



Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association

Turn Row Talk

Winter Issue 2016

Volume 21

President's Column

Travis Vallee

Cenla Ag Services, LLC

Many will not want to read this, since I hear so many people say "I want to just forget 2015". So, if you are one of those, then skip down to the last four paragraphs, because I couldn't think of anything else to write about. This past season, was probably the most challenging of my career. The spring brought on torrential rains on several occasions. I had several cotton and milo fields that were planted in early April (somehow) that had large areas go under water at least three different times. The crops handled the first flooding okay, but each one after that caused greater damage, thinning stands and roots. Most likely, the increased air temp with each flooding increased negative impact.

We applied additional nitrogen to clay soils to compensate for nitrogen loss. The cotton finally got "turned around" and was looking pretty decent, where stands weren't thinned too much from the flooding. Then when it stopped raining, it just stopped and the heat intensified. The clay soils cracked deep and wide! The cotton on the clay soils shed all of its fruit on the top 7-8 nodes and many of the bolls that it kept were malformed due to poor pollination and stress, while the silt loam and irrigated cotton fared well, especially if it was in a corn or milo rotation.

Many soybeans had ample water during the vegetative period and soybeans were able to grow off well for the most part. They had a good stalk and enough nodes, but many of those fields ended up cutting less than 20bu/A, due to lack of rain and increased heat during pod fill. Conversely, later beans didn't get as much size and were blooming late enough that bollworm infestations were an additional factor.

The corn was able to escape the drought and benefited from all of the early rains. The only trouble we had with corn, for the most part, was applying additional nitrogen to the heavier soil type areas in fields. Corn yields turned out very respectable and only slightly under the previous year, for most of my customers.

Most growers are vigorously searching for places to make cuts and reduce inputs for 2016. I just hope that they don't skimp too much on herbicides as we had many "escapes" last year. This is due in large part to delayed planting and having to apply another "burndown" at planting, and there were some pigweeds that were over

threshold size already present. Between that and delays in post applied herbicide applications, many fields had more pigweeds in the field at harvest than normal, therefore an increased soil seed weed bank.

We probably won't worry about keeping fields perfectly clean this year, but we definitely will not be making any cuts on early season weed control. I doubt many will be willing to spend the money controlling later emerging weeds in track rows, etc. that won't impact yield.

LACA is a first class organization. Along with providing, seeking and sharing up to date information it receives from scientists and other consultants, it stands up for consultants and their clients when called upon, particularly when possible law changes may negatively impact our clientele and/or our businesses.

LACA maintains a great relationship with the AgCenter, and this in turn helps everyone, as pertinent information flows quickly from the scientists through consultants and applied at the field level of our clients and vice-versa. I'm honored to have been president of this organization. This will definitely be among one of my top accomplishments in life. In February, Mark Smith will take over and he will do a fine job representing this organization. Oh! And thank you, Denise!!

Executive Director's Comments

Denise Wright

Support Services Unlimited

Pest Management Enterprises, LLC

I often refer to this group of gentlemen as "my consultants". Since becoming Executive Director to the Board of this elite organization in 2004, I have been the benefactor of so many great friendships, gifts, and loads of kudos, which I'm not absolutely sure I deserve, but will humbly accept. The members have become like family to me.

As most of you know, in addition to "taking care" of "my consultants", I am part of a contract research business, and am also raising my two wonderful grandchildren. At times, my world gets a bit overwhelmed, but when I think of all the blessings that have come my way over the past 13 years, I can quickly overcome that sinking feeling, and climb back on top to get

it done! My sincere thanks to Travis Vallee...he has been an outstanding president, always on top of the game. Thank you to our past presidents...all of these gentlemen take this responsibility very seriously.

I would encourage our members to get involved in the association by serving on committees. I would also encourage those who are not members of LACA to join our organization so we can experience the benefit of your knowledge, ideas, and talents. If you are a member of industry, the AgCenter, USDA, or another government entity, you can join as an Affiliate member. If you are not currently a licensed consultant, but could be in the future, and just want to support the association, you can join as an Associate member. Check out the membership criteria on page 2 of the LATMC registration form to see where you might fit. Then go to www.laca1.org and apply online. I am always a phone call or email away if you need assistance. To "my consultants", THANK YOU for allowing me to "take care" of ya'll!!!



Commissioner's Message

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

Each year begins with a renewed hope of good weather, good prices, and a bountiful harvest. We search for each and every opportunity to increase productivity and sustainability and address the challenges of the day.

