

# MCIA Annual Meeting Preview

## One-Day Event in Fergus Falls: January 5, 2017

This year's MCIA Annual meeting will be held in a new one-day format. The business meeting, education program, and awards luncheon will all take place on Thursday, January 5, at the Bigwood Events Center in Fergus Falls. Every MCIA member is encouraged to attend as the meeting will address issues important to the seed industry and will provide an excellent opportunity for attendees to visit with other seed professionals.

Program topics include an introduction to and update from Aaron Lorenz, soybean breeder at the University of Minnesota; Industrial Hemp in Minnesota; updates from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and the University of Minnesota; and a seed certification workshop. A trade show will fill out the day and make it worth the time to attend.

The luncheon keynote speaker, Tom Turner of Running Wealth Management Group, will discuss a topic everyone is interested in, *money*, and how to make your money work harder for you. We will also recognize recipients of the Premier and Honorary Premier Seed Grower awards and present the Achievement in Crop Improvement Award.

### Reception Wednesday Evening

Those arriving the day before the Annual Meeting are invited to a reception, beginning at 7 o'clock Wednesday evening, hosted by the MCIA Board of Directors. Plan to arrive early enough to join us.

To register for the meeting or to obtain more information please contact MCIA at 1-800-510-6242 or visit us online at [www.mncia.org](http://www.mncia.org).



MCIA President Dr. Fawad Shah addresses attendees of the 2016 MCIA Annual Meeting.

## Small Grains Update Meetings: Wheat, Soybean, and Corn January 16-20, 2017

There is no cost to attend these meetings and registration is not required. Meetings will be held in Argyle, Crookston, Fergus Falls, Gary, Hallock, Moorhead, Morris, Red Lake Falls, and Roseau.

For meeting venues, times, and other details, please contact the office of the **Minnesota Association of Wheat Growers**, at 218-253-4311, or visit [www.smallgrains.org](http://www.smallgrains.org).

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## MN Field Crop Trials Online

The 2017 Field Crop Trials from the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station (MAES) are available online at [www.maes.umn.edu](http://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*. The Trials can also be accessed through the MCIA web site, [www.mncia.org](http://www.mncia.org).

## 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.

## Minnesota Seed Guide

The 2017 edition of the *Minnesota Seed Guide* will appear shortly in print and online. The guide compiles University of Minnesota crop trial results and lists MCIA members, the varieties of crops they produce, and the services they provide. For more information visit: [www.minnesotafarmguide](http://www.minnesotafarmguide).



# Chairman's View

Paul Kjolhaug, Board Chair

## Will We Be Agents of Change?

The MCIA Board of Directors is continually in discussion about where your organization, MCIA, is headed. We ask ourselves, what do we need to do to support your business and MCIA? How do we continue to be relevant in an ever-changing world, be ready for tomorrow, and to be leaders in our industry? At our last board meeting we briefly discussed being an agent of change and the need to lead our area of the industry into tomorrow.

An agent of change can be defined as a person or people who act as a catalyst for change. What does that mean? As a change agent one needs to:

1. Understand why there is a need for change.
2. Develop a clear vision of what the change will look like—and understand that there is not just one way to do things.
3. Tap into the strengths of people/partners who have the ability to support change—sources who are knowledgeable and can ask the difficult questions. Sometimes the agent of change is within the organization and sometimes they are outside—partners or associates who have the knowledge and experience to help make change.
4. Be patient—changes do not happen quickly.
5. Trust our leadership.
6. Be actively learning and looking. Among its services, MCIA acts as a liaison to present and validate, through its certification program, germplasm (new varieties of soybeans, wheat, oats, barley, etc.) to the commercial market, as well as being a third-party verifier in other programs. MCIA continues to research and look beyond those services. It interacts with the University of Minnesota and with other associations within and outside our state to find new and innovative services to support our membership.
7. Understand that change is not easy. Pushing the boundaries of acceptable practices beyond what is considered the current “norm” can often be perceived as being temporarily disruptive—but it can clearly have long-term positive impacts.

MCIA's Board of Directors understands that the outcomes of business decisions are difficult to predict and that the speed of change in agriculture is increasing exponentially. I also believe—although it is not an epiphany to me or any of us—that

unpredictability and rapid change are conditions that can create opportunity for members and the association.

We are fortunate to be part of an association with very strong leadership, both at the staff and board level. They understand that change is inevitable. They understand that we can be proactive and help decide those changes or we can wait and let change decide our fate. We are also fortunate that they are evaluating opportunities and actively interested in being agents of change.

As I close my time on the board I want to thank you all for allowing me the opportunity to serve this wonderful organization. You all know what a great group of people this is, and what a strong and committed team—both at the staff and board level—serves the association. Because of that I know you will have continued success.

## Welcome Karen Gjelhaug!

Minnesota Crop Improvement Association welcomes Karen Gjelhaug as a new seed analyst in our seed testing laboratory. Karen has 3 ½ years of experience with seed testing at Eurofins-BioDiagnostics, including MCIA samples, and is working toward her Registered Seed Technologist certification. Karen's interest in sustainable agriculture is a great fit for MCIA. When the lab is less busy, she will be working with MCIA's Organic Services.





