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As I write this article I am impressed with the ability of our industry to get things done in a hurry. As of May 5th the US corn crop was 29% planted, Indiana was 20% planted vs 8% one week ago and 7% a year ago May 4th. I traveled to Chicago earlier this week; I had never seen so many planters running. My guess is that by the end of the week the majority of the Indiana corn crop will be planted.

Indiana Crop Improvement has impressed me with that same ability to get things done in a hurry. Whether it’s large numbers of acres to get inspected or a huge run of samples through the lab, the staff always seems to get the job done and done well. The wrap up of the 2013-14 fiscal year was a very good example of getting a lot done in one year, which has led to a very strong financial performance for the year.

There is a lot of activity already planned for the coming year. A few highlights are; the AgSEED grant that was awarded to Emily and Srilakshmi to work on popcorn dent sterility, the move from isozyme electrophoresis testing to isoelectric focusing (IEF) for genetic purity testing, LabLink updates, and an increased effort in the Indiana Corn Belt conference planning process, to help insure continued improvement of that great event. In addition to all of this, the team at ICIA is ready to meet all of your inspection and lab testing needs in the coming year. Give them a call and let them know how they can help your business flourish.

I am excited to be working closer with ICIA this year as they continue to make a lot of good things happen in a hurry. This fast paced spring will come to a quick end and summer will arrive. Take some time out of your busy schedule to enjoy the changing seasons.

Craig Anderson, VP Sales & Marketing, AgReliant Genetics
Meet Jim Wolf!

In talking with Jim, it is quickly evident that agriculture has been a strong foundation piece of Jim’s life. Born in NW Ohio on a grain and livestock farm, he began his leadership skills participating in 4-H and FFA. He attended and participated in many shows and competitions culminating in a FFA State Farmer Degree.

After attending Ohio State University – in Agronomy, of course – Jim started a successful sales career with Lafayette Cooperative Elevator Co, in Lafayette, IN. Still selling today, he has found the best policy and advice he can give is to simply live by the Golden Rule. “I’ve tried to treat others as I would want to be treated and as I have worked directly with growers or lead sales teams, I try to pass along the idea that ‘others don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.’ That’s something I have learned through training and experience, and is so true in building long-term relationships,” Jim says.

The challenges in today’s agriculture industry is the size and scale of the average farm operation and keeping up with technology. “We’ve learned that with skilled management it takes 12-1400 acres to support a family unit.” Jim explained. With the “tools” of today’s farmer – seed technology, equipment navigation systems, precision ag crop production and grain marketing alternatives—a lot of risk has been mitigated. However, as Jim points out, the gross farm income and profit forecast for the next 5-7 years is much different than the past three. He believes the family farm will remain alive and well, however, overall growth may not be the driver of all decisions. Also, he believes that succession planning from one generation to another will continue to be important. In his current role, Jim is building and leading sales teams for Trupointe Cooperative, Inc. in Milford, IN. They have built a state-of-the-art facility to supply inputs to growers in an efficient, high speed approach. As growers continue to expand and travel greater distances, they too will be able to keep pace within a 60 mile radius.

Jim brings his leadership and business experience to ICIA as a board member to help the organization make solid fiscal decisions for the future. “As we look ahead, we will not be immune from the potentially tightening agriculture market and our services to the seed industry need to fill customer needs, be competitively priced, and be supported with the most talented staff possible,” he added. Jim feels ICIA is currently strong in all of these areas.

At the end of the day, after his faith in God, the most important focus in his life is his family. He treasures is wife, Tressa, and admits that her support has allowed his ag career to develop way beyond his expectations. Jim and Tressa attend Grace Community Church in Noblesville where he is a faithful usher. Jim readily admits, “Grandparenting is a blast and at this stage of our lives, it’s apparent our daughters’ families, and our grandchildren, will take more of our focus.” Jim’s other hobbies are landscaping and traveling. I suspect there will be a few more weeds in the landscape as he travels to see those grandchildren!!

Thanks so much Jim for your support and involvement on the ICIA board!
As a non-profit association, Indiana Crop has a unique advantage in the seed industry. ICIA’s genetics lab research associate, Srilakshmi Makkena, Ph.D. focuses her research on developing new services based on the needs of customers. ICIA recognizes the need to serve the seed industry as a whole. In addition, ICIA’s relationship with Purdue University lends access to interactive networking with scientists and opportunities for collaborative research and grant funding.

