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Keeping Up with Changing Consumers, Needs

By Eric Sfiligoj

For most, agriculture is the starting point for the world's food supply. But despite this fact, the average consumer might not completely understand (or appreciate) how their food comes to be in supermarkets for purchase. Even more importantly, consumer buying habits have changed significantly over the past decade or so, and agriculture, food producers, and food retailers are largely scrambling to catch up with many of these trends.

This was the message delivered to attendees of the annual Mid America CropLife Association meeting this past September by self-proclaimed supermarket guru Phil Lempert, Founder and Editor of The Lempert Report. "When we look at retail, it's all about the relationship," said Lempert. "And when it comes to this, we in agriculture really need to be ahead of the curve, not behind it."

To understand exactly what the curve is these days, said Lempert, observers need to pay attention to the end-users of all things food – the consumers themselves. "Consumers have changed dramatically," he said. "They actually understand what's in their food, and many of them want a shorter list of ingredients in their food. And people want to engage with their food. That's the magic button for them."

In addition, added Lempert, today's consumers are much more complex regarding their food buying habits than any of the world's previous generations tended to be. "In fact, studies have shown that 64% of the population will actually remove certain foods from their buying lists based upon their ingredients or their own dietary habits," he said. "And half of consumers expect their food shopping experiences to be more personalized."

Consumers are also getting more comfortable with using online sources for their food shopping needs, said Lempert. "By the end of 2019, it is estimated that 40% of customers will be buying at least some of their groceries online," he said. "That's up from around 17% in 2018."



Phil Lempert

The Market Responds

To adjust to this changing set of buying habits by consumers, food producers and retailers have largely altered how they bring products to the marketplace, said Lempert. "Many food companies are now hiring nutritional scientists to help them develop new, healthier food choices to appeal to today's consumers," he said. "For food retailers, they are going beyond just offering in-

store samples to consumers and instead trying to position food choices that engage in all five of a consumers' senses – sight, touch, hearing, and smell as well as taste."

An example of this in action, said Lempert, would be the food retail's experimentation with 3-D printers, which can allow consumers to "customize" their options. "Say you go into the bakery department at your local store," he said. "Consumers can go to a kiosk and decide what ingredients they want in a cake. They would program this information into the computer and this would then be sent to a 3-D printer to manufacture. This would be a personal cake made just for the consumer, with no waste generated at the end of the day."

To market these options, companies also have begun to alter how they tell consumers about new food choices, said Lempert. "Everyone is moving from a scare mentality, trying to convince people that other food choices are bad, to an inspirational one, where things like sustainability and reducing food waste are emphasized. And that's exciting!"

Of course, many of these same companies have also struggled a bit while looking for the "next big" consumer trend. "For food producers and retailers, it's important to know the difference between a trend and a fad," said Lempert. "Fads only tend to last for a day in marketplace terms. Trends, however, have staying power, but only will keep this status if they are easily explainable to today's consumers."

When it comes to agriculture's role in all these market changes, Lempert said that many of the world's farmers are "the real celebrities" in this effort. "Many farmers are

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2019 AWARD RECIPIENTS

Rodney Schmidt

Dean Roy Achievement Award



MACA President Paul Edsten presented **Rodney Schmidt** the Association's most coveted award, the Dean Roy Achievement Award for "Exceptional Service to MACA and the CropLife Industry," for contributing the most by their selfless service. Schmidt is a Regional Account Manager for Bayer and lives in the Noblesville,

Indiana area and is the 38th person to receive this award.

Edsten cited Schmidt's service to the association where he has served on the Industry Communications Committee and as the Young Leader Scholarship Program Co-Chair and been a member of the Executive Committee since 2017. He's mentored students and new member plus been an ambassador and made elementary school presentations. He's also helped with the annual meeting program and no request is too big or too small.

"Rodney steps up and works for the good of MACA and industry," stated Edsten.

Doug Goff

Industry Vision Award

Doug Goff, Helena Agri-Enterprises, LLC, was presented the Industry Vision Award. It's presented to an individual who's devoted their career to promoting and protecting the interests of the entire crop protection industry which supports American and Midwestern agriculture.

