



Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association

Turn Row Talk

Spring Issue 2016

Volume 22

President's Column

Mark Smith

Crop Management Services of P.C.

It is an honor and privilege to serve as president of LACA in 2016. It is a great organization, and I am proud to be a part of it. We held our annual Louisiana Agricultural Technology and Management Conference on February 17-19 in Marks-ville, and it was a huge success. A big "thank you" goes out to our program planning committee and especially our executive director, Denise Wright, for all the hard work and the "behind the scenes" planning that goes on in putting this meeting together. I'm probably biased, but I think we have one of the best meetings around. We had some great speakers, and their presentations were timely and informative. Hopefully, everyone took home valuable information and can apply it to their businesses. Our annual meeting is also a great place for net- working between consultants, researchers, and industry folks. Over the years, I know I have developed friendships that will last a lifetime. So, if you are not a member, please consider joining the LACA and get involved. It's a decision you will not regret.

As of this writing (May 1), Mother Nature has not been kind to us. March and April have been extremely wet, and it has been a challenge getting crops planted. Some areas of the state experienced severe flooding, and crops were under water. It seems like it's the same story every week with a chance of rain every few days. Hopefully, we can break this cycle we are in right now and get into a more normal weather pattern. We can use 3-4 weeks of sunshine so we can get our crops planted.

Another challenge in 2016 is the depressed commodi- ty prices. People say everything runs in cycles. Well, our mar- kets are definitely in a down cycle right now. As independent crop consultants, our jobs are more important now than ever. It is our responsibility to help our growers manage their crops and to help them be profitable in their farming operations. We must get a return on investment for every input that is recom- mended. If we do not get a return on investment, then it is wasted money. And, wasted money means less profit or no profit. Profit margins will be tight, and we must do everything to protect our growers' bottom line.

In closing, I hope our weather patterns change, and we have a good growing season. I hope commodity prices will improve sooner rather than later. Let's get busy in the fields, and I hope everyone has a successful season.

2016 LATMC Pest ID Winners

(Crop Protection and Production Quiz)

Dwayne Coulon—1st place \$200.00

Richard Costello—2nd place \$150.00

Harold Lambert—3rd place \$100.00

Hank Jones—4th place \$75.00

Fred Collins—5th place \$50.00

Congratulations, Gentlemen!!!

Dwayne Coulon will be preparing and hosting the 2017 Crop Protection and Production Quiz...sharpen your knowledge in the field this season for next year's challenge...Please send any interesting field (pests) photographs to Dwayne (dpcoulon@cox.net) during the season for possi- ble inclusion in next year's quiz.

Richard L. Jensen Scholarship NAICC Foundation Scholarships

Three scholarships will be awarded. \$3,000 for the Jensen Scholarship and two \$1,500 NAICC Foundation Scholarships. One application will be eligible for all three scholarships and will be awarded based on merit.

Application Deadline November 1, 2016. Please review the scholarship criteria at <http://thefae.org/jensen-scholarship/> or www.laca1.org before submitting the application.



Commissioner's Message

Greetings! George Washington once said, "I know of no pursuit in which real and important services can be rendered to any country than by improving its agriculture, its breed of useful animals, and other branches of a husbandman's cares."

Always looking after the interest of the agriculture and forestry industries, my legislative team and I closely monitor bills as they move through the legislative process. We finished the special session that began Feb. 28, 2016 and are in the final weeks of the regular general (non-fiscal) session that began Mar. 14 and will end at 6 p.m. June 6. Governor Edwards has indicated he will call a second special session immediately following the end of the regular session.

Early this year, the state budget was estimated to have a \$2 million deficit for the fiscal year beginning July 1 but the gap has since narrowed to approximately \$600 million.

The special session was particularly challenging as there were a series of bills that would have eliminated tax exemptions and placed additional sales taxes on agriculture and forestry equipment, inputs, and gross sales.

Working with legislators, the administration, and farmers and industry representatives, we were able to protect the majority of inputs and gross sales from additional taxes. Our farmers' and industry representatives' participation in the legislative process was key in our success. They made phone calls and traveled to Baton Rouge to testify in committee and personally meet with their legislators. In discussions, we focused on the fact that no other state in the union places these taxes on agriculture and forestry. Imposing these new taxes would severely impact the profitability and global competitiveness of the largest industry in Louisiana as well as increasing retail food costs. We also presented an LSU AgCenter study, which proved that a significant amount of revenue over and above the taxes collected would be lost due to inputs and products being purchased and sold out of state.

