



Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association

Volume 14, Spring Issue

TURNROW TALK

May, 2011

President's Column

Hank Jones

C&J Ag Consulting

A picture of my great great grandparents sits in my parents' den and dates back to the early 1900's. I'm not sure how old they were in that picture, or how difficult times were, but the photograph shows them both in working attire, looking emotionless at the camera as if they'd just heard the river was rising above flood stage. I'm told that those were "the good ol' days", and judging by their expressions, I can just tell in their eyes just how exciting those times actually were. I've asked my parents more than once why people never smiled for photos in those times, and the only consistent answer I get is, "Son, there wasn't much to smile about back then."

Fast forward to 2011, if you will...I'm typing this column on an iPad as my driver navigates us to go check rice. Most of us have the capability to access news, weather, crop information, and market prices, take digital photographs and send them within seconds from most anywhere. On the farm, commodity prices are at record high levels and look somewhat promising for the future. Staying abreast of new crop technologies is certainly keeping our consulting professions relevant and refreshing; although, the 2000 different varieties of soybeans are getting a little hard to keep up with...So, with this in mind, I find myself looking at my recent family portrait and dreaming about the year 2120...my wife, Melanie, my kids, Stella (2), and Owen (1), and I are dressed to match, with big smiles on our faces.

Now, if you watch the news or listen to the radio much, you'll hear that these aren't good times for the USA. Economic and social despair is rampant with no political answer in sight. My hope is that my great grandkids will look at our family picture, with our joy evident, and know that 2011 was the "good ol' days" for us and know that the hard work we've done has paid off for them. After all, with \$7 corn, \$13 soybeans, and \$1.30 cotton, we should have plenty to smile about. Have a safe summer, and let's hope the creek doesn't rise too much...

Get the Picture?!



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Welcome New Members

Ashley Peters, Peters Crop Consulting, joined LACA as a new Voting Member.

Hunter Fife of Dow AgroSciences, Kyle Fontenot and Mike Redlich of Bayer CropScience, and Dr. John Russin, Vice-Chancellor and Director of the LSU AgCenter joined LACA as Affiliate Members.

A&L Analytical Laboratories, Inc. of Memphis, TN returned to LACA as a sustaining member, and Ag Software Designs, LLC (Field Rx) came on board as a sustaining member in 2011.

Paving the Path for Others to Follow in Their Footsteps

B. Rogers Leonard, Ph.D.

For over half a century, Ray Young has been a cornerstone of agriculture. His story starts during the Depression with a family that valued hard work and faith. Mr. Ray made his first cotton crop at age 13, farming three acres behind a mule on a hill farm in Union Parish. During the late 1940's and early 1950's, he spent his summers scouting cotton in a Ford Model A while a student of agriculture at what was then known as the Louisiana Polytechnic Institute in Ruston. This vocation of working for farmers to help them manage crops formed the foundation that he would build on during much of his life. It was during his time in college that he met his future wife, Ms. Dorothy Burns. She was one of 11 children, and learned early the value of education and perseverance from her mother. These two were married in 1952, just weeks before Mr. Ray left to serve as a fighter pilot in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War. After his service, he returned to school and completed a MS degree in entomology from Louisiana State University. He worked with prominent agricultural entomologists such as Dan Clower, Dale Newsom, Jim Brazzel and many others, learning the science behind the applied decision-making process used in crop protection.

Mr. Ray actually began his professional career in 1949 when he started scouting for a cotton producer, Dan Logan, in Northwest Louisiana. Most of those involved in Southern agriculture believe this was the birth of the cotton consulting business in the United States. Upon completing his military service and graduate education, he decided to start his professional agricultural consulting business in another region and moved to Wisner, south of Monroe, in 1955. It was here that he and Ms. Dorothy decided to make their home and raise a family. It's also where Mr. Ray began the task of knocking on doors to ask producers to let him work as their consultant. That strategy has worked for over six decades.

As both a farmer and consultant, he distinguished himself as a knowledgeable and skilled cotton scout when the field of crop consulting was still in its infancy. Ms. Dorothy pursued her educational goals, earning both BS and MS degrees in education, while raising the couple's four children (Tony, Jesse, June, and Peggy). The couple worked hard to develop a family business, training and nurturing dozens of young "cotton scouts," many of whom went on to successful careers as crop consultants. It is quite possible that Mr. Ray has mentored more agricultural professionals than anyone currently active in this field. His willingness to share information, offer encouragement, and promote the efforts of the consulting industry is unparalleled among the groups he has served.

