

## MCIA Visits Japan

In November, MCIA staff member Jim Boots traveled to Japan to attend the U.S. Soybean Quality Conference sponsored by the United States Soybean Export Council (USSEC). Jim attended the conference with Brian Greenslit, Minnesota Soybean Research and Promotion Council (MSRPC) board member. The MSRPC sponsored their trip. Also attending the Food Grade Soybean Conference from the University of Minnesota were Soybean Breeder, Dr. Jim Orf, and Soybean Extension Agronomist, Dr. Seth Naeve. Attendance at the conference and visits to soy-food processors in Japan provided an opportunity to promote Minnesota food grade soybeans and MCIA's Identity Preserved and Traceability programs.

Minnesota is a leading producer of high quality food grade soybeans. A unique combination of factors has led to the growth of the food bean industry in Minnesota. These include favorable growing conditions, capable professional growers willing to do the work required to produce a quality soybean and companies large and small that have invested in processing facilities needed to deliver a premium product. The industry is backed by breeding and research programs along with organizations that offer supporting services that enable producers to capture value in markets domestically and internationally.

Japan alone uses one million metric tons of food grade soybeans each year and Minnesota is a key supplier. Minnesota producers and companies provide various specialty soybeans to Japan for the production of tofu, natto, soy sauce and other soy-food products. Many of these companies utilize varieties developed by the University of Minnesota and MCIA services to assure integrity and quality to the buyer in Japan.

In an effort to promote the use of Minnesota soybeans, MCIA coordinated the development of a new display, logo and brochure in cooperation with the University of Minnesota and funding from the MSRPC. Beginning with variety research and development, through production, processing, independent certification and transportation, the display tells the story of Minnesota's ability to produce food soybeans with integrity, quality and safety. The display will be used at various meetings and trade shows to promote soybeans from Minnesota.

The use of the display and one-on-one conversation with suppliers and food manufacturers help create an identity that distinguishes Minnesota food grade soybeans. It also is a chance to share views about soybean supplies, product demand and prices as well as trends in Minnesota agriculture. Overall the trip was an excellent opportunity to learn more about the soy food industry in Japan and strengthen Minnesota's relationship with many suppliers and processors.



*New Soybean booth with Jim Boots, Dr. Jim Orf, Dr. Seth Naeve and Brian Greenslit.*



**INTEGRITY • QUALITY • SAFETY**

## Looking Back/Looking Forward

The end of the year is an opportunity to look back at what we've accomplished the past year and also to look forward to what we need to do to make the New Year a success. Here at MCIA, we look back by reviewing how well we have done in performing the services our members have requested and look forward by developing our organizational objectives. Organizational objectives are developed by the staff through a process where everyone is encouraged to put forth ideas about what needs to be done to improve the quality of MCIA's services and to identify key activities that will result in the growth of MCIA's programs and other service offerings. These organizational objectives are reviewed by the Board of Directors to allow them to have input into the priorities of the organization for the coming year.

Several of our key objectives this year reaffirm our organization's commitment to delivering quality services that satisfy the needs of our membership. We have begun a review of our seed certification program including the seed standards, certification procedures and other aspects of the program. We are also looking at innovative ways to improve the organic certification process to make organic certification more manageable for organic producers and handlers. We are striving to make these programs more efficient, effective and user friendly for those that certify products at MCIA. The agricultural industry continues to change rapidly and MCIA is committed to utilizing new tools and operating methods to adapt our programs to ensure that they are current and relevant.

Many of the changes that will be implemented are the result of comments from those that utilize our program services. Gathering, recording and responding to customer feedback is a key part of any organization's internal quality management program. To ensure that we fully utilize the input from our membership, we are formalizing MCIA's internal processes for managing and responding to customer input. We will also seek ways to allow you as members to directly interact with our staff. You will have such an opportunity at the MCIA Annual Meeting on January 6-7 at Jackpot Junction in Morton. This year's program includes a member workshop where proposed changes will be discussed and where you will have the opportunity to ask questions and offer input. Organic program participants will have the opportunity to meet with our staff at the Minnesota Organic Conference in St. Cloud on January 16 – 17. We hope that you will take advantage of these opportunities to meet with us to offer your input into our programs.