At the end of the day, no taxes were levied on feed, seed, fertilizer, chemicals and other inputs or on the wholesale sale of vegetables, nuts, grain, cotton, rice, sugar, livestock or poultry. Unfortunately, a two-percent tax was levied on new equipment purchases, one cent of which will roll off on July 1, 2016; one-percent tax on off-road fuel, and a five-percent tax on poly-pipe. Most of the taxes were passed in the last minutes of the session. It is my understanding that the two-percent tax on farm equipment and the five-percent tax on poly-pipe were not intended to be in the final conference committee report but were inadvertently not removed prior to the vote.

Additionally, there is ongoing legislation which attempts to remove statutory protections of dedicated funds derived from industry-specific taxes and fees. Removing the protections make these funds available to be spent on any state program or purpose. I will continue working with our legislators to maintain

these protections for our industries. The legislature made a commitment to you that if you paid these additional taxes, fees, and assessments, they would be used for the purposes intended and not diverted to other programs.

The next special session which is set to begin immediately following this current session will focus on tax exemptions, exclusions, and credits as well as other potential fundraising methods. Again, I urge you to reach out to your legislators and explain how these issues directly affect you, your operation and your family. It is imperative that we remain economically viable and globally competitive in order that we may grow and earn our way to a stronger economy and properly funded state government.

Please stay in contact with our office and let us know what we can do to be of assistance to you.

Mike Strain, DVM
Commissioner
Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry
(225) 922-1233

Veronica Mosgrove
Press Secretary

Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry
(225) 922-1256 office

2016 LACA Scholarships Awarded

Doctoral Scholarship

A graduate scholarship was awarded to a doctoral student majoring in agriculture and sponsored by the Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association and funded by Louisiana Land Bank, ACA. The recipient of the PhD scholarship was Ms. Mary Ferguson, who is pursuing her doctorate in Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. Ms. Ferguson was born in Bogalusa and graduated from St. Scholastica Academy in Covington, LA where she ranked 3rd in her class.

Mary next attended Birmingham Southern College majoring in biology and minoring in math. Ms. Ferguson graduated Magna Cum Laude; was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa; and received the Distinction in Leadership Studies award. She was a National Merit Scholar, a member of Mortar Board, and a member of Beta Beta Beta Biology Society. Mary received the Senior Biology Award and the Paul Clinton Bailey Biology Award.

While an undergraduate at Birmingham Southern, she conducted research on developing a field test for cyanide in plants and she presented her work at the Birmingham Southern Honors Day.

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Ms. Ferguson was the Service Learning Project Coordinator and worked with students developing gardens at a local high school and an elementary school. Mary was a farm assistant for Educational Concerns for Hunger Organization and conducted classes, demonstrations and developed materials related to agricultural development. She was awarded the Hess Award for Leadership and Service.

Mary received her masters from North Carolina State University in Horticultural Science. While a student at NC State, Mary was a research and teaching assistant. Her research was on the use of several composts in strawberry production. Her thesis was the 'Evaluation of Three Commercially Available Composts for Use in Strawberry Production.' She presented a poster on her thesis research and gave an oral presentation at the Southeast Strawberry Expo. While a graduate student, Mary taught courses in Nursery Management, Landscape Maintenance and Small Fruit Production. Ms. Ferguson was inducted into Phi Kappa Phi and Gamma Sigma Delta honorary societies.

After graduation, Mary worked as an Extension Agent for Agriculture in North Carolina. She conducted numerous classes, demonstrations, field days and other educational activities. Mary published monthly newspaper & magazine articles and emails on listservs. She also did regular radio spots and appeared on TV. Mary was the coordinator of the county's Master Gardener program and served as the pesticide education coordinator for commercial and private applicators.

In 2009, she was recognized by the North Carolina Association of County Agents and presented with the Young Agent Scholarship. Mary is the author of more than 60 abstracts, articles, newsletters and other publications. Mary helped coordinate and/or taught Pesticide Use Review, Fruit Disease and Insect Management, Turf Weed Management and Pesticide Safety, Pesticide Safety for Commercial and Private Applicators, Disease and Insects of Landscape Ornamentals, Landscape Insects: Fire Ants and Other Key Pests, Air Blast Sprayer Calibration and numerous others.

She enrolled in the PhD program in the Department of Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology. She has completed 60 hours of credit in the department and an additional 11 hours in entomology, which is her minor. She has an overall GPA of 4.0.