Doug has been with Helena since 1996, where he started out as a Sales Manager for the Midwest Division based out of West Des Moines, IA. Shortly thereafter, Doug transitioned to his current role of North Central Division Manager in Carmel, IN. Previously, he worked for Monsanto for 17 years.

Early in his career, Doug's passion was Precision Information Management. He's assisted in the acquisition of over 40 physical retail locations and the development of the Owensboro, KY wholesale market for Helena.

Goff is known as a 'passionate people developer;' he sees the potential in

employees, inspires and encourages them to channel their potential to be successful in their careers. He's been active in the industry and given back to the industry by serving on the MACA Board of Directors, the Michigan Agribusiness Association, Indiana Plant Food, and Illinois Fertilizer Chemical Association.



Dr. Carl A. Bradley

Educator of the Year Award

Dr. Carl A. Bradley, University of Kentucky, received the Educator of the Year Award. Dr. Bradley received his Doctor of Philosophy in Crop Sciences, Plant Pathology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2001. Currently, he is a Professor / Extension Specialist at the University of Kentucky, Department of Plant Pathology.

Dr. Bradley speaks at numerous venues throughout the year, including pest forums, university field days at various Midwestern universities and extension outreach throughout Kentucky.



Carl has always worked with industry leaders as a collaborative partner in product use and development and is considered a leader among row crop plant pathologists. Carl has given more than 400 presentations as a faculty member and his presentations have reached thousands of people by using on-line meeting platforms in

addition to "in-person" presentations in 14 states plus Australia, Canada, China and South Africa.

The award was first presented in 1978 and is given to an individual who has demonstrated significant contributions to American agriculture, especially in the MACA region.

Gil Gullickson

Ruth White Media Award



The Ruth White Media Award was presented to **Gil Gullickson** who serves as Crops Technology Editor at Meredith Corporation.

Gil has been reporting on agriculture since graduating from South Dakota State University in 1983 with a minor in journalism.

For the last decade (plus), he has been covering

developments in seeds, agricultural chemicals and other agricultural technologies for Successful Farming magazine.

Gil is the current president-elect of AAEA, the Agricultural Communicators Network, and received the coveted Story of the Year award at the 2018 Ag Media Summit.



GOLF TOURNAMENT RESULTS

The Fort Golf Course provided a competitive course for the participants. Taking first place in the competitive flight was **Millers' team** with **Dean Ladner**, *Albaugh LLC*; **Don Houston** and **Jeremy Sheffer**, *MFA* with a six hole scorecard playoff. In second place it was team **Edsten** with **Teko Goda**, *GreenLeaf*; **David Bartine**, *XPO Logistics*; **Ryan Ruckman**, *Belchim Crop Protection* and **Paul Edsten**, *FMC*. In the fun flight, Sfiligoj's team comprised of **Eric Sfiligoj**, *Meister Media*; **Jim Wagner** and **Roger Callaway**, *Helena Agri-Enterprises* and **Sierra Williamson**, *U of MN YLSP* took first place with a first hole scorecard playoff.

The closest to the pin for the first flight was won by **Dean Ladner** on #5 hole while **Teko Goda** won on #17. In the fun flight, **Mary Junge**, *AGI Junge Control* won on the #3 hole. The longest drive for those under 54 was won by **Dean Ladner**; **David Flakne**, *Syngenta* was the winner for those 55 and older.

The longest drive for a woman was made by **Mary Junge** and the longest putt went to **Ryan Ruckman**.

Focus, then follow-thru with your swing... that's Jerry Baker's approach.



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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE



First, it was good to see so many of you at the MACA annual meeting in September in Indianapolis. The speakers were excellent and made me think about what we do as well as the opportunities which lie ahead. Having the Young Leader Scholarship Program recipients in attendance adds energy to the meeting and makes us all realize that there are young people who still want to be involved in agriculture in spite of the challenges!

I'd like to share with you three goals that I will be pursuing in the year ahead.

1. Participation – to increase participation by member companies. To those member companies who have someone attend the quarterly meeting, thank you. I really want to encourage every member company to send at least one person to one quarterly meeting by September 2020 and ask that they be an active participant. I believe everyone benefits – the individual, MACA and the company. Larger companies, please consider sending a second person on a regular basis. Again, more participation equals more ideas and more people to get things done.