We hope that as you look back on 2008, you can take pride in your successes and that MCIA may have contributed to those in a positive way. We hope that you will take an active role in our Association this coming year as we strive to achieve our goals. We look forward to working with you to help you meet your objectives for 2009!

*-Ben Lang  
President/CEO*

## Organic Corner

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is still working out the details of the organic certification cost-share program. Certified operations will be able to apply for reimbursement of 75% of the cost of certification up to \$750. MDA will contact certified operations directly, but MCIA will make sure that none of our clients are missed. Clients located in other states will also be notified when those states are ready to accept applications. Wisconsin has indicated that they expect the program to open in January 2009.

There are several great conferences to attend this winter: the Minnesota Organic Conference, January 16-17th in St. Cloud, MN with Elliot Coleman as guest speaker; the Organic Farming Conference, February 26-28th in LaCrosse, WI with Dr. Vandana Shiva and Dr. Alan Greene as guest speakers; the Sustainable Farming Association Conference, February 21st in Northfield, MN with Joel Salatin as guest speaker; and the Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society, February 13-14th in Huron, SD. MCIA will have an information booth at St. Cloud, LaCrosse, and Huron. Please stop by and meet us.

We have designed a new Transaction Certificate form. The first copies have gone out and we have received positive comments so far. Please let us know if you think they are easier to use as you receive and use them.

The MCIA organic staff has met with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to discuss programs they offer that are compatible with organic farming. If you are transitioning some land to organic, want to add permanent buffer zones, begin rotational grazing, plant windbreaks, plant pollinator strips, or do erosion control, etc., you may find it worth your while to visit with your county NRCS agent. There are cost-share funds available to make improvements that meet their standards. NRCS is usually located in the Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. You may wish to check out their website: [http://efotg.nrcs.gov/efotg\\_locator.aspx?map=MN](http://efotg.nrcs.gov/efotg_locator.aspx?map=MN). Click on any county on the MN map. On the next page, go to "Section IV, C, Conservation Practices" to view practices they support.

Contact Michelle Menken (612-625-7766) for more information about the organic program.

### The Chairman's View

With harvest wrapped up for a month in some areas, two weeks in others, just finished in some and still going in others, it is hard to begin the planning process for 2009.

Ready or not, 2009 is just around the corner. With the turbulent times we find ourselves in, planning will be even more important than ever for a successful year ahead. Your board and management have been continuing the planning process for 2009 and beyond. Quite honestly it cannot stop.

We invite you to be part of that process at your annual meeting January 6 & 7, 2009. Please plan to attend. Give us your ideas and input, and take this opportunity to enjoy a little time together with other members of your organization. Have an enjoyable Holiday season with family and friends and we look forward to seeing you in January.

- Tim Backman

### Foundation Seed for 2009

Now is the time to order your Foundation Seed for 2009 planting! A listing of varieties available was sent to all certified seed producers at the end of November. Order now for best availability!

### Proper Labeling Important

Seed of many species used in pasture, lawn grass or roadside mixtures are produced outside of Minnesota. When purchasing seed from outside suppliers, there are a few state and federal regulations to keep in mind. Seed offered for sale in Minnesota must be labeled according to the Minnesota Seed Law, section 21.82. Common label factors missing on seed purchased from some other states and Canada are hard or dormant seed percentages and 'total germination and hard or dormant seed' when applicable. A close second is the failure to disclose noxious weed seed. Restricted noxious weed seed in excess of 25 per pound and any amount of prohibited noxious weed seed are not allowed. Restricted noxious weed seed occurring at less than 25 per pound must be identified by name and number per pound. Other states may not consider the same weeds as noxious, so it is important to make sure that the presence of any Minnesota noxious weed seeds are disclosed to you.

The Federal Seed Act, section 203, does provide an exemption to full labeling, but only under the following conditions: (1) quantities of 20,000 pounds or more, (2) with the consent of the consignee, (3) each bag or container is clearly stenciled or labeled with the lot designation, and (4) full label information is provided in the records for that lot. However, if the seed is to be sold in Minnesota, then a full label meeting Minnesota requirements must be attached to each container prior to sale in the state. Unconditioned seed is also exempt from full labeling under both state and federal law, but must be identified as "seed for conditioning".