Ms. Ferguson is very active in the Graduate Student Association and the American Pathological Society. She is a member of the Plant Sciences Journal Club and served as the student representative to the APS Southern Division executive board. In

addition, Mary is a reviewer for the scientific journal, Plant Disease, published by the APS. She has helped extension by updating the blueberry and strawberry sections of the plant disease management guide; has taught Master Gardener classes on plant pathology; and answered questions through the eXtension Ask an Expert website.

In 2014, Mary received the American Phytopathological Society's Student Travel Award and was awarded an honorable mention by the American Phytopathological Society's Graduate Student Research Award.

In 2015, Mary received the C.W. Edgerton Honor Award given by the Department of Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology. Ms. Ferguson has worked on agricultural related projects for the Dominican Republic, Mauritania, and Uruguay.

Her dissertation research is focused on the bacterial pathogen *Xylella fastidiosa* in rabbiteye blueberries. Mary's research has shown significant reduction in yield and altered fruit quality by this pathogen.

One of her recommenders stated, "As I have watched her interactions with growers, it is evident that they quickly value and respect her and appear glad to be involved with her research as they see the value it will have for their operation."



Mary Ferguson accepts her LACA scholarship check from Ted Gauthier, representing Louisiana Land Bank, ACA, which provided funding for the Doctoral scholarship.

Masters Scholarship

The scholarship for a Masters student in agriculture was sponsored by the Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association and funded by Pest Management Enterprises, LLC.

The recipient of this graduate student scholarship is a student at Louisiana State University who is pursuing a Master of Science degree in plant pathology and crop physiology, Ms. Alejandra Jimenez Madrid.

Ms. Madrid is from Honduras and attended high school at the Institute of Santa Cruz del Oro, where she excelled in academics and graduated second in her class. She attended the National University of Agriculture where she majored in Natural Resources and Environment Management. Ms. Madrid received several honorary Diplomas of Recognition for placing first in Disciplinary Performance; Field Performance; and Academic Performance. Ms. Madrid also worked on biological education for school children.

Her bachelor's degree research project was conducted in cooperation with the Range Cattle Research and Education Center at the University of Florida and involved the capture and distribution of soil organic carbon under different agro-pasture systems. She is the lead author of a publication on this research project.

After graduation, Ms. Madrid served as Coordinator of the Gender Unit at the National Institute of Women in Honduras where she worked on creating programs and projects to benefit women and to implement gender equality and improvement of women rights.

As an intern/visiting scholar during 2014 at Louisiana State University, Ms. Madrid worked as an assistant on research projects with faculty members in Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology. Currently, she is working in horticulture pathology under the direction of Dr. Melanie Lewis Ivey. Her research is on the identification and evaluation of sources of bacterial wilt resistance to strains of *Ralstonia solanacearum* in Louisiana soils, a disease that can result in severe economic losses in tomato, eggplant, and peppers grown in Louisiana. The outcome of this research should provide growers with a sustainable management practice to reduce bacterial wilt and increase crop productivity.

In addition to her coursework and research, Alejandra is active in the Departmental Graduate Student Association. She also works with the Department of International Affairs setting up a program to assist students with the transition from Honduras to university life at LSU.

One of her recommenders commented that she has a strong work ethic and has made significant progress in her research and has a strong interest in bringing sound science to practical agriculture.

Pictured at top right...



Alejandra Jimenez Madrid (far right) was awarded the Masters scholarship funded by Pest Management Enterprises, LLC. Representing the sponsor were from left, Randall Landry, Anna Meszaros, and Denise Wright. Scholarship Committee Chairman, Paul Temple at the podium.

Undergraduate Scholarship

The undergraduate scholarship in agriculture was sponsored by the Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association and funded by Ray and Dorothy Young, RiceTec and Crop Production Services. The recipient of the undergraduate scholarship was Mr. Kody Beavers.

Mr. Beavers was born in West Monroe, Louisiana and lives in Fort Necessity. He graduated from Franklin Academy ranking 4th in his class. A member of the National Honor Society, Beta and a graduate of the Louisiana Young Producers Program, Kody was recognized by Who's Who Among High School Students and won both regional and state science fairs and the science Olympiad.

Currently, a senior at LA Tech, Kody is majoring in agribusiness and has earned a 3.7 GPA. He is on the President's List, the Dean's List and is one of the 2016 Featured Agribusiness Students. Mr. Beavers is the Vice President of the plant science club Greenscape, a member of Alpha Zeta Honor Fraternity, and employed by the Louisiana Tech greenhouse, where he helps growing bedding plants, vegetables, and poinsettias.