2. Member Benefits – to focus on benefits for member companies. Benefits like: Department of Transportation HAZMAT Videos – that meet the requirements for DOT training; the Ambassador Speakers Program; MACA's water consultant; the Young Leader Scholarship program; the annual meeting; quarterly meetings and finally the Sustainability Forum planned for November 5-6 in St. Louis. All of these programs provide industry information related for members to do their job better as well as ensure that crop protection products are stored, transported and applied in a safe and responsible manner plus provide team building skills and opportunities to network with industry leaders.

3. Communication – to more effectively communicate what MACA does and the benefits to the members. I want to make sure we are reaching the company contacts and key people who make the decisions to recognize the benefits of MACA.

As I said at the annual meeting, together, I believe we can accomplish many things in the year ahead to provide benefits to MACA's membership. Let me know your thoughts. Email me at Timr@amvac.com or 816-830-6886. I look forward to seeing you at a MACA event this year!

Tim

Tim Riley
2019-2020 President

Keeping Up with Changing Consumers, Needs *continued from page 1*

helping get the word out on modern agriculture through blogs, farm visits, and in-person speeches about the industry, which is so important," he said. "They are really connecting with consumers, because consumers really want to know where their food comes from."

To this end, Lempert sees farmers and agriculture investing more in emerging technologies such as vertical farming in urban areas to keep agriculture successful going forward. "Right now, the world's population is supposed to hit nine billion by 2050 and 65% of this group will live in urban areas," he said. "So vertical farming growing in cities like New York seems like a perfect way to go for agriculture in the future."

Reaching Consumers in the Modern Age

By Eric Sfiligoj



Nicole Collier

In many ways, today's consumers present a bit of a mystery for agriculture, food producers, and retailers. As the Internet Age has evolved over the course of the 21st century, several companies have been left scrambling to keep pace with the "new demands" being made upon them by buyers. Perhaps **Nicole Collier**, *Director, Policy and Public Affairs for Nestle*, put it best at the recent annual meeting of the Mid America CropLife Association (MACA), held this past September in Indianapolis, IN.

"What do consumers want?" asked Collier. "They want something different every day." Collier was just one of four panelists from the food and agricultural

industries looking at the topic of the food chain in 2019 and what consumers want. She went on to point out that such topics as wellness and flexibility are presently dominating consumer buying habits based upon Nestle's own research into this area.

"Consumers today are moving away from quick fixes and fad diets, with many having an eye towards product traceability and transparent information," she said. "The bottom line is health and wellness in food today are not the same concepts as they were just 10 to 12 years ago."

M. Vincent Restucci, *Director of Procurement & Business Technology at R.D. Offutt Farms Co.* (a family farm operation that grows a variety of crops in seven states), agreed with this view.



M. Vincent Restucci

"Meat is no longer the center of the plate for today's consumers," said Restucci. "People want more vegetable options as their centerpieces." He also noted that most consumers do care about such agricultural concepts as environmental footprint and sustainability when it comes to how their food is produced. "I talk about these ideas with everyone I meet these days," said Restucci. "I tell them that my entire livelihood working for a farming operation is based upon the responsible use of the planet's resources."

To better understand consumers today, **Jennifer Maloney**, *U.S. Food Stakeholder Manager – North America for Bayer*, invited

MACA attendees to "put on some consumer-thinking panty hose" and consider four different topics of conversation. The first of these she dubbed "people don't hug me anymore."

"I remember my first day on the job when I worked for John Deere when I introduced myself, my supervisor immediately hugged me and started telling me the story of how his grandfather had used a John Deere tractor and how important that was to him and his upbringing," said Maloney. "It was an immediate connection, through that story and the warm embrace. But today, when I tell someone I'm talking to that I work for a crop protection products company, I don't get any hugs. Today's consumers care about their food and don't necessarily understand how a company like mine helps produce for them."