Mr. Ray and Ms. Dorothy's efforts were never limited to their own success. Both have been actively involved in a variety of community affairs and are passionate advocates on behalf of American agriculture. They are active in state and national agricultural organizations, lending their considerable talents and influence to the advancement of agricultural education, promoting agrarian interests, supporting research efforts, and transferring technology to clientele. When a void in agricultural lending occurred in his region, Mr. Ray, all too familiar with the financial struggles faced by farmers, was instrumental in the formation of the Louisiana Land Bank, serving with distinc-

tion on its board of directors for many years. Respected by his peers for his general knowledge of agriculture, he has become a sought-after expert and a tireless lobbyist for national issues - making numerous trips to Washington, DC, on behalf of this industry he dearly loves. For over half a century, Ray Young has quietly gone about his business, of contributing in his way to the success of agriculture. His efforts to improve the lives of farmers and their families across the U.S. have been done without ever seeking acknowledgement or accolades. Although many people personally are aware of his dedication, it is important to his friends and family that future generations of farmers, consultants, agricultural industry personnel, and students share in his legacy. Ms. Dorothy has been with him every step of the way as an active participant in his career accomplishments.

Anyone who has been associated with the crop production industries has likely heard of Mr. Ray and Ms. Dorothy. Farming is a wonderful way of life that hopefully will never end and there are many young people who will not have the privilege to share this experience with a true Southern gentleman and Southern belle. To preserve their contributions for future generations, it is very appropriate that a process has been initiated to fund the "Ray and Dorothy Young Endowed Assistantship in Louisiana Row Crop IPM." It is the sincere hope from a committee of family and friends that this assistantship will be used to support the education of the next agricultural consultants who will follow in their footsteps.

A sincere "thank you" to all charter contributors and those of you who have contributed since the announcement of the endowment in February. If you would like to contribute to the Ray and Dorothy Young Endowed Assistantship, please make check payable to LSU Foundation, and in the check memo, indicate "Young Endowed Assistantship". Mail to:

Denise Wright, Executive Director
Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association
P.O. Box 104
Morrow, LA 71356

Your contributions will be forwarded to the LSU Foundation to ensure proper credit to the endowment account. Subsequently, the Foundation will mail tax deductible receipts to you for your records, and you'll receive an acknowledgement letter from the Ray and Dorothy Young Endowed Assistantship Committee as well (see committee listing below). Not only is this a tribute to two outstanding leaders, it's a very worthwhile investment in agriculture's future...Please consider sending your contribution today!

Committee for the Ray & Dorothy Young Endowed Assistantship:

Jess Barr	Keith Majure
Roger Carter	Scott Martin
Grady Coburn	Mark Matthews
Chism Craig	Chad Nelson
Tim Ford	Reed Parker
Gary Gaar	Carroll Smith
Billy Guthrie	Gary Thompson
Hank Jones	Tim White
Kenneth Koonce	Denise Wright
Harold Lambert	Jesse Young
B. Rogers Leonard	

It's A Great Day in Louisiana Agriculture!

Agriculture is the largest sector of Louisiana's economy. Agriculture, forestry, and aquaculture cover over 85 percent of the surface area of the state and those industries provide more than 243,000 jobs, or nearly 10 percent of our work force. At more than \$30 billion, agriculture and forestry combined make up one of Louisiana's largest and most economically dependent industries. Nationally, our state ranks second in the production of aquaculture and sugarcane, third in rice production and milling, fourth in sweet potatoes, and six in grain sorghum.

According to the LSU AgCenter's 2010 Ag Summary, Louisiana agriculture and forestry contributed more than \$9.9 billion directly to the state's economy in 2010, an increase of over 20 percent from the year before. These gains were led by forestry and poultry, which contributed \$3.1 billion and \$1.6 billion, respectively. The Ag Summary was compiled by LSU AgCenter economist John Westra, Ph.D.

Additionally, farm-raised crawfish was up 31 percent to \$279 million. Farm-raised and wild caught crawfish benefited from increased price and production. Sweet potatoes increased 25 percent for a total of more than \$142 million and the sector is expecting continued growth to meet increased demand from the new ConAgra sweet potato processing plant in Delhi. King Cotton did very well, increasing in overall planted acreage by ten percent and better yields (more than 120 additional pounds per acre) and record prices. In cane country, sugar has never been sweeter. Producers experienced good yields and very favorable prices. According to a report compiled by Rob Yunch of the USA Rice Federation, Louisiana's rice output grew to over \$640 million and our rice milling industries added an additional \$746 million toward a total output of \$1.3 billion. The industry sustains more than 5,300 jobs. In livestock, the cattle business added an additional \$411 million to our economy.