Proactive in agriculture, Kody started working on Bouef Prairie Farm at age 14. He also worked for Gilmore Farms and Company. His farm experience includes tillage work, planting, spraying, irrigation and harvesting crops including corn, cotton, soybeans and wheat. One of his recommenders commented. "When he starts a job he shows enthusiasm and attends to the task until completion. His strong work ethic is exemplary for someone his age."

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Currently, Kody holds a Louisiana Private Applicators License and is planning on becoming certified as a Louisiana agricultural consultant. Upon graduation from Tech, he plans on pursuing a Masters degree in agricultural economics.



Pictured from left are representatives of co-sponsors providing funding for the Undergraduate scholarship, Marcus Guidroz of CPS, Cullen Minter of RiceTec and Ray Young (Dorothy Young, not pictured) along with scholarship recipient, Kody Beavers.

Letter of Thanks from Lina Bernaola

Dear Members of the Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association,

I would like to take this opportunity to express my most sincere gratitude to LACA for choosing me as the third recipient of the **Ray and Dorothy Young Endowed Assistantship in Crop Integrated Pest Management** of 2015. I am incredibly honored to have been selected as the third recipient of such a prestigious award. The support of this award will greatly benefit one part of my doctoral study and professional development towards the completion of my research on the "Transcription analysis of mycorrhizal rice plants in response to feeding with fall armyworm, *Spodoptera frugiperda*". The knowledge gained from this research will give to the scientific community, consultants and farmers a better understanding of how arbuscular mycorrhizae fungi, a symbiotic soil borne microorganism, influence resistance against insect herbivores in rice via changes in plant signaling profiles and its potential use for pest management programs that rice producers can utilize to improve resistance in rice.

This level of generosity from your association to keep awarding every year the Ray and Dorothy Young Endowed Assistantship in Crop Integrated Pest Management goes a long way in providing valuable educational and career development opportunities. Future recipients in all agricultural disciplines will benefit immensely and no doubt be just as grateful as me. This award will help foster leadership qualities and skills in its recipients, who will have their own chance of giving back later on.

I had the opportunity to meet Mr. and Mrs. Young at the Louisiana State University Alumni Association Spring Banquet last year. It was very nice talking with both of them. I was amazed to hear from him all his professional contributions and service to the agricultural industries. It must be nice to have the privilege of working with Mr. Ray Young and it is well deserved that this award was named in his honor. I was very lucky to meet and to receive the award from Mr. and Mrs. Young. Like Mr. Ray Young, I hope through my career I am able to contribute in the agricultural field and to have a positive impact on people around me in the same way as Mr. Young has done through his career. I promise I will continue working hard to prove myself worthy of this opportunity you have given me. There is still a long way to go, but I am looking forward to the day I am able to help other students in achieving their goals, just as you have helped me through this scholarship award. The sky is the limit.

Thank you, once again for your generous support and for creating this amazing opportunity.

Gratefully,

Lina Bernaola

Selection from Letter of Application Lina Bernaola

I am writing to submit my application for the Ray and Dorothy Young Endowed Assistantship in Field Crop Integrated Pest Management. I am a doctoral student in the Department of Entomology at LSU. You will see through my application that I am committed to working in agriculture and my experience in diverse aspects of integrated pest management makes me an ideal recipient for this assistantship.

My career in agriculture started in 2005, as an undergraduate research assistant at the International Potato Center (CIP). In Dr. Marc Ghislain's lab, I performed qualitative and quantitative analyses of genetic resistance to late blight using DNA markers. We found DNA markers linked to QTLs for late blight resistance in the small germplasm screening lines analyzed, which were later adapted in other genetic materials for detecting potato late blight resistance in fields in the Andean highlands. In 2010, I began my master's degree in the School of Plant and Environmental Sciences at LSU as a graduate research assistant. In Dr. Niranjana Baisakh's lab, I isolated multiple cold-responsive genes that were induced in response to cold stress from a cold-tolerant energy cane clone. This published study represents the first report and the baseline in our long-term goal of developing functional markers to facilitate breeding of cold tolerant energy cane cultivars suitable for more temperate climates. Additionally, I found unique genotype IDs in smooth cordgrass accessions, which are very useful for maintaining genetic identity and purity of the smooth cordgrass varieties used as an ideal plant for coastal restoration in Louisiana.

