

Annual Meeting Chairman's Report

Duane Dahlman, Board Chair

Tags



Tags. Tags. Tags. Tags everywhere. There are section tags, header tags, content tags, styling tags, skin tags, anchor tags, hash tags and then there is being tagged. We all remember the game of tag. It was probably one of the first games that children would learn as they play in groups. Tags are everywhere.

The word tag has multiple meanings. One definition as Webster's writes, "A label attached to someone or something for the purpose of identification or to give other information." As an action word it is defined as to attach as an addition, or to provide or mark with. Tags have become part of our everyday life and we use them many times not even realizing how significant and important they are. Tags as we know them are one of the fastest, easiest, and most powerful ways to organize content. They are short, descriptive words or phrases that classify and organize entries or physical items.

Most of you are very familiar with the many tags that the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association issues in accordance with the rules and regulations that govern their programs. But I wonder how many of you have really paid much attention to the information that is printed on the tag. My attempt today is to correlate your certified tag that is attached to your products with your Minnesota Crop Improvement Association as I have viewed it this past year.

There are a number of tags or certificates that are managed by our Minnesota Crop Improvement Association. There is a Certified, Registered, and Foundation tag. There are bulk certificates, Certified Noxious Weed Seed Free Forage and Mulch tags, Identity Preserved, and OECD tags. There are a number of others, but what I am trying to portray is that your organization is involved with many programs.

If there is an opportunity to serve its members, the MCI Board of Directors along with the management team will examine its viability to the organization. Jay Samit was quoted, "To be successful, innovation is not just about value creation, but value capture." A new program or a significant change in an existing program needs to create and capture value to its members and the organization.

Now let us look at a particular tag that we all recognize, the certified tag. Every tag has a different number printed on them creating an individual identity to each one. I want you as a member of MCI to consider yourself as a certified tag.

Each and every one of you is an individual member of the Minnesota Crop Improvement and like the certified tag, everyone one is as important as the next and must be accounted for. I know that our employees look upon each of you as the most important person or business to the organization. My

experience, as well as most of you, has always been positive when a phone call is made to the office. Your questions are answered if not immediately, in a very timely fashion.

If you would look at the bottom of the tag, it reflects that the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association is a member of the Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies. The Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies (AOSCA) is dedicated to assisting clients in the production, identification, distribution and promotion of certified classes of seed and other crop propagation materials. AOSCA Mission Statement:

To promote and facilitate the movement of seed or plant products in local, national, and international markets through the coordinated efforts of official seed certification agencies acting to evaluate, document, and verify that a seed or plant product meets certain accepted standards.

The major purposes of AOSCA are:

- To establish minimum standards for genetic purity and identity and recommend minimum standards for seed quality for the classes of certified seed.
- To standardize seed certification regulations and procedures, and operational procedures in inter-agency seed certification.
- To periodically review agency genetic standards and procedures to assure compliance with the Federal Seed Act.
- To cooperate with seed regulatory agencies in the determination of policy, regulations, definitions or any procedures relating to the labeling and distribution of seed moving in intra-state, inter-state or international commerce.
- To cooperate with the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and international organizations involved in the development of standards, regulations, procedures, and policies to expedite movement of seed and encourage international commerce in improved varieties.
- To assist member agencies in promotion, production, identification, distribution and use of the certified classes of seed and other propagating materials of crop varieties.

If you take note of the mission statement of our own Minnesota Crop Improvement Association, there are many similarities. Our Mission Statement States:

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. These two organizations have the same core objectives to their members.

We have been very fortunate to have Ben Lang as our representative to this organization. He has been an active voice for the concerns which have involved Minnesota Crop Improvement Association and made it a priority to keep the board informed as to what is happening on the national level.

When one examines the tag, there is the Limited Certification statement which states that the seed in this container is from a lot of seed which was produced in accordance with standards of the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association which is recognized as the official seed certifying agency by the laws of Minnesota. The Association only certifies that samples taken from the lot of seed which are representative of the seed in this container, met the standards of the Association at the time the tests were made.

The producer or vendor whose name appears on the analysis label is solely responsible for the information thereon and for the proper use of this certification label. You as an individual member like this certified tag are responsible to maintain the integrity of the program of certification. The employees of Minnesota Crop Improvement Association are fully dedicated to implement the programs with the rules and regulations that have been adopted and or amended.

There is the Exclusion of Warranties Statement which states the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association makes no warranty of any kind, expressed or implied, including but not limited to the implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular business. If you own or are part of a business of any kind, you have seen a statement like this and so I will not elaborate any further.

Your Minnesota Crop Improvement Association address is also printed on the tag. This reminds us of the building we are currently housed in. There are continued talks occurring between our Association and the University of Minnesota. Building projects are always a part of the University of Minnesota's scope of the allocation of their funding and we as an Association continue to set funds aside for future building needs if collaboration with the University needs to occur. There is still consensus among the board that we stay in close proximity of the St. Paul Campus. We would encourage all of our members to give input to the board as to your prospective of office needs.

Now there is the information that we as members or the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association office staff print on the tag. It is important that all follow the rules as to what needs to be printed on the tag. It creates a consistency to the information that is attached to the certified product it represents. This concept without question is one of the top characteristics of our organization. The size of the company that is using a particular program of the MCI, makes no difference with the rules and regulations that are enforced. Consistency, consistency, consistency. This is so important to an organization.