According to the 2015 Global Agricultural Productivity (GAP) report, the rate of per capita income is going to increase almost three times as fast in developing countries as in already developed countries (4.4 percent vs 1.7 percent).

This will result in an increased demand for meat, crops, fiber, energy and all types of consumable products. Specifically, developing nations will need approximately 12 percent more dairy, 15 percent more cotton, 28 percent more coarse grains, 24 percent more meat, 28 percent more poultry, and 32 percent more vegetable oils to meet their growing demands and populations.

Overall, by 2050, the global middle class is expected to double to 70 percent of the population. Moreover, the growing issue of climate change will be especially challenging to the majority of agricultural production throughout the world. Whereas we utilize approximately 70 percent of all available fresh water today, this will increase to more than 89 percent by 2050. At the same time, the urban population will rise to 2/3 of the world's population with fewer people living and working in the rural areas.

With 95 percent of the world's consumers outside of the United States and the fact that more than 60 percent of the grains and a large portion of the proteins exported worldwide come from the United States, we have an unprecedented opportunity ahead. Once oil prices and the value of the American dollar stabilize, which

is expected to begin early in the second quarter of this year, the world economy will begin to recover and commodity prices will rise.

It is imperative now that we stay the course and become more efficient in production, transportation, processing and delivery of raw and value-added agricultural, forestry and aquaculture products. In doing so, we will be in the driver's seat and command a greater market share and profitability.

On Capitol Hill, the omnibus spending bill included the 2014 Section 179 tax extender language that was initially passed in late December 2014 making it permanent at \$500,000 and retroactive through 2015. Additionally, a 50 percent bonus depreciation was extended through 2019 and the Conservation Easement tax credit was made permanent, as well.

The bill also includes a five-year extension of property depreciation that is acquired and put in service during 2015 through 2019, with an added year of certain property with a longer production period. The bonus is 50 percent for property put in service in 2015, 2016 and 2017. It lowers to 40 percent in 2018 and 30 percent in 2019.

For cattlemen, the bill included the repeal of Country of Origin Labeling (COOL), eliminating the possibility of billions of dollars in retaliatory tariffs that were approved by the World Trade Organization. While COOL certainly captured the headlines, the omnibus contained many more priorities for producers including language to continue congressional oversight of the dietary guidelines process. With passage, Congress made it clear that the current and future dietary guidelines will be based on scientific agreement and limited to nutrition and dietary information. The bill also increases scrutiny on beef imports from regions with known animal diseases, funds wildfire reserves, continues prohibitions on environmental permitting and reporting and blocks the Department of Interior from designating de facto wilderness areas.

According to Brian Breaux of the Louisiana Farm Bureau, the omnibus spending bill for federal fiscal year 2016 also includes important H-2B relief and does the following:

- Exempts H-2B returning workers from the 66,000 annual cap;
- Addresses H-2B wages and allows the use of private wage surveys which were not allowed under the 2015 final H-2B wage rule;
- Clearly defines seasonal as ten months, as opposed to the nine months in the new interim final H-2B comprehensive rule;
- Prevents DOL from implementing the provisions of the interim final rule related to corresponding employment and the ¾ guarantee; and
- Prevents DOL from implementing the new and burdensome DOL enforcement scheme in the IFR related to audit and the Certifying Officer (CO) assisted re-

cruitment; and

- Allows for the staggered crossing of seafood H-2B workers.

Many people have been working very hard on this issue and our congressional delegation should be thanked for all of their help and support.

Further, we have a new governor and are seating a new legislative body. It is imperative that we work together to stabilize the fiscal affairs of the state and protect the agriculture and forestry sectors from over taxation which would cause great economic harm and be economically counter-productive. We must be fully prepared to use our collective voices and political clout to accomplish this as there are many legislators from heavy suburban and urban areas which simply do not understand rural, agricultural, and resource based economies based on narrow margins, high risk, and global competitiveness. We are going to be fully engaged, working hand in hand with our champions in the legislature, the rural caucus, and Governor John Bel Edwards who has promised to work with us as we move forward.

Finally, this year we will elect a new U.S. senator and president. Every congressman must also run for re-election. We must make sure that our voice is loud and clear and emphasize the importance of agriculture and forestry to the future of this nation.

