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As each season passes, I continue to be amazed at how different each season is from the year before, and how every year is so drastically different than any previous year. 2013 has started off exactly this way, with many areas across the Midwest having record breaking rain fall in April and experiencing cool late spring conditions, which is completely opposite from last year. These few factors, as well as many other factors, are what make agriculture challenging, yet exciting at the same time.

Indiana Crop Improvement Association (ICIA) is also having an exciting time as we work towards another great year. The board of directors met at the beginning of April and approved a new budget that included a lot of valuable additions to the organization that members will see throughout the year. Not only does the organization have a great plan for 2013, but the board also approved a new strategic plan, which will be a valuable tool to help guide the organization moving forward. This plan will serve as a guide for new directors and staff and will help keep the organization on a strategic path for years to come.

One of the new additions you will see or hear about over the next few months is the launch of a Native Seed Testing Program. ICIA is very excited to enter into this field of testing, and in just a short period of time under Gil Waibel’s leadership, ICIA will be a pivotal leader in the testing of these seeds. Gil will be arriving at ICIA on July 1st and will hit the ground running. He comes to us with 35 + years of seed testing experience, with the last 10 years directing the Wyoming State Seed Lab.

ICIA is also working at making some exciting technological additions over the summer months. A new website will be launched sometime mid-summer, which will have a new design and an upgraded platform, giving us the ability to expand our electronic services as well as our educational resources. Also this summer, our field inspection program will be testing an electronic reporting system. Our goal is to create a reporting system which will potentially allow us to send out same day inspection reports, along with having data in a user-friendly format to improve data management for both our members and ICIA.

So, as we all enjoy our summer in different ways, please keep your eyes and ears on ICIA as we launch all of our exciting new additions. If you have any questions about our additions or improvements, please feel free to contact the staff at ICIA, as the entire organization is thrilled with the upcoming changes and would be delighted to explain them in more detail to you!

Aaron Conaway, President
Total Seed Production
Tipton, IN
Who says you have to be raised on a farm or have an Ag degree to enjoy the excitement and meaningfulness of a career in Agriculture? Not ICIA Board Member Jeff Perry.

Jeff graduated from Eastern Illinois University with a business degree in Marketing and began his career at a retail fertilizer company in Illinois in 1979. Any agricultural influences in his life prior to that were experiences gained on the farms of his Grandad and Uncle, both of whom farmed and raised hogs. Working with them on their farms fostered an understanding and appreciation of agriculture that most business degree graduates wouldn’t begin to grasp. In the early 1980’s Jeff segued into the crop protection side of the business and worked for Elanco, Dow Elanco and then what became Dow for a total of 19½ years. During these years Jeff took advantage of opportunities to learn more about the industry around him and participated in training courses to grow professionally as well, such as completing the courses and testing to become a Certified Crop Consultant (CCC).

In 2000, Jeff took a position with Bayer CropScience in their crop protection division and in 2006 moved over to the seed growth division – focused on seed treatments for corn, soybeans and wheat – as a Regional Key Accounts Manager. In this role and with this organization, Jeff feels that the goal is to be a compliment to the seed company genetics giving them the best opportunity to achieve the highest yield. Bayer CropScience has a goal to provide fungicide and disease protection for the seed to increase the potential for as many uniform plants to get out of the ground as possible.

Working with people has also led to Jeff’s involvement in other Ag associations and boards. When working with crop protection Jeff served on a local county board of the American Soybean Association, he also served 4 years on the Illinois Fertilizer and Chemical Association board; he has served on a local school board and is now in his second year as an ICIA Board member.

When Jeff was approached about the opportunity to serve on the ICIA Board, he admits he was not well acquainted with ICIA and the services they provide to the industry. “My first encounter with ICIA was through some of our (BCS) customers who were growing and selling LibertyLink soybeans.” Perry says, “Some auditing and testing was required according to the license agreement and ICIA was the group making sure everything was in compliance.” Jeff felt the position on the board would be a great opportunity to learn more about seed and the seed business, from a quality and production point of view and how that relates to his customers.

The major challenges for the industry in the future are obvious ones: population growth, how to grow more on less acres and investing in R&D to develop the right products and solutions. “However, there will be more hurdles in other areas as well, such as regulatory issues, says Perry. As companies like Bayer CropScience look at moving into seed products there will be regulatory issues with marketplace entry. Contributing to this potential issue is that we have a population that does not have a clear understanding of Agriculture, how important it is and that we have processes in place to provide much needed products that are safe for people and the environment. We need to do a better job of educating the public.”

And that’s from the guy with a degree in marketing!
ICIA is excited to announce a new service for member customers. For several years ICIA has had requests from current customers and potential customers to perform germination, purity and tetrazolium testing on native species. Native species, in this context, are wild flowers, prairie grasses, sedges and other naturally occurring species that are used in seed conservation, restoration and reclamation projects, national and state parks, golf courses, wetlands and can be used in landscaping.

ICIA is pleased to introduce Gilbert Waibel as the director of the native seed testing program. “Gil is a nationally recognized expert in the testing of native species and has provided industry leadership in the development of native species testing for many years,” says Alan Galbreth, ICIA Chief Executive Officer. “Gil’s experience will allow ICIA to begin offering this service to members in time for the late summer and fall harvests of these species.”

Gil has been actively involved in seed testing for over 30 years. He has tested field crops, vegetables and flower seeds as well as native species. He is just completing a term as vice-president of the Association of Official Seed Analysts (AOSA) and is the current AOSA Rules Committee Chair. He has served on the board and been President of the Society of Commercial Seed Technologists (SCST). Gil is coming to ICIA from the Wyoming State Seed Lab where he has been the director of the seed laboratory for the past 10 years. In addition to his seed testing background he is very familiar with seed certification activities having served as the manager of the Colorado Seed Growers Association.

The testing of native species has been a consistent inquiry from current and potential customers. The opportunity to hire Gil coincided with some goals of a recent strategic plan process. With Gil’s leadership ICIA can confidently begin offering this service to our member customers. There are currently some challenges in the industry in the testing of native species. Gil brings integrity and science based knowledge to the native seed testing arena. CEO Galbreth has this comment, “As with all of the testing we perform, this new program will be conducted based on science and the applicable rules and procedures for the species being tested. There are no short-cuts or deviations from standard operating procedures for seed testing which occurs at ICIA.”

Gil will be in Lafayette and ready to establish the native seed testing program beginning July 1. His first tasks will be to set up a testing configuration for natives in the seed lab and to begin training some of our analysts on the testing of these species. Gil will also be attending appropriate seed industry meetings and making customer visits as ICIA’s representative for this facet of the industry. Later this summer ICIA will provide more information to the industry regarding the ICIA native seed testing program.
Centered around Ag.

Meet Mitch Snyder. Mitch is the sales manager of AgVenture McKillip Seeds; a member of the ICIA board of directors, and is currently serving as Director at Large on the Executive Committee.

For Mitch, agriculture has always been a focus; his “growing up” years, college major, career path, and family have all centered around agriculture. Mitch grew up in southern Wabash County on a small grain and livestock farm, while also working on a neighboring dairy farm. After graduating from Purdue University in 1994, Mitch started his career with American Cyanamid in sales located in Saginaw, Michigan. After two years he was offered a new position as product manager in Parsippany, New Jersey. He and his wife, Michelle, relocated to New Jersey where they remained for three years.

The year 1999 brought a new opportunity when Mitch joined the Monsanto Company as a retail sales manager in Northeast Indiana. This also gave him an opportunity to move back to the Midwest, and work more directly with ag chemical dealers and growers.

In 2003 Mitch “came home” and back to his roots when he accepted a position with McKillip Seeds in Wabash as their sales manager. McKillip Seeds joined the AgVenture network of independent regional seed companies in 2006 effectively expanding the footprint of the McKillip’s territory, as well as their product offerings.

Mitch instantly points to technology as the greatest change he has seen in the industry. “I know the lab has a good reputation in the industry, which I appreciate,”

“Technology from the standpoint of traits, trait stacks, refuge blends in bag, seed treatments and handling equipment now offer such a wide range of choices which make farming today much more efficient. Add these technologies to the advancements in precision farming, availability of information and you have a much higher level of comfort which means today’s farmer can be more productive and profitable.”

Mitch explained when asked why he wanted to serve on the ICIA board. He feels the industry needs an independent lab that is devoted to quality testing, consistency, timeliness, and one that stays up-to-date with the testing needs of the seed trade. He sees serving on the board as an opportunity to give back to the Association, and also as an opportunity to work with others in the industry. He admits he is still learning about all of the activities in which the Association is involved.

Free time is a relative term for the Snyder family since it isn’t necessarily about relaxing—entertaining maybe, but not relaxing. This is particularly true when the entertainment centers around Purdue basketball and football. Mitch and Michelle spend time watching their sons, Jacob (9) and Benjamin (7), compete in various sports events, as well. When not watching Purdue or the kids playing sports, Mitch also enjoys waterfowl and upland game bird hunting.

Welcome to the board, Mitch and THANKS FOR SERVING!!
ICIA Research making a difference.

Spring brings an “out with the old, in with the new” attitude for the Genetics Program at ICIA. The spring and summer are a time for process improvements, lab updates, and new equipment purchases as we ramp up and prepare for the fall. In line with that thinking and the addition of Srilakshmi Makkena, PhD as Research Associate, things are in full swing.

Research at ICIA has traditionally been determined on an as-needed basis; this core value has not changed. ICIA entertains research projects that will directly benefit the industry and our member customers. Projects are chosen that can quickly result in a service and provide a direct benefit to helping our customers deliver high quality agricultural products. For more basic, investigative projects we rely on our collaborative relationship with Purdue University.

Currently the slate is full for summer projects, but we are always interested in picking up more projects. Our upfront approach will help determine the appropriate method and timeline to help meet your needs. Please contact Genetics Program Director, Emily Dierking, PhD at dierking@indianacrop.org or 866.899.2518.

ICIA wants to pick Your brain!

As the 2012-13 testing season comes to a close, ICIA is once again requesting member customer feedback through our Seed Laboratory Services Survey. The survey is available to all of our member customers and multiple reps from each organization can participate.

Visit our website at www.indianacrop.org and click on the Take the Survey Now link.

Many of the improvements we have implemented in various areas such as; lab services, customer service and overall ICIA operations and processes have been the result of feedback from our membership. In order to continue improving your member experience with ICIA we need your insight and expertise – we want to provide the service and solutions you expect and deserve.

Got Questions? pestow@indianacrop.org
This spring two of ICIA’s staff members were asked to visit with an Intro to Crops class at Ivy Tech Community College in Columbus, Ind. as part of the Ambassador Program of the First the Seed Foundation, an initiative of the American Seed Trade Association.

First the Seed Foundation (FTSF) is a not-for-profit organization established in 2008 by the American Seed Trade Association, one of the oldest trade associations in America, to inform today’s consumers and tomorrow’s workforce about the importance of the seed industry. First the Seed Foundation has created its Ambassador’s Program. This program provides schools an opportunity to have someone from the seed industry come out and talk to your students about the many careers and opportunities in the agricultural industry.

Liz Pestow, ICIA Marketing Director and Aaron Whalen, ICIA Asst Field Prgms Director and Bioassay Dept Head spent an hour visiting with 20 students about their respective paths to the careers they have now and the wealth of opportunities that exist in the seed industry. Liz comments, “As someone who came into this industry via a non-traditional ag path I thought my story could show these young people that no matter what area peaks their interest: marketing, sales, IT, accounting, and many more - there is a career for you in the seed industry.” When you combine the needs of a growing global population and the uncertain future of many industries, a career in the seed and/or agriculture industry is a great option for many entering the workforce – we’re always going to need agriculture to survive – and that survival starts with a seed.

For more information or to get involved, visit http://www.firstthesefoundation.org/

ISTA Day at Purdue University

Diagnostic Training and Research Center

The ISTA Diagnostic Day is Thursday, June 13th. If you have not registered, please do so by Friday, June 7th. The diagnostic day will take place at the Beck Agriculture Center, 4540 U.S. 52 W., West Lafayette, IN 47906. We hope you will join us for a full day of informative and educational topics regarding current issues in our industry. After discussing many topics, we will spend the final portion of the day in test fields diagnosing crops. Registering for the field day gives you the opportunity to earn CEU and CCH credits. Registration is $125.00 and is open to members and non-members of ISTA, lunch is included.

Applying for Credits/Points

CEU’s (3.0 PM, 1.0 CM, 1.0 NM, 1.0 SW)

CCH’s (6.0 for category 1 & RT; 2.0 for category 4; 1.0 for category 11, 1.0 for category 14)

If you have any questions, please contact Quincy at 317-423-0307

In Memoriam

Robert Will
Tenbarge Seed Company
April 5, 2013
Seed Quality Update

Test results through May 15, 2013

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<tr>
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<td>90.1%</td>
<td>87.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sand</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<td>Warm Germ</td>
<td>95.9%</td>
<td>96.1%</td>
<td>96.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold Test</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
<td>91.2%</td>
<td>92.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seed Quality is good for both the crops of soybean and corn. The warm germ average for corn is 95.9% and warm germ for soybean is 91.2%. Vigor scores were also good.