Almost every sector of agriculture and forestry increased markedly in value in 2010. American farmers earned a record \$100 billion and pushed up exports to \$127 billion, an 18 percent increase that resulted in a positive balance of trade of more than \$33 billion. Agriculture's balance of trade was the highest of any goods sector. In Louisiana, exports increased by over 15 percent to \$20 billion.

Louisiana has seen unprecedented economic activity in agricultural and forestry processing and infrastructure. Recently, more than \$1 billion in new projects in the state will enhance the value-added sector of our economy. These projects include:

1. Foster Farms in Farmerville and DG Foods in Bastrop-poultry processing
2. ConAgra Foods Lamb Weston in Delhi- sweet potato processing
3. Bruce Foods in New Iberia- plant improvements
4. Myriant Technologies in Lake Providence- biobased succinic acid plant (biofuels)
5. Aquatic Energy in Lake Charles- algae plant (bioenergy)
6. Georgia-Pacific in Port Hudson- advanced paper making

7. Kennedy Rice Dryers in Mer Rouge- rice export
8. South Louisiana Rail Facility in Lacsassine- grain export
9. New Orleans Cold Storage in New Orleans- poultry exports at Port of New Orleans
10. Tyson/Syntroleum in Gramercy- synthetic fuels
11. Monsanto in Luling- plant improvements
12. Louis Dreyfus in Baton Rouge- grain elevator at Port of Greater Baton Rouge
13. Zegis USA in Lacassine- cotton spinning facility
14. Louisiana Sugar Refining LLC in Gramercy- a new sugar refinery, cooperative endeavor between Cargill, Imperial Sugar Co. and Sugar Growers & Refiners Inc.
15. IFG Port Holdings in Lake Charles-grain elevator at Port of Lake Charles

For many years critics of the state have said that Louisiana produces almost every agricultural commodity but processes very little. That has changed. We are entering a new era in Louisiana, one that will bring growth and wealth to rural, suburban, and urban regions.

We will see an unprecedented increase in the need for our products. In one generation, America's population will grow by more than 100 million. The global population is expanding at a rate of more than 75 million people per year and will grow to 9.2 billion. Energy consumption is expected to increase by a minimum of 25 percent. We must double our food supply by 2035 and we will rely on bioenergy for these future needs as our fossil fuels are finite and limited. Currently, our human population occupies over 35 percent of all available land on the planet and consumes 70 percent of all available fresh water. In order to meet the needs of the future it is imperative that we embrace every opportunity to increase productivity and efficiency in a sustainable fashion.

Bill Batchelor, Ph.D. and Dean of the Auburn University's College of Agriculture, said "Agricultural technology has led to a tremendous amount of economic growth in our world. In the 1870s, 70 percent of the people lived on the farm and produced their own foods. By 1900, that number was down to 38 percent because there was enough output from those farms to support the 62 percent (of population) in cities in America. Now only 1.5 percent (of the population) works on the farm, meaning 98.5 percent do not."

At the current rate of increasing productivity and efficiency, world demand will outpace our ability to produce by one to two percent annually if we do not markedly accelerate our research and technology. Additionally, the increasing demand/supply ratio will result in greater equity and profitability in agricultural production and processing, reflecting greater value in lands and facilities.

Overall, the future for rural Louisiana is bright. There will be more and better jobs, greater equity and a stronger promise of tomorrow. Together we must embrace the future and grow our way to a stronger economy and state, one farmer, one farm and one acre at a time.

Submitted by:

Mike Strain, D.V.M., Commissioner



**David J. Boethel, Recipient of
Louisiana Agricultural Hall of Fame Award**



2011 Graduate Scholarship Winner

Jarrod Hardke accepts his \$2,000.00 scholarship check from 2011 LACA President, Hank Jones. This scholarship was cosponsored by Agrotain International, Gowan, Horizon Ag, RiceCo, and SFP.



LACA County Agent Award

Al Orgeron of St. James Parish, accepts the County Agent Award from LACA member, Blaine Viator. Blaine nominated Al for his outstanding service to producers and consultants in his role as County Agent.

Pictured left to right are, Dr. B. Rogers Leonard, Mrs. Betty Boethel, and Dr. David J. Boethel, recipient of the 2011 LACA sponsored Louisiana Agricultural Hall of Fame Award. Dr. Boethel recently retired as the Vice Chancellor for Research and Director of the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station, a post he held for the past six years of his 36-year career with the AgCenter. At his retirement party in December, he was surprised with the announcement of the newly established David Boethel Student Scholarship fund. Dr. Boethel has been a great asset to the consultants association, as well as to many others in his career. He and Ms. Betty have plans to return to their cattle operation and home in Wymer, TX.