SUSTAINABLE ROW CROP IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT IN LOUISIANA

The LSU AgCenter, USDA NRCS, and Southern University are providing education and training related to furrow irrigation of row crops via the Central Regional Irrigation Conference held on Feb 16-17, 2016 in conjunction with the LATMC Conference. Topics include: agronomics such as key growth stages, initiation, and termination; irrigation scheduling; water quality; pumping plant efficiency; irrigation technologies; economics; water policy; USDA NRCS assistance programs; and the Master Farmer program. Training will also include demonstrations of software, research results, and panel discussions with key producers. Registration is free and can be completed at: lsuagcenterwater.eventbrite.com. Hotel rooms can be complimentary to accommodate both days of the training if indicated during registration. Contact Dr. Stacia Davis for more information at 318-741-7430 ext. 1105 (sdavis@agcenter.lsu.edu).

Ray and Dorothy Young Endowed Assistantship

Tax-deductible contributions to the *Ray and Dorothy Young Endowed Assistantship in Louisiana Row Crop IPM* are encouraged and appreciated. Checks must be made payable to **LSU Foundation** with check memo indicating **"Young Endowed Assistantship"**. Please mail checks to:

Denise Wright, Executive Director
Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association
P.O. Box 347
Cheneyville, LA 71325

Not only is this a tribute to two outstanding leaders, it's a very worthwhile investment in agriculture's future...Please consider sending in your generous contribution today!

Your Consultants Meeting

If you don't plan on attending the 2016 Louisiana Agricultural Technology & Management Conference (aka Louisiana Consultants' Meeting), you're definitely going to miss out on some good take-home information, as well as a lot of networking opportunities with your peers.

We have some very good speakers and topics lined up, as well as a pre-conference irrigation management workshop sponsored by the LSU AgCenter (see adjacent column) which begins on Tuesday, Feb. 16th and concludes on Feb. 17th just prior to our consultants' meeting.

In addition to new research in agronomics, we'll hear about economics, marketing trends, cleaning spray rigs, and much, much more!

We have nine new sustaining members this year, which is awesome...this meeting will give you opportunity to meet and welcome these people and learn about their companies, products and/or services.

We hope you will put this event on your calendar now and join us for continuing education, and networking with your peers. Go to www.laca1.org to access the preliminary program, registration, hotel information, and more...the final program will be distributed at the meeting.

Wheat Production Winter Update

Boyd Padgett

LSU AgCenter Interim Wheat Specialist

Steve Harrison

LSU AgCenter Wheat Breeder

Trey Price

LSU AgCenter Extension/Research Plant Pathologist

David Kerns

LSU AgCenter Research Entomologist

Nitrogen (N) management can dramatically influence wheat grain yield. The current recommendation is to apply 90-120 lb/A of N during the growing season. The exact rate depends on soil type, previous crop, and crop condition. The total of N amount should be split over two to three applications beginning at green up (Feeke's Growth Stage 5) and ending with an application at or just prior to jointing (F7). This strategy is intended to minimize N loss due to volatilization, leaching, or denitrification. The initial application is usually made during early February in South Louisiana and mid-February in North Louisiana. With all of the rainfall we have experienced since planting it is likely that most wheat fields are delayed in development and need nitrogen to stimulate tillering. With that in mind, growers should consider an initial topdress N application in late January even if the crop is not at F5.

Sulfur (S) and Phosphorus (P) can also impact wheat growth and development. If S is deficient, ammonium sulfate blended with urea in the initial topdress is a good option to remedy this deficiency. Phosphorus can be adequate in the soil, but may not be available due to wet and cool conditions. Producers can apply DAP to supply N and P.

Wheat that was planted late needs to have the maximum opportunity to grow. Anything that stresses the plant will reduce yield, including inadequate fertility, weed competition, and poor drainage. Late-planted wheat will probably benefit from 20-30 pounds of pre-plant N to stimulate tillering, depending on how late it is planted and how much residual N is in the soil. Weed control and drainage should be optimum to prevent stress that will slow crop growth. Many of the problems we have with late-planted wheat occur because the crop sits in cool, water-logged soils and cannot access nutrients until spring. The crop remains in this condition during the winter then puts up heads from very small plants in the spring. Wheat will tiller and grow all winter if we give it the opportunity.

Even though diseases are usually not a problem until spring, keep an eye out for early season stripe and leaf rust. Stripe rust is a cool season rust and epidemics can initiate during the winter in susceptible varieties. Leaf rust is less of a problem during cool weather, but warmer temperatures can result in favorable conditions for development. Fungicide applications prior to flag leaf emergence are usually not necessary; however, fields should be closely monitored where epidemics are present.