Jennifer Maloney

Second, there is what she calls the paradigm shift. "I used to be a lobbyist in

Washington, DC, and most of us in the industry then used to look at legislation like the Farm Bill for market guidance," said Maloney. "But that could cause us as a market to overlook consumers. Consumers today have so much power. Their voices are so much stronger because of things like social media. So, the food industry must move faster on developing new products for them, and this in turn is having a much bigger impact on the demands being made to farmers who have to grow the crops to do this."

Thirdly, consumers have developed an intimacy with their food. "People are proud of the food that they buy and eat," said Maloney. "It's part of their personality, and they really, really care how their food is produced and grown on the farm."

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, there is transparency. "Consumers today consequently want to know such things as what's in their food, where was it grown, what pesticides were used on it in the field, and when was it harvested?" said Maloney. "That's why many food producers are putting as much information as they can on their product labels, so consumers can use their smartphones to find answers to these questions."

The Industry Responds

So, what can the industry do to better connect with today's consumers? According to Maloney, moving away from a myopic perspective is a good first step. "Many times, we focus on the issues that are key to our businesses, but never really think about what the consuming public is thinking about," she said. "Also, it's important for our industry to think about non-traditional ways to get to consumers by telling easy-to-understand stories that make a connection with consumers about the safety of their food."



Kara Behlke

Kara Behlke, *Director, Health and Wellness Strategy for Schnuck Markets, Inc.*, a family-owned supermarket chain with stores in five Midwestern states, concurred. "Too often in this industry, we have pointed to science to justify our production methods," said Behlke. "But to have real appeal to today's consumers, we also have to engage with them on the emotional side of how their food is produced."

Behlke went on to tell attendees that the days of being about to launch a new product simply by buying "lots of television ads and billboards" are long gone. "To reach today's consumers, the marketing has to be more personal, such as reaching them through their smartphones with individual promotions or their social media platforms," she said. "Food is more than just stuff in boxes. Today, if I as a marketer am trying to talk to everyone, chances are I'm talking to no one."

Growers such as R.D. Offutt Farms has also gotten this message. According to Restucci, his company has been working with such alternative crop protection/nutrition products such as biologicals for many years now to differentiate themselves from other farms. "We've also tried to be nimbler in responding to consumer demands," he said. "With our size and the variety of products we grow, we can enter and exit a market very, very quickly."

According to Bayer's Maloney, one of the most important ways agriculture can reach today's consumers is by simply speaking for itself. "Many of us might think that other people will talk to consumers about how their food is grown," she said. "And we would be right. Other people outside our industry are probably talking to consumers about how their food is grown, but it might not be how their food is actually grown."

R.D. Offutt Farms' Restucci agreed. "I'm always willing to talk about what my company does when it comes to farming," he said. "I think if you have questions about something in life, you should go to the source. We as an industry shouldn't look to celebrity know-it-alls to do this for us."

The ambassador program is off and running this fall! It is wonderful to see all the requests coming in from new and returning schools. I will continue to reach out to ambassadors to fill these speaking requests – check your emails.

Fall and the start of a new school year is also a fabulous time to approach some of your colleagues about becoming ambassadors. Reach out to someone you work with about presenting. It is very rewarding for our ambassadors and so valuable for the children to hear the story of agriculture. Send them to the website for more information or to sign up at <http://ambassador.maca.org/> or have them email me at michelle@maca.org.

NEW AMBASSADORS

Barry Anderson, Ag Leader Technology

Keri Anderson, Corteva Agriscience

Pamela Cuffee, Corteva Agriscience

Alysia Diffendal, Corteva Agriscience

Ashleigh Frank, Corteva Agriscience

Katelyn Lichte, Corteva Agriscience

Brad Syltie, Valent USA LLC

Hygie Starr, Corteva Agriscience

Think about CAN the next time you're with one of your coworkers that is passionate, energetic or enthusiastic about agriculture, and refer them to us. Direct them to our website and click on "Become an Ambassador." It's easy! This is a perfect time to refer new ambassadors so they are ready for the upcoming school year.

Michelle Kilper,

CropLife Ambassador Network
Program Manager

■ 314-849-9446

■ michelle@maca.org

■ Ambassador.maca.org



CropLife Ambassador Network- CAN



CropLife Ambassador Network



CropLife Ambassador Network

Our Mission...

to provide scientifically based accurate information to the public regarding the safety and value of American agricultural food production.