Minnesota Crop Improvement Association's service to the seed industry began in 1903. A few years later, 1-pound bags of Grimm alfalfa seed were sent from the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station to a seed company in Colorado accompanied by documented proof of varietal purity. Unparalleled service to the seed and agricultural industry continues to be

a focus of MCIA well after its inception over a century ago.

MCIA's success can be attributed to its experienced, skilled, and dedicated staff, as well as to its supportive members. With imminent retirements of management and senior staff, the need to plan for the future is paramount. Of course, MCIA is not alone in facing this challenge. Many companies, small and large alike, have met this challenge successfully and continue to provide value to customers and maintain profitability.

During its November 2016 meeting, the MCIA Board of Directors discussed ways to ensure exceptional service, delivery, and customer care in the future. Succession planning is a process for identifying and developing future leaders who can replace current leaders when they leave. The Board identified such a

need and formed a committee to address the succession planning needs of MCIA. The committee consists of three Board members to align MCIA's programs with the demanding dynamics of the agricultural industry and three staff members to capture a broad perspective of roles and responsibilities within the organization.

The newly formed committee will look into many aspects of succession planning, including hiring and retention, transition, training, and employee empowerment. The resulting roadmap will offer a framework and direction for a robust succession plan that aligns talent management with MCIA's vision of the future. It will also ensure that employees have development opportunities to hone their leadership skills, and guarantee the organization has a leadership plan in place for continued success.

The addition of two new full-time positions and the filling of one full-time vacant position to support operations is yet another important step in sustaining the laboratory and office. As well, the growth of current and potential customers along with offering new services keeps MCIA competitive and strategically vigorous.

Succession planning will be the most valuable tool in MCIA's toolbox, necessary to preserve and move the organization forward. Thanks are due to the committee members for their willingness to serve and help navigate MCIA's future.



## Organic Corner

Michelle Menken, Organic Certification Program Manager

The 2016 production and certification season is winding down. We worked with many new applicants this year. At the end of 2016 we will have issued about 475 certificates. A big *thank you* to everyone for your patience. We were aiming to have all the crop producers done by the

end of December and we will be close to accomplishing that, except for those clients who have not yet paid. Sometime in February we will start working on sending out renewal applications for 2017. So it will start all over again. We are planning some changes next year to make things flow more easily and faster.

MCIA will have its re-accreditation audit by the NOP in 2017. We also apply annually to be a certifier. Every two and a half years auditors come into our offices and review our files to make sure we are conducting our program according to the standards. They randomly pick a selection of our client files to review and look through our records to ensure we are completing random

pesticides residue testing, doing unannounced inspections, evaluating inspectors, etc. The audit usually lasts a week.

If you have never been to an organic conference, we highly recommend attending one. They are a good place to meet other organic growers and make contact with organic buyers and input suppliers. There are always good informational sessions to attend and it is energizing to be around so many other organic producers. MCIA will have booths at all the conferences listed in the *Minnesota Seed Grower* calendar. In particular, we invite you to visit us at the Minnesota Organic Conference in Saint Cloud, January 12-13; the Northern Plains Sustainable Ag Conference in Aberdeen, South Dakota, January 26-28; and the MOSES Organic Farming Conference in La Crosse, Wisconsin, February 23-24.

The MCIA Organic Services Committee will meet at the conference in Saint Cloud, at 5:30 PM, Thursday, January 12, in the Blue Room. We will discuss our organic program—all are welcome to attend. We plan to have some nice metal "Certified Organic" signs available to pick up at this conference. This project was delayed as MCIA needed to create a new logo, which is a central part of the new signs. More information about signs will be sent out soon.



THE MINNESOTA SEED GROWER Vol. 88 No. 4  
 Winter 2016 (Pub# 352240) is published quarterly by  
 MCIA, 1900 Hendon Ave, Saint Paul MN 55108.  
 Periodical postage paid at Saint Paul, MN and  
 additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to  
**The Minnesota Seed Grower**  
 1900 Hendon Ave  
 Saint Paul MN 55108



PERIODICAL

**The Minnesota Seed Grower**

Published quarterly by the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association, 1900 Hendon Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55108

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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..... MCIA Office Closed
- 5..... MCIA Annual Meeting, Fergus Falls
- 12-13..... Minnesota Organic Conference, Saint Cloud
- 16..... MCIA Office Closed
- 16-20..... Small Grains Update Meetings, multiple locations
- 19-20..... Upper Midwest Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference, Saint Cloud
- 25-26..... MN Ag Expo, Mankato
- 26-28..... NPSAS Winter Conference, Aberdeen, S.Dak.
- 28-29..... Immigrant and Minority Farmers Conference, Saint Paul

**February**

- 3-4..... Organic Vegetable Production Conference, Madison, Wisc.
- 11..... SFA Annual Conference, Saint Joseph
- 15-16..... SFA Midwest Soil Health Summit, Fergus Falls
- 23-25..... MOSES Organic Farming Conference, La Crosse, Wisc.

**For more information on these and other events please visit [www.mncia.org](http://www.mncia.org).**