2011 Undergraduate Scholarship Winner

Lauren Heinen accepts her \$2,000.00 scholarship check from sponsor, Dow AgroSciences' representative, Jonathan Siebert. Congratulations, Lauren. Keep up the good work!



2011 Crop Protection & Production Quiz Winners

From left to right, Grady Coburn, Dwayne Coulon, Jay Frantom, 1st place winner and 2012 quiz administrator, Lucas Pitre, and Fred Collins. Congratulations, gentlemen!

Update on Budget Cuts

Paul Coreil, Ph.D.
LSU AgCenter

The Smith-Lever proposed cuts were reduced from about 10% to 1% (\$30 million to \$3.7 million). The efforts of our clientele and stakeholders were very effective in getting the cut reduced and we are grateful to LACA for their support and help. All earmarks are now eliminated which is a loss of over \$100 million or so to the Land-grant institutions - especially research. To offset this loss, some funding was added to the Hatch Act and McIntire Stennis Capacity funding (\$21 and \$4 million, respectively), and about \$2 million to AFRI. The 2012 President's proposed budget has a 5% cut to both Smith-Lever and Hatch - so the budget battle will continue and the protection of these Capacity Funds will be our priority, no doubt. The challenges will continue and the support from LACA will be crucial. I hope this helps on the federal budget update. The state budget debate will begin in earnest when the regular session begins April 25.

Currently we are cut about \$7 million from July 2010 start and this does not count the unfunded mandated costs which add about \$3.1 million more. So, we are about \$10 million short from where we were one year ago. We are hoping that our supporters in the Legislature help us get back about \$9 million of these cuts in programming support dollars, and we will be working very hard to get these funds restored being we do not have tuition increases to offset these cuts like our neighboring student campuses. We will need the help of LACA to get our supporters in the Legislature to take action and help us with these budget challenges. Thanks to all LACA members for their past support. We will appreciate their continued support this upcoming session to help us with the budget shortfall and our unique position of not having tuition increases to fall back on. Thanks a million.

Already Planning for 2012

The LACA Executive Board and LATMC Program Planning Committee have already started planning for your next Agricultural & Technology Management Conference to be held at the Paragon Casino Resort in Marksville, LA, February 15-17, 2012. On October 20-21, 2011, our fall retreat and official program planning meeting will be held. We would like to involve the entire membership in gathering ideas for presentation topics and potential speakers, so if you have ideas, please don't hold back. Call or email Denise with your ideas for topics and/or speakers throughout the season and we'll be ready to put it all together this fall. Some of the presentation ideas that have already surfaced are "portraits of consultants", possibly inviting consultants from other states to come in and tell us about their consulting businesses, media speakers, such as someone from Delta Farm Press or Cotton and/or Rice Farming, consultants' interactions with industry (company reps, dealers, etc.), equipment, software, and new technology gadgets that can

make your business more efficient and effective, and enable you to better help your growers produce optimum yields with better quality, and updates from sponsors on what's coming down the biotech pipeline. And, these are just a few of the topics that have been submitted for possible presentations. Of course, we will be investigating the best speakers for these topics who are both knowledgeable on the subjects, and good presenters. We are going to try to "think outside the box" more in 2012 and need your ideas to make our annual conference be "the meeting to attend" where everyone can take home sound information to improve their bottom line.

If you are interested in becoming more involved in planning our future annual meetings, please talk to your President-Elect, Fred Collins or Denise and ask to serve on the LATMC Program Planning Committee for the 2013 meeting. This committee along with the Executive Board and Governmental Affairs Committee join LSU AgCenter researchers and specialists, USDA researchers, and members of the LDAF to come up with timely topics for presentations to further educate you, and improve your consulting/research professions.

Calendar of Events

Beltwide Cotton Conference
Orlando World Center Marriott, Orlando, FL
January 3-6, 2012

National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants
Annual Meeting
Peppermill Resort, Reno, NV
January 18-21, 2012

Southern Weed Science Society
Annual Meeting
Francis Marion Hotel, Charleston, SC
January 23-25, 2012

National Conservation Systems Cotton & Rice Conference
Harrah's Conference Center, Tunica, MS
January 30-February 1, 2012

Weed Science Society of America
Annual Meeting
Hilton Hotel Waikoloa Village, Big Island, Hawaii
February 6-9, 2012

Louisiana Ag Industry Association (LAIA)
Annual Meeting
Paragon Casino Resort, Marksville, LA
February 8-9, 2012

Louisiana Agricultural Technology & Management Conference (Consultants' Annual Meeting)
Paragon Casino Resort, Marksville, LA
February 15-17, 2012



For information on membership in NAICC
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