2019

AMBASSADOR OF THE YEAR

MACA presented the 2019 Ambassador of the Year award at the MACA Annual Meeting in Indianapolis, IN in September. The CropLife Ambassador of the Year Award was first presented in 1993. It is designed to recognize an ambassador for their efforts in promoting the crop protection industry through presentations to students or consumers.



MACA would like to congratulate the 2019 Ambassador of the Year, **Chris Williams, Rosen's, Inc.** Since joining the ambassador network in 2003, he's made eighty presentations to students.

In addition to being a speaker, one of the unique things that Chris does is he shares the program with students at The Ohio State University. Through his teaching and outreach, he is able to recruit new ambassadors this way as he understands the program, its importance and encourages others to become a part of it. Chris also is responsive to requests when asked, which makes it much easier for the teachers.

As a father to four school age children, he knows the subject and the importance of speaking to elementary students on American agriculture. Professionally, Chris is a Sales Educator for Rosen's, developing and delivering individualized Sales Training Programs for Rosen's valuable retail customers

Chris Williams has worked in the agricultural industry for over 20 years. After graduating from Virginia Tech in 1998 with a degree in Horticulture, he worked with Novartis and Monsanto delivering various sales training programs and working directly with agricultural retailers and row crop producers.

Chris earned his MBA degree from the University of Cincinnati in 2003 and received the honor of First Runner-Up in the 2003 Eastern Region New Venture Business Plan Competition.

In 2004, he joined Rosen's, Inc. Chris is also a member of the Board of Directors for the Ohio Agribusiness Association (OABA) and he also teaches AEDE 3121 – "Salesmanship in Agriculture" – at The Ohio State University.

CONSUMER DRIVEN AGRICULTURE



Shelbi Domjen, Kellie Bray, Lindsey Jackson, Steve Taylor, Matt Wagner and Andrew Kuenker spend a few minutes catching up.



President Paul Edsten welcomes 10 of the 13 Young Leader program recipients.



President Paul Edsten joins Jay Morris and Jim Lehman in welcoming back former President Pat Robinson and his wife Mary.



Nicole Collier, Nestle talks with Mike Lehman, AMVAC after her presentation.



The group tour Schutz Containers to learn how IBC tanks are made.



Doug Mertens, FMC talks with Don Houston, MFA.

The industry tour included lunch at Schutz with Brian Clark, from Schutz and a MACA Board Member, barbecuing ribs for the group.





A rare moment as two generations are active in MACA and both attended the annual meeting. Mike (L) with dad Jim Lehman.



YLSP Co-chairs Jaime Yanes and Rodney Schmidt share a moment.



Colleen Gerdeman and Bill Randell talk with Mark Bishop.



Vice President Tim Riley listens as Jay Morris and Roger Callaway talk.



Rick Lynch and Duane Mol, pause as Norm Wagoner, tells them to smile for the photo.



Rosen's team of Steve Koziolk & Jim Lehman congratulate Croplife Ambassador of the year Chris Williams.



Lindsey Jackson, Sara Lechleider and Matt Wagner are all smiles as they discuss the YLSP.

MACA Young Leaders 2019: The Need for Better Communication



By Eric Sfiligoj

For several years now, the Mid America CropLife Association has worked with sponsors to provide scholarships to worthy students at the nation's land grant universities. At this year's annual meeting in Indianapolis in early September, attendees had the chance to hear from the 2019 recipients regarding their views on such topics as society, their summer internships with ag-oriented companies and organizations, and agriculture in general.

According to **Madelyn Heinecke** from *Southern Illinois University – Carbondale*, who worked at the BASF Research Farm in Seymour, IL, the best part of her internship was connecting with people. "This helped me learn many new things I didn't know, and now I realize I have a lot more to learn," said Heinecke.

Erin Chalupa, from *Iowa State University*, agreed. "The best part of my internship with Valent USA was I got to meet new people each and every day," said Chalupa. "Most ag people have really great passions and values."