Stripe rust development is most aggressive when

temperatures are 50 to 65°F in the presence of intermittent rain or frequent dews (6 to 8 hours). However, development can occur when temperatures range from near freezing to 70°F. Initial infections on seedling wheat may not have the characteristic striping pattern that occurs on older plants. Seedling infections often occur in 'thumb-sized' clusters on the leaves, as opposed to a random distribution that occurs with leaf rust. Infections may appear as linear rows of small yellow to light orange pustules (stripes) on the lower leaves during late winter or early spring. Striped patterns are typical of infections in older plants. If conditions remain favorable for development, pustules may cover the entire upper leaf surface, as well as portions of the head. A lifecycle (infection to reproduction) can be completed within 7 to 10 days under optimum conditions.

Leaf rust is usually evident later in the season than stripe rust. This is because the leaf rust pathogen requires warmer temperatures for development. Initial symptoms of leaf rust begin as light orange/yellow spots, usually on the lower foliage. As the disease develops, small pin-point pustules form on the upper leaf surface. Pustules are deep orange-red and occur randomly on the leaf. Similar to stripe rust, pustules can cover the entire leaf surface if conditions remain favorable for development. The disease develops optimally when nighttime temperatures are 50 to 70°F and leaves remain wet for 6 to 8 hours.

A number of aphids that infest wheat are capable of transmitting BYD, particularly the bird cherry-oat aphid. Where BYD is commonly problematic, preventative pyrethroid applications targeting aphid during the winter have proven effective. The goal is to reduce the initial aphid source and avoid spreading BYD. Detecting aphids at this time is difficult. However, waiting until spring or when aphids are more numerous is ineffective in preventing BYD. In Louisiana, BYD is not considered common enough to warrant automatic preventative sprays.

Leaf Rust





Leaf Rust



Stripe Rust in the lower canopy on early season wheat



Brazilian Tour Made Lasting Friendships

Back in June, 2015 a group of Brazilian farmers traveled with their agricultural consultant, Fernando Martins (Din Din) to Louisiana to tour Pest Management Enterprises' research facility and farm, Dean Lee Research Station, and several grower operations in the state. They also visited New Orleans and friends in Mississippi, tasting of our culture along the way...

We had a fine time with them, learning much about their way of life, and farming and consulting in Brazil, while they were here learning about our ways.

I invited Din Din to come to the NAICC Annual Meeting in Orlando in 2016, and as I write this, we are all about to depart this meeting and go home after a week-long conference. We heard from Din Din this morning who prepared a presentation about his homeland for the attendees of the NAICC meeting. I think he had a very enjoyable time back in June and again this past week. Din Din has joined GAIA (Global Alliance of Independent Agricultural Consultants), an organization formed by members of NAICC to bring other countries together for the mutual benefit of learning from each other for a better world. If you are interested in learning more of this organization, you can go to their website at www.gaiac.org. Below and on the following page are pictures from the Louisiana tour in June, 2015.





Become a Tigers Advocate

Visit www.lsualumni.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!!!

David Ball (retired from Dow AgroSciences) changed his Affiliate membership to **Voting** in 2015.

Randall Landry joined LACA as an **Associate Member**.

Joining as a new **Affiliate Member** was **Justin Dufour**.

Joining LACA as new **Sustaining Members** in 2016 are **AgSmarts, Air Data Solutions, Arysta LifeScience, Calvin Viator, Ph.D. & Associates, LLC, NACHURS, Pest Management Enterprises, LLC, Stoller USA, Timac Agro USA, and Winfield**.

We appreciate so much your support of our Louisiana consultants!!!

2015 LACA Executive Board

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

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

Randy Richard, Past President
985-688-1805 (m)
randy.richard@hotmail.com

Matt Myers, Director
318-389-4411 (o) 318-854-4411 (m)
AMSMattM@aol.com

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

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

Jim Griffin, Ph.D., Academia Board Liaison (outgoing)
225-578-1768 (o) 225-281-9370 (m)
jgriffin@agcenter.lsu.edu

Boyd Padgett, Ph.D., Academia Board Liaison (incoming)
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

For information on membership in NAICC

go to www.naicc.org or
contact Allison Jones at
JonesNAICC@aol.com or
Denise Wright at denise@laca1.org