

## Retirement with Honors MCIA General Manager Cindy Wippler Recognized for Service to Seed Industry

After 34 years of dedication to the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association (MCIA) and to the members that make up this organization, Cindy Wippler has retired. In early August of this year Cindy solved one more office computer problem, completed her final organic certificate, and finished submitting payroll for the last time.

In her most recent position as general manager and in her previous roles with the organization, Cindy became well versed in the various programs and operations at MCIA. She was instrumental in the development of the Pure Harvest database, MCIA's information management system, and was often involved in program development and implementation.

As a result, she became the go-to person for all things MCIA. Her familiarity with the assortment of programs and how they were interrelated led her to remind fellow staff members, CEOs, and board members to "think it through," as a change in one area might have unintended effects in another area.

Cindy grew up on a hog and dairy farm near Browerville, Minnesota. She attended the University of Minnesota, Waseca and then moved to the St. Paul campus to complete a degree in horticultural science. As a student, she worked part-time in the MCIA seed lab, planting germinations. Before graduating, she was offered and accepted a full-time position in the MCIA office.

One of her early responsibilities in the MCIA office was to type up OECD certificates. Using an electric typewriter she would type, without any mistakes, hundreds of certificates. In 1987 alone MCIA certified 49.5 million pounds of soybean, corn, sunflower, and grass seed for OECD export. All of which required a typed OECD certificate.



Chet Boruff, AOSCA CEO, with 2019 Honorary Members Cindy Wippler and Alan Galbreth, CEO of Indiana Crop Improvement Association, June 25, 2019.

This humble start and commitment to excellence exemplify Cindy's career. When her fellow employees were asked to describe Cindy, they used the words *hardworking*, *dedicated*, *pragmatic*, and *insightful*. One noted, "She always went above and beyond." Another said, "Her attention to detail and understanding of the "big picture" had a direct impact on the success of our programs."

Her efforts have not gone unnoticed. In June of this year, the Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies (AOSCA) presented Cindy with its Honorary Membership award. The award was presented during the Centennial Gala and Awards Banquet of this year's AOSCA annual meeting. She is the first woman in AOSCA's 100-year history to be recognized as an Honorary Member.

AOSCA received many letters supporting Cindy's nomination for the Honorary Member award and testifying to her tireless commitment to seed certification and the seed industry. This recognition is a fitting tribute to someone who truly valued the MCIA organization and the many members she has worked with over the years.

Cindy, for your many years of dedicated service to MCIA we say, "Thank you!"



### Recognize a Deserving MCIA Member!

MCIA members are encouraged to submit nominations for the Honorary Premier Seedsman, Premier Seedsman, and Achievement in Crop Improvement awards, which will be presented at the MCIA Annual Meeting in January.

If you know a producer, seed conditioner, or supporter of MCIA deserving of recognition, or if you have questions about nomination requirements, please contact Roger Wippler at 1-800-510-6242 or by e-mail at [wippl002@umn.edu](mailto:wippl002@umn.edu).

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When I and Cindy Wippler started our seed careers it was in the midst of the Reagan administration. The Cold War was winding down, and we listened to the Go-

Go's, Bon Jovi, and Joan Jett on the radio. I got to know Cindy pretty well when she started with MCIA, as my company was busy shipping OECD sunflower and soybean seed overseas.

That seems like only yesterday and now she has decided to take the next step in life and start to enjoy her time off, when every day is Saturday, except for Sunday. Looking back, some of the soybean growers I first signed were newlyweds starting families. Now we are signing contracts with

their children and not too far along it will be their grandchildren with their starter acres. When that first contract is signed with the third generation, I, too, may need to call it a career.

Over that time, there have been many challenges and every year was marked by highlights, as well. We remember LDP payments, the drought of the late '80s, the Dakotas taking on the soybean/corn rotation; good years, and challenging years. It is surprising how much has changed with GM traits, yields, and agronomics, and how much has stayed the same with prices, politics, and programs. Plus, there is always the weather.

So, I guess, time moves on: MCIA will adjust post-Cindy. She will be enjoying her hobbies, friends, and family. And the farmers will endure, because they know they have to. It just shouldn't be so difficult.