According to **Adam Kroll** from *North Dakota State University* who worked as a commodity trading intern with Cargill, this kind of passion for their job was very important, especially this crop year. "In 2019, the grain industry faced a lot of uncertainty," said Kroll. "With trying to get crops planted and all the trade issues, many customers were facing real challenges that they had to communicate to our team."

Speaking of communication, **Mary Buehler** from *The Ohio State University* believed that this was one area where agriculture needed to make a greater effort, particularly when it comes to talking to consumers. "I think we all need to provide better communications with folks who aren't in agriculture, because we haven't been super-stellar at that," said Buehler. "We need to do a better job of telling consumers why we do what we do and why that's important to everyone."

Another student, **Rachel Chayer** from *Colorado State University*, agreed with this view, pointing to the public's concerns about one of the industry's key herbicides, glyphosate. "Some people claim using glyphosate

causes cancer," said Chayer. "I would like to challenge this view and point out to people why glyphosate is safe and agriculture needs it to help control weeds."

Devin Koroleski from *Michigan State University* added he would like to tell the public about all the positives agriculture brings to society. "I always grew up on a farm and I love to talk with people about the pride I feel doing that kind of work," said Koroleski.



Jim Jerkins, makes a point while speaking with Young Leaders.



2019 YLSP Class - L to R Front Row: Nate Dick, KS; Ally Ringeisen, SD; Rachel Chayer, CO; Madelyn Heinecke, IL; Sara Lechliden, IN; Erin Chalupa, IA; Sierra Williamson, MN. Back: - Devin Koroleski, MI; Mary Buehler, OH; Samuel Jesse, WI; Clayton Robinson, MO and Adam Kroll, ND. Missing from photo is Rachel Knox, NE.

Agriculture's Financial Outlook Still Uneven

By Eric Sfiligoj

In terms of difficulty, 2019 would rank near a 10 – and unlike in gymnastics, that's not necessarily a good thing! Although growers and ag retailers have gotten used to lower-than-expected commodity prices, this year piled on the negative news with uneven weather events around the globe and a protracted trade war between many of the world's major agricultural export partners (including the U.S. and China).



Dr. William Tierney, Jr.

At this year's annual Mid America CropLife Association meeting in September, **Dr. William Tierney, Jr.**, *Chief Economist for AgResource Co.*, reviewed the myriad variables affecting agriculture in 2019. He also gave attendees a brief look ahead to 2020, offering a sobering outlook for the marketplace.

First off, Tierney acknowledged just how difficult it was for many of the nation's growers to simply get seed into the ground this past spring. Record and consistent rainfall throughout much of Midwest, Mid-South, and Eastern U.S., followed by unusually cool temperatures, kept many growers from getting into their fields well into June. Even worse, many acres never got planted at all.

"According to the Farm Bureau's August 2019 estimates, there was a total of 19 million prevent plant acres across the country this year," said Tierney. "Six states – Arkansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Illinois, and South Dakota – accounted for almost 57% of this total. South Dakota had the nation's highest number of prevent plant acres at 3.9 million acres."

Given these non-existent or late planting dates, many analysts are forecasting that crop yields will be down significantly for the year. For example, the U.S. corn yield estimate could be 165 bushels per acre, down 12 bushels per acre from the 40-year trend line.

"The average Illinois corn crop won't be at black layer until November," warned Tierney.

And as for soybeans, they might be in even worse shape based upon the available data. "Once a soybean plant begins the podding process, it requires some 53 to 56 days to reach full maturity," said Tierney. "There were 16 million acres of soybeans starting the podding process in late August, they will require nearly eight weeks to reach maturity. First frost/freeze dates will have to hold off until October 19-30, two to three weeks later than normal across the Northern Plains and one to two weeks later than normal across the northern one-third of the Midwest."

Of course, U.S. soybeans might have a larger issue to tackle, namely China. "Chinese imports of American soybeans have all but dried up over the past year," said Tierney. Part of the reason for this, besides the ongoing trade dispute with the U.S., ties back to the steep decline in China's hog herd, which typically consume U.S. soybeans as feed. Because of an outbreak of African swine flu, Tierney estimated that the country has seen its hog production drop by 29% in 2019. And this number is expected to fall another 15% to 26% for 2020.