As I look at the certified tag, I see the face of the organization, our own President and CEO, Ben Lang. Ben Lang is retiring from our organization beginning on June 1st of this year. He will be greatly missed not only as our President and CEO, but as a friend to all of us. The Minnesota Crop Improvement Association is what it is today because of the leadership of Ben Lang. Sam Walton is quoted, "Outstanding leaders go out of their way to boost the self-esteem of their personnel. If people believe in themselves, it's amazing what they can accomplish." How true this is with Ben. If you have a conversation with any of The Minnesota Crop Improvement Association employees, one would quickly realize that Ben Lang is a leader that you want to work for.

He empowers his employees to work at a level of high achievement. As a visionary, Ben looks at the broad picture of an organization allowing his personnel to carry out the day-to-day operations. I

particularly have had the privilege of experiencing the work of Ben as he was my field supervisor for many years. One always smiled as this tall lanky young man would crawl out of this small, and I mean small, white pickup, to inspect fields or inspect the seed house in the spring.

A sure thing we knew was the inspections were done thoroughly and properly and the coveralls would need to be washed as I am not sure how he got into some of the places in the seed house, but he saw everything. This same mindset carried over as he entered the desk world and has managed our organization to a level of excellence. What we can say now is: "Thank you Ben. Well done. But I am sure I do not need to remind you, you still have several months left."

For the last six years, I have had the privilege of serving as a board member of your organization. The members that I have served with have been an outstanding group. As board members leave and new members arrive, it as if we do not skip a beat with our MCIA organization. We have been fortunate to have board members who look at the MCIA's mission statement and move forward with what is best for Minnesota Crop and its members.

During a board meeting, it matters not what the topic is, a thorough discussion always happens. With guidance of Ben Lang, our board is also visionary, and is constantly looking for opportunities for growth and expansion of our organization, but in an orderly fashion. I would encourage each of you to consider a position on the board of directors or one of its committees. It is an opportunity to give back to the organization which we all use each year in one aspect or another.

Dr. Seuss is a writer that we all know. He wrote 46 children's books of which many have quotes that we use to live our lives by. My favorite book is "How the Grinch Stole Christmas". Today I want to finish with my version of a book I read to my children just about every night before they went to bed. I had it memorized and could not skip a page. I know that because I tried a few times. Here is my version of Dr. Seuss's A B C book as it reflects our own Minnesota Crop Improvement Association.

BIG A little a What begins with A?

Audits, Annual meeting, Approved facilities A.....a.....A

BIG B little b What begins with B?

Ben Lang, Bulk certificates, bulletins and Barley grain for seed

BIG C little c What begins with C?

Certified, Corn Crop, and Conditioning C.....c.....C

BIG D little d What begins with D?

Deon Stuthman dreamed of Deon oats and the MCIA Directory too

A B C D E..e..E

Effective and Efficient Source, Enhanced Value, and Electrophoresis E.....e.....E

BIG F little f What begins with F?

Foundation seed Fanned in Facilities inspected MCI A Fieldmen

A B C D E F G

Grasses, Grains, Germs and GMO free

BIG H little h What begins with H?

Habstritt, Haugrud, Heartland and Handlers packing Hay Hooray! Hooray!

BIG I little i i...i...i

Identity preserved, Inspectors, Indiangrass and Canadian wildrye

BIG J little j What begins with J?

Jim, Janet, Jennifer, and Jody begin that way

BIG K little k

Kittson, Kandiyohi, Kanabec and Koochiching counties all produce known commodities for MCI A

BIG L little l

Licensing, livestock, Liberty Link and labels that are to be listed

BIG M little m

Many Members of Minnesota crop are making mulch mighty nice

BIG N little n What begins with this?

Nine new native grasses and the NOP and a Norden wheat field in Norman County you cannot miss

O is very useful. You use it when you say: OECD, Organic, Oats and the Onsite inspections that way

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P

Planting Prosper wheat in Polk county, President Ben Lang in St. Paul, Proven quality and Performance and Profitability, it Pays

BIG Q little q What begins with q?

Quality assurance program using an approved QMS. But do not forget Quest. It is a barley too.

BIG R little r

Registered class of seed, Rosemount still has research and now there is roadside re-vegetation by required MN-Dot regulations

BIG S little s

Samples, Soybean Seed, and Standards, and Seth with service second to none

T.....T.....t.....t What begins with T?

Tags and Testing of Timothy, Traill soybeans Triticale

BIG U little u What begins with U?

University of Minnesota, Unbiased third party inspections and the USDA connections too

BIG V little v

Variety licensing is very, very, very important, as we put Value in Variety Verification

W..w..W

Winter Wheat and Wild crop producers are wonderful but the MCI Website is too

X is very useful if your name has the word flax. It also comes in handy when spelling experiment and a source ID name like Carex and Phlox

BIG Y little y

A Yellow tag exists if the native is source identified, higher Yields are obtained after Years of Your plots tried

A B C D E F G H I J K L M F O P Q R S T U V W X Y and Z What begins with Z?

Zizia aptera, Zizia aurea, source ID products, and Zabel Seeds sure do

So I finish with one final quote of Dr. Seuss, "So the writer who breeds more words than he needs, is making a chore for the reader who reads."

Respectfully Submitted

Duane Dahlman, Chairman