Each year, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture cites several violations on Minnesota seed companies that could have been prevented by asking the right questions and insisting that suppliers provide properly labeled seed or complete information to enable proper labeling and avoid importation of noxious weed seed. Please visit the MDA Seed Regulatory Program webpage, [www.mda.state.mn.us/licensing/grainseed/fmsrpr.htm](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/licensing/grainseed/fmsrpr.htm) for more information.

- Steve Malone

MN Dept of Agriculture

## Statement of Activities and Financial Position For the Year Ended May 31, 2008

### STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

	Inspection and Laboratory Services	Foundation Seed	Total
<b>Revenues</b>			
Fees	\$1,118,322		\$1,118,322
Seed Sales		\$663,332	663,332
Royalties & Other Income	<u>79,132</u>	<u>11,645</u>	<u>90,777</u>
TOTAL REVENUES	1,197,454	674,977	1,872,431
<b>Expenses</b>			
Program	807,995	173,463	981,458
Supplies/Maintenance	68,105	20,734	88,839
Insurance, Prof. Services,			
Payroll Taxes	238,112	55,046	293,158
Seed Procurement		378,387	378,387
Miscellaneous	<u>7,195</u>	<u>18,813</u>	<u>26,008</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>1,121,407</u>	<u>646,443</u>	<u>1,767,850</u>
Net Increase in Net Assets	76,047	28,534	104,581
Net Assets, Beginning of Year			<u>871,184</u>
Net Assets, End of Year			\$975,765

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

<b>Assets</b>	
Cash	204,797
Accounts Receivable	129,339
Accrued Interest Receivable	1,080
Inventories	12,357
Prepaid Expenses	22,566
Investments	928,326
Equipment	500,067
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(468,190)</u>
Net Equipment	<u>31,877</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	1,330,342
<b>Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Note Payable - Auto	21,514
Accounts Payable	44,345
Royalty & VDF Fees Payable	212,538
Accrued Salaries & Vacation	<u>76,180</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	354,577
<b>Net Assets</b>	<u>975,765</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	1,330,342

**The Minnesota Seed Grower**

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Minnesota Seed Grower, 1900 Hendon Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108.

- Ben Lang..... President & CEO
- Tim Backman ..... Chairman
- James Hunzeker..... Vice Chairman
- Neal Anderson..... Treasurer
- John Lundquist.....Secretary
- Brent Benike ..... Director
- David Boehm..... Director
- Rick Brandenburger..... Director
- Nancy Ehlke..... Director
- Mary Hanks..... Director
- Glenn Rivard..... Director
- Cal Spronk ..... Director



The MCIA Annual Meeting is on  
January 6-7, 2009 at Jackpot Junction  
Casino Hotel in Morton, MN

**The Minnesota Seed Grower**

Published quarterly by the  
Minnesota Crop Improvement Association  
1900 Hendon Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55108  
Periodicals postage paid at St. Paul, MN.  
Publication No. 352240

PERIODICAL

**MISSION STATEMENT**

MCIA 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.

~Remember to attend the MCIA Annual Meeting~  
January 6-7, 2009 ~ Jackpot Junction

**Calendar**

- December 24, 25, 26.....MCIA Office Closed
- January 1, 2009.....MCIA Office Closed
- January 6-7, 2009.....MCIA Annual Meeting, Morton, MN
- January 7, 2009.....MSGA Annual Meeting, Morton, MN
- January 8, 2009.....Corn Growers Meeting - MN Ag Expo, Morton, MN
- January 16-17, 2009.....MN Organic Conference, St. Cloud, MN
- February 1-2, 2009.....MN Grain & Feed Association, St. Cloud, MN
- February 13-14, 2009.....NPSAS Winter Conference, Huron, SD
- February 26-28, 2009.....Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference,  
LaCrosse, WI

**Seed Testing Update**

MCIA will continue to work with BioDiagnostics, Inc., South Dakota State Seed Lab and North Dakota State Seed Department as official labs to conduct seed testing for MCIA programs. Please contact MCIA if you have any questions regarding what you need to do to complete seed testing and certification.

MCIA is the seed certification authority in Minnesota. All sample tags, bulk certificates, and interagency transfers should be submitted to the MCIA office.

Please contact MCIA if you have any questions.

*Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for the New Year  
from all the MCIA Staff!*