"Pork production in China may take more than five years to recover," he said. "In fact, Reuters reported as many as half of China's breeding pigs have either died or been slaughtered."

Put all these factors together, said Tierney, and the outlook for the next few years for the nation's growers doesn't appear very bright. "The prospects are that crop prices will continue to be low over the next several years, leading to a period of lower farm incomes," he said. "Even given those prospects, prices could go even lower, causing more financial stress to develop. Right now, I wouldn't be surprised to see corn prices below \$3 per bushel in 2020 and soybeans as low as \$7 per bushel."

MACA UPDATE

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MACA NEW MEMBERS:

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MACA WEBSITE

Be sure and check out the speaker presentations and photos from the MACA Annual Meeting which have been posted on the MACA website and Facebook.

Follow MACA on Facebook.



MACA MEETING

September 8-10, 2020

MACA ANNUAL MEETING

Marriott St. Louis Grand

St. Louis, MO

Mid America CropLife Elects 2019-2020 Leaders

At its annual business meeting recently held in Indianapolis, Indiana, the Mid America CropLife Association (MACA) elected officers for 2019-2020 and filled several board of director positions.

New officers are **President Tim Riley**, *AMVAC Chemical Company*; **Vice President Lindsey Jackson**, *Corteva Agriscience* and **Secretary/Treasurer Greg Welsh**, *CNI*. **Paul Edsten**, *FMC*, will serve as immediate past president.

Elected to three-year board of director terms were: **Joe Olson**, *Helena Agri-Enterprises, LLC*; **Lisa Klein**, *MMI*; and **Jay Morris**, *Morris Bixby*. Elected to two year board of director terms were **David Bartine**, *XPO Logistics*, and **Randy Stookey**, *Kansas Agribusiness Retailers Association*. Stookey will serve as the state association representative.



MACA 2019-2020 Board of Directors

L to R seated: Vice President Lindsey Jackson, President Tim Riley, Immediate Past President Paul Edsten, and Secretary/Treasurer Greg Welsh. Back Row: Brian Clark, Randy Stookey, Jay Morris, Joe Olson, Shelbi Domjen, David Bartine, Steve Koziolk, Susan Macy. Missing from photo is Lisa Klein.

KEY MEETING DATES

November 5-6, 2019

*Sustainability –
What Can We Do About It?*

Renaissance St. Louis Airport Hotel
St. Louis, MO

November 6-7, 2019

MACA Quarterly Meetings

Renaissance St. Louis Airport Hotel
St. Louis, MO

September 8-10, 2020

MACA Annual Meeting

Marriott St. Louis Grand
St. Louis, MO



On June 5, 2019, MACA visited the FOOD ROOF Farm, the first rooftop farm in St. Louis. The farm grows over 200 edible vegetables and includes a living wall and hydroponic towers.





WATER UPDATE

– By Steve Taylor, MACA Water Consultant

The WOTUS train keeps rolling down the tracks and so I want to provide a brief update on the status of ‘repeal and replace’ (the repeal of the current WOTUS rule currently in effect and the new WOTUS rule that will be its replacement). Regarding the new WOTUS rule, in the MACA newsletter earlier this year, I discussed in some detail the comments MACA provided EPA on that draft rule. The public comment period has been completed and expectations are that the new replacement rule will become final around the first

of next year. In the meantime, the EPA just recently provided a final rule repealing the current WOTUS rule. There was nothing particularly surprising regarding the rule to repeal. During the time period in which the current rule is repealed and the new rule goes into effect, the EPA and the Corps of Engineers will revert back to pre-2015 status and will enforce Clean Water Act regulations “informed by applicable agency guidance documents and consistent with Supreme Court decisions and longstanding agency practice.” I know this process is somewhat confusing. But, basically, we are going back to pre-2015 policy until the new ‘replacement’ WOTUS rule becomes final, which should be sometime next year.