Hope everyone has a bountiful fall harvest, once it gets started. Stay safe and best wishes to Cindy in her retirement. I thank her for all the years of dedication to MCIA and to all the members of our organization.

## Cindy's Farewell

I would like to thank MCIA for the opportunity to work here for the last thirty-four years. It went by rather quickly. When I was hired back in 1985, I was only planning on working at MCIA for a year. Well, life isn't always what you plan.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at MCIA. It has been an honor and a privilege to have worked with so many wonderful staff, MCIA members, MCIA Board of Directors, AOSCA colleagues, and industry professionals.

Many changes have occurred over the years. When I first started, seed certification was the only program MCIA was involved in. I spent a majority of the fall and winter months typing up OECD certificates for international shipments.

Eventually, MCIA diversified. As new project and program ideas came up, many initiated by our members, MCIA staff would analyze whether these ideas were a good fit for our organization. We would then determine what it would take to develop the program, and worked cooperatively to put together standards, guidelines, and forms. Quality assurance, Native Seed, Noxious Weed Seed-free Forage and Mulch, Sod, Round-up Ready field inspections, IRM assessments, and Organic certification, to name a few, developed into good pro-



Kurt Flegel presents Cindy Wippler with a plaque "in great appreciation of 34 years of dedicated service," on August 28, 2019.

grams for MCIA. All accomplished by a lot of people working together. MCIA is a great organization because of all of your contributions.

Thanks again, for the opportunity to work with and for you. I wish you all continued success. I will miss this great organization.

— Cindy Wippler

### ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

The MCIA Annual Meeting will be held January 8, 2020 at the Bigwood Event Center in Fergus Falls. Official proceedings will all occur in one day. The business meeting, informational presentations, trade show, and awards luncheon will begin in the morning and conclude late in the afternoon.

### CALL FOR RESOLUTIONS

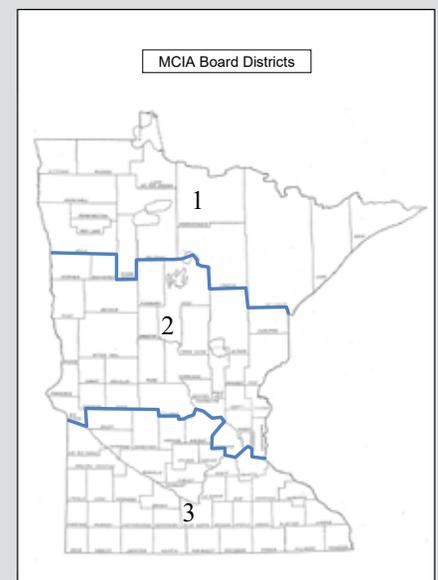
A draft of any resolution to be considered by the MCIA Legislative and Public Affairs Committee and forwarded to the floor of the annual meeting should be received by MCIA 14 days prior to the meeting.

### MCIA BOARD POSITIONS OPEN

MCIA is seeking candidates for positions on the MCIA Board of Directors. The following seats are open: Matt Bohn, Related Industry; Mory Rugg, Related Industry; Scott Habstritt, District 1; Darius Thiel, District 2. Bohn and Thiel are eligible for re-election; Habstritt and Rugg are not eligible for re-election.

The MCIA board districts are shown below. Related Industry is a state-wide position. Directors are elected by and from the members at the annual meeting to a 3-year term of office.

To propose agenda items or resolutions for the annual meeting, or to nominate someone to serve on the MCIA Board of Directors, or to inquire about serving on the board, please contact Fawad Shah at [fawad.shah@mcia.org](mailto:fawad.shah@mcia.org) or call the MCIA office.





In today's world, use of technology has become second nature. We hardly notice how dependent we have become on technology in our everyday affairs. Advancements in technology have changed the world, especially in the last two decades. Nonetheless, there are some things that are as valid and valuable today as they were many decades ago.

For instance, the concept of maintaining varietal purity and identity, which led to seed certification, was conceived over 100 years ago. In 1919, the Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies (AOSCA) was founded to promote and facilitate the movement of seed or plant products, in domestic and international markets. That seed met specific standards, which had been agreed upon by seed certifying agencies. The organization was then known as the International Crop Improvement Association. As a result, Certified Seed, also known as 'Blue Tag Seed,' became synonymous with quality and pedigree.