My doctoral research involves investigations of the mechanistic basis of plant resistance against above-ground and below-ground organisms in rice. I am studying the effects of mycorrhizal fungi, a symbiotic soil-borne organism, on rice resistance to insect herbivores and pathogens. My findings in

mycorrhizal-insect-pathogen interactions will lead to the development of more effective pest management programs in rice, a result that is important not only for Louisiana but also for global agriculture.

In addition to my research experience, I am also involved in many activities at LSU. I am a member of the LSU Entomology Club having served as President in 2013-2014, an Ag-Magic volunteer and a Spring Garden Show volunteer. I have attended and presented my research findings on meetings in my professional societies.

I feel qualified for the Ray and Dorothy Young Assistantship as my research is aimed at protecting the rice industry in Louisiana from the threat posed by rice insects. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lina Bernaola



Lina Bernaola is the third recipient of the Ray and Dorothy Young Endowed Assistantship in Louisiana Row Crop IPM. This endowment was established to assist in enabling worthy students the opportunity to further their work in agriculture, thus helping to maintain the sustainability of agriculture in Louisiana and beyond.

Louisiana Agriculture Hall of Fame 2016

Belle Caffey Chatelain was presented one of the 2016 Louisiana Agriculture Hall of Fame plaques in honor of her father, the late Dr. H. Rouse Caffey. Dr. Steve Linscombe, Director of the H. Rouse Caffey Rice Research Station roasted the late Dr. Caffey and presented this prestigious award.



Following the presentation of the HOF Award to Dr. Caffey's family, Dr. Steve Linscombe was presented with the 2nd of this year's Louisiana Agriculture Hall of Fame Awards for his contribution to agriculture over the many years he has served as rice breeder and director of the recently named H. Rouse Caffey Rice Research Station.



2017 LACA Scholarships Available

Paul Templet, Chair of the Scholarship Committee and members of his committee have worked very hard to recruit applicants for the three scholarships awarded each year at our annual meeting, as well as spending many rigorous hours going through applications, transcripts, and references to glean the most worthy students for these scholarships. The scholarship criteria and application can be found on the LACA website at <http://www.laca1.org/LACAScholarshipRequirements-050216.pdf>. If you know of an undergrad, graduate, or doctoral student who might qualify, please encourage them to apply in the fall (deadline January 10, 2017).

Become a Tigers Advocate

Visit www.lsu.alumni.org/tigeradvocates

Sign up today!

You will receive email notifications at critical times when your voice needs to be heard in the state legislature. With just a click or call, your legislators will know the LSU Tiger Nation are closely monitoring legislative decisions that impact the future of LSU. Your legislators represent YOU...Show them you care about LSU and they will to...

All state legislators can be accessed from this website, so register as a Tigers Advocate today!

Welcome New Members

Joining LACA as a new Associate member in 2016 is Nick Daigle of Lance Rodriguez Ag Services.

Also joining LACA as a new Affiliate member is Dr. Dustin Harrell of the H. Rouse Caffey Rice Research Station.

For information on membership in NAICC go to www.naicc.org or contact Allison Jones at JonesNAICC@aol.com or Denise Wright at wrightpme@aol.com

2016 LACA Executive Board

Mark Smith, President
225-638-3173 (o) 225-718-1699 (m)
msmith1699@gmail.com

Ashley Peters, President-Elect
318-282-8803 (m)
edpeters1@aol.com

Travis Vallee, Past President
318-709-5598 (h) 318-451-3776 (m)
tvcentlaagservices@yahoo.com

Hank Jones, Secretary
318-372-9422 (m)
HankCJAg@gmail.com

Calvin Viator, Ph.D., Treasurer
985-447-3393 (o) 985-637-5511 (m)
cvia@bellsouth.net

Andy Lanie, Director
337-856-5109 (o) 337-319-8089 (m)
LanieAD@aol.com

Richard Costello
318-376-1629 (m)
rcostello742@gmail.com

Denise Wright, Executive Director
337-945-3694 (m)
denise@laca1.org

Boyd Padgett., Academia Board Liaison
318-473-6520 (o) 318-614-4354 (m)
bpadgett@agctr.lsu.edu

Jerry J. Ford, Industry Board Liaison
318-613-5062 (m)
jerry.ford@basf.com

2016 Printed Directory

If you are an individual member or sustaining member contact of LACA, be looking out for your 2016 membership directory to arrive in the mail soon. The directory is also distributed to distinguished friends of the LACA. If you would like to have a copy of the directory and are not a member of LACA, email Denise at denise@laca1.org or call 337-945-3694 and she'll make sure you get one. The cost to cover printing/postage is \$15.00.