It is important to remember that more legal battles are surely ahead. All these actions by the agencies will likely end up back in court and likely before the U.S. Supreme Court. Perhaps with this in mind, the ‘repeal’ rule was over 172 pages long with much of that involving justifications that can be used in the upcoming



With the repeal of the WOTUS rule, this farm operation is now less likely to result in a violation.

legal battles. Another important legal development was a recent decision by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Georgia which ruled that EPA and the Corps exceeded their authority under the Clean Water Act and violated the Administrative Procedures Act when it issued the current WOTUS rule. Among the items noted by the Court, it stated that the definition of a water ‘tributary’ was too broad and that there was a lack of proof that waters within the rule’s distance limits satisfied the significant nexus test. The Court also stated that the rule imposed a significant intrusion on traditional state authority because of its vast expansion of jurisdiction over waters within the states’ authority. The Court determined that the rule was arbitrary and capricious because the distance and floodplain limitations were not adequately explained. And finally, the Court stated that the agencies failed to apply the normal farming exemptions allowed by the Clean Water Act. This and any ruling now being issued by the Courts could indeed have an impact on legal proceeding ahead.

Switching focus from WOTUS for a moment, it might be well to note that EPA appears to also be broadening its focus beyond WOTUS. In August, EPA management sent a memorandum to all EPA Office of Water Program Directors regarding the thousands of policy documents and guidance documents that have produced by EPA over the years. These are not rules like WOTUS, but nevertheless, they direct how EPA staff enforces the Clean Water Act. The plan will be for these ruled to be reviewed and possibly rescinded. The memorandum stated that EPA plans to establish a website which will house the thousands of policy and guidance documents so that they all will be available for public review. MACA will monitor this website once it is available and we will certainly focus on those that are of crucial importance to MACA members, and of course, continue to keep you informed.

EXECUTIVE REPORT



Bonnie McCarvel
Executive Director

Thank you! Yes, thank you for your membership in MACA, participation and support of the various programs throughout the year. The MACA Annual Meeting was a great opportunity to hear speakers, meet with the YLSP students, see longtime friends like Pat Robinson who served as the 1996-1997 MACA President and his wife Mary, as well as meet new people who have an interest in MACA. For me, the annual meeting recharges and energizes me for the year ahead. After looking at photos from the meeting, it looks like many people feel the same way so the year ahead is off to a great start.

One of the exciting events planned is the sustainability forum. 'Sustainability – What Can We Do about It?' is the theme for the forum scheduled for Tuesday, November 5 – Wednesday, November 6 at the Renaissance Airport Hotel, St. Louis. This is a conference you don't want to miss! The keynote speaker on Tuesday is **Michelle Miller, Farm Babe™**. Her presentation, *Food System Security – Feeding the World*, will kick-off the conference on November 5 at 1:15 pm.

Speakers will address various topics and include:

- *Cybersecurity in Precision Ag/Technology* - **Mike Matson, FBI Louisville;**
- *Ag Plastics* - **Mark Hudson, ACRC;**
- *The Future of Transportation Infrastructure* will include **J. Chris Klenklen, MO Department of Agriculture** and **Cheryl Ball, JD, MO Department of Transportation;**
- *Food vs. Ag* with **Joe Kelsay, Corteva Agriscience;**
- *What Does Sustainability Mean to Consumers vs. Everyone Else* will be **Carter Purcell, Field to Market;**

- *Sustainability in Conventional Farming* by **Matt Carstens, Land O'Lakes;**
- *State Actions* will be presented by **Ben Wicker, IN Agriculture Nutrient Alliance** and **Randy Stookey, Kansas Agriculture Retailers Association;**
- *The New ARA Program* will be presented by **Donnie Taylor, Agricultural Retailers Association.**

Tuesday evening there will be a reception and dinner for participants to talk with speakers as well as network. The Wednesday lunch will include table discussion to share ideas on how to use the information presented.

The topics and issues are timely. The 11 speakers are experts in their field and are excited to be a part of the program. This will be an opportunity to talk with the speakers as well as other attendees about sustainability, how it may impact you and what you can do.

For the complete schedule go to **www.maca.org** and register for the conference and reserve a hotel room. Early registration closes October 25, 2019.

As the board and committee chairs make plans for the year ahead, please let me know if there is an issue or program that you would like to see MACA address. The board as well as committee chairs and members want to provide programs that are meaningful, and so the best