This summer AOSCA celebrated its 100-year anniversary! To mark the occasion, representatives from seed certifying agencies from across the U.S., as well as from New Zealand, Chile, Argentina, Canada, and South Africa, were in attendance at this year's annual AOSCA meeting. Combining the usual organizational business with centennial celebrations made the event a memorable one.

The organization's founding purpose, making genetically pure crop seed available to farmers, has been fulfilled through the development of field inspection and seed testing procedures and standards that ensure varietal purity and identity. Over the last century, seed science experts from participating agencies have continuously updated old standards and developed new standards. Thus, AOSCA has remained relevant and strong even after 100 years.

Our own Cindy Wippler, General Manager of the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association, is one of those seed experts who made significant contributions to AOSCA, as well as to MCIA. Over a career spanning 34 years, Cindy's dedicated service included chairing numerous committees and working side-by-side with many agencies, especially those located in our neighboring states. In acknowledgement of her leadership, hard work, and strong commitment to AOSCA and seed certification, Cindy was presented with the AOSCA Honorary Member Award. Cindy is the first woman ever to receive such recognition in AOSCA's history. Presentation of this award at the AOSCA's centennial anniversary truly made the occasion unprecedented and historic.

As we celebrate Cindy's recognition, we can also look back on MCIA's founding in 1903 and celebrate that our commitment to quality has endured for over 100 years. Retirements and departures in the past three years have led to hiring new talent. With over half of the staff fairly new to MCIA, cross-training and team-building are underway to ensure integrity and excellence in service delivery and customer care. People like Cindy, and many others, established a sound foundation on which newcomers can reliably build, taking MCIA to new heights of success.



## Organic Corner

**Michelle Menken, Organic Services Manager**

It's been another really busy year. We are still scheduling crop inspections. There may even be a few inspections in October. Handler renewal applications are going out now for all fall and early winter clients. We will try to send them out via email this year. Remember certificates are valid until surrendered, suspended,

or revoked. If you need a Letter of Good Standing, or if you are new this year and need your certificate to make a sale, please contact the office.

It's time for a reminder about 2018–19 Organic Certification Cost Share. All certified organic operations are eligible to apply for a rebate of organic certification costs through the USDA's Organic Certification Cost Share Program. You may apply at your Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. In Minnesota and Wisconsin,

you may also apply to the state department of agriculture. The purpose of this rebate is to encourage more people to consider converting to organic production. Participation in the program is voluntary.

Operations that receive certification or had ongoing certification between October 1, 2018 and September 30, 2019 are eligible for reimbursement of up to 75 percent of paid certification-related costs, with a maximum of \$750 per scope (crop, livestock, processing/handling, and/or wild crops).

If you still have certification payments to make, pay them by the end of September to be eligible to include them in this year's cost share rebate. If you have not had an inspection, you may prepay an inspection deposit of \$325 for crops and \$425 for livestock/handling. Additional fees may be charged after the inspection occurs.

Contact your local USDA FSA office or state agriculture department for a cost share application, cut-off dates, and submission requirements.



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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.

Improving your process • Enhancing your products • Increasing your profits

**In Memoriam**

**Duane Smith Sr.** passed away June 11, 2019. Duane began his career in agriculture at MCIA before joining the University of Minnesota Agronomy Department. For over 50 years he was a fixture in the Farm Crops area at the Minnesota State Fair, including time as superintendent.

**Hubert Anderson**, of Anderson Seeds of St. Peter, passed away June 26, 2019. Hubert, a longtime MCIA member, remained active in the family seed business his entire life. He passed on the love of sowing seeds to his children and grandchildren, who continue operating the family hybrid seed corn business.

**CALENDAR**

**OCTOBER**

17–19 Women in Sustainable Ag Conference, St. Paul

**NOVEMBER**

- 1–2 South Dakota Local Foods Conference, Pierre
- 1–4 ASTA Farm and Lawn Seed Conference, Kansas City, MO
- 7 Minnesota Ag and Food Summit, hosted by AgriGrowth, Minneapolis
- 14 MCIA Board Meeting, Saint Paul
- 24–25 Iowa Organic Conference, Iowa City
- 28–29 MCIA Office Closed

For more event information visit [www.mncia.org](http://www.mncia.org).