Makkena stated the credibility of ICIA and its services offered her a unique opportunity to utilize her background, education and knowledge she’s gained to develop molecular and genetics based services to further advance the ICIA genetics lab programs. Srilakshmi pronounced (SHREE-LOCK-SHME) holds a BS in Agriculture, MS in Seed Science and Technology and a Ph.D. in Plant Molecular Biology, Genetics and Cell Biology, OSU. Moving from Columbus, Ohio, Srilakshmi said, “it felt like coming home, it’s one of the great aspects of this industry,” of her interaction with the agriculture community.

After receiving grant funding through an AgSEED grant Srilakshmi is currently working to develop a DNA based test for Dent Sterility for the ICIA genetics lab. Dent Sterility is a trait that prevents fertilization by dent corn pollen. This trait is applicable to the popcorn production industry.

In further development, “we are now transitioning from Isozymes to IEF (Isoelectric focusing) due to the advantageous accuracy of reliable and reproducible results,” said Srilakshmi. “ICIA genetics staff is currently undergoing training for performing this purity test and we expect to offer this option to our customers at the beginning of the fall season,” stated Emily Dierking, Ph.D., Genetics Lab Director.

Another project in the ICIA genetics lab pipeline is radish seed lot purity. Radish has been in use as a cover crop in no-till or organic farming and is becoming more popular. Daikon, a preferred type of radish, can cross pollinate with other types of radishes. It is anticipated that ICIA could develop a test to assess purity of radish seed lots before planting.

After making breakfast for her family, packing lunches, and dropping her two daughters off to begin their school day, Srilakshmi looks forward to her morning commute where she plans her day ahead. She understands the value of research – and its relationship in delivering quality and reliable services to ICIA customers. Her goal is to develop new services, while increasing the quality and reliability ICIA customers have come to expect. At the end of the day, as she enjoys her quiet commute home before dinner and homework, Srilakshmi reflects to determine if she has advanced the progression of services at ICIA.
ICIA has completed the required proficiency protocols set forth by the respective trait providers to now perform both Agrisure Duracade™ trait confirmation testing and LibertyLink® Soybean herbicide tolerance testing. Additionally, the genetics lab is prepared to test for Agrisure Artesian™ corn, reaffirming ICIA’s efforts to keep the needs of their customer’s top of mind. “Passing these proficiencies is a representation of our efforts to provide comprehensive testing services to our member customers,” says Emily Dierking, ICIA Genetics Program Director, “interested customers should be aware that these tests are available immediately.” Liz Pestow, ICIA Marketing Director also shares, “It is our goal to be on the forefront of the technologies in the marketplace and positioned to support the testing that will be needed by our members. We are here to provide the quality arm they need to be successful at what they do; they trust us to stay on top of what testing is required to do that.”

Members interested in submitting samples for testing of these traits can send seed directly to the lab. Please contact the Genetics lab for additional information.

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_LibertyLink® is a registered trademark of Bayer._

ICIA is hosting its first Native Seed Testing Discussion which will feature time for Q&A with ICIA Management, Staff and Native Seed Technicians and explanation and demonstration of testing methods & techniques. “We encourage any of our membership that has an interest in the native seed industry and the quality testing that goes on at our facility to attend this event,” said Liz Pestow, ICIA Marketing Director. This is also a chance to engage in an open discussion with peers and experts regarding current topics in this segment of the seed industry. This event will take place at the ICIA Seed Technology Center in Lafayette, IN. The location and timing are particularly convenient for those who plan to attend the 131st ASTA Annual Convention. ICIA is located approximately 45 minutes from the J.W. Marriott in Indianapolis which is the host hotel for the Convention.

Please consider joining us on Tuesday, June 10th from 2-5pm
7700 Stockwell Road, Lafayette, IN 47909.

If you have plans to attend the ASTA Annual Convention, roundtrip transportation is available.
Please contact Liz Pestow at 866.899.2518 or pestow@indianacrop.org for more information or to RSVP by May 30th.

We look forward to seeing you in June!
Indiana Proud: Seed Industry Leadership at its Finest.

It is truly a unique and special time in Indiana Seed Industry history. The current leadership of two of our industry’s most important and influential organizations are representatives from right here in our home state.

Craig Newman, President and CEO of AgReliant Genetics, LLC from Westfield, IN is the Chairman of the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) and Tim Johnson, President of Illinois Foundation Seed Inc. (IFSI) from Lafayette, IN is the International Seed Federation (ISF) President.

The ASTA represents a membership of over 700 companies that are involved in seed production and distribution, plant breeding, and related industries in North America. As an authority on plant germplasm, ASTA advocates science and policy issues of industry importance. Its mission is to enhance the development and movement of quality seed worldwide.

Complimentarily, the ISF facilitates the international movement of seed, related knowledge and technology; mobilizes and represents the global seed industry; informs its members and promotes the interests and image of the seed industry. In order to fulfill its mission, the ISF promotes strong co-operation among national and regional seed associations. It endeavors to work in partnership with organizations responsible for international treaties, conventions and agreements and those that shape policies that impact the seed industry.

The two aforementioned men have made great strides in their respective roles, especially in a time of heightened awareness of our industry and its role in our lives. Craig Newman took on his role as ASTA Chairman ready to take some real steps forward in the areas of intellectual property rights, expanding international business opportunities, building a grassroots model for resolving federal, state and local seed trade issues, and maintaining ASTA as a high-value resource for the seed industry. In addition to all of these high priority issues, Craig includes education in his objectives. He is passionate about increasing the education and training opportunities for ASTA members, “Things are moving rapidly in our industry – there are significant developments in science, business and policy so continued education is critical,” he said. Craig has followed through with that intention as the first Seed Leadership Program will be held the two and half days prior to the ASTA 131st Annual Convention this June. As if he wasn’t already full of pride to be hosting the annual meeting in Indianapolis for the first time, now he can add an inaugural educational event as another feather in his cap.

When initially called to serve, Tim Johnson was being asked to make a seven year commitment. Like many life changing events, he can recall exactly where he was (at a Purdue football game) and how he felt in that moment. Although a little daunted at first, after giving it some thought, Tim gladly accepted the role of 2nd VP which would begin the progression to becoming the ISF President in the summer of 2012. “I have a strong belief that you give back to the community” says Johnson. About 38 years ago Johnson’s “community” became the seed industry and he’s been holding true to that belief ever since. In 1993 he moved to Indiana and right away he involved himself in state associations such as Indiana Crop Improvement and Indiana Seed Trade. This paved the way for more regional and national leadership with the American Seed Trade Association as the Corn and Sorghum Division Chair, Regional VP and then on to the Executive Board. Tim had been attending the ISF annual meetings on behalf of IFSI since 1996; his participation in the Federation changed when ASTA asked him to replace Gary Arthur on the ISF Breeders Committee and then Chaired this committee for two terms. Although this journey has required a lot of his time and energy, his colleagues at IFSI fully support his involvement and concur that it fits right in with their own business philosophy. Johnson and IFSI both
recognize the importance of visibility of the US and Indiana Seed Industry in the International Seed arena.

Similar to Craig, Tim Johnson has faced some parallel challenges during his tenure of leadership positions with ISF. AP/LLP continues to be at the forefront of many discussions and perhaps more recent advancements in this area will alleviate the issues of farmers having access to seed from the US. Intellectual Property rights are an issue of high importance worldwide. Johnson notes, “Progress is happening…some African countries, for example, are beginning to move to a UPOV system. Not all US IP laws will be mimicked worldwide – but if good laws can be implemented in each country that the people will obey and respect, then international companies can understand those laws and learn how to do business successfully within each country respectively. That direction will be part of the innovation that drives international seed trade success.”

After record setting attendance at last year’s conference in Athens, Tim has been working hard with his ISF colleagues to organize another productive meeting this summer at the 2014 World Seed Congress in Beijing, May 24-28, 2014. In addition to the many critical topics to be covered during the sessions, opportunities to visit amazing sites such as The Great Wall, The Forbidden City and the Temple of Heaven are available during the four day program.

The seed industry is a complex, moving target with critical issues that will have a global impact – Indiana Crop Improvement Association is proud of our local leaders, Craig Newman and Tim Johnson, and say “thank you” for your commitment and contribution to our industry.

Congratulations to you both on your terms as Chairman of ASTA and President of ISF!

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Diagnostic Day

The 2014 ISTA Diagnostic Day is scheduled for Wednesday, July 16th and will take place at the Beck Agriculture Center, 4540 U.S. 52 West, West Lafayette, IN 47906.

Plan now to attend this full day of informative and educational session regarding current issues in the agriculture industry. A portion of the day will include diagnosing crops in test fields. Registering for the field day offers attendees 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 and registration is limited.

If you would like to register, please contact Quincy Cunningham at 317-423-0307 or email at qcunningham@frickassoc.com.

Further information is available on the ISTA website at www.indianaseed.org

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In Memoriam

Spencer Burris
Burris Seed Service
April 6, 2014
Seed Quality Update

Test results through May 15, 2014

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2013 Corn quality was excellent. Vigor scores were also strong. Soybean quality was good for most lots this past season. A few lots showed a lower germ with some mechanical damage and some other lots with pod and stem. The table above shows the germination and vigor scores to date for the 2014 testing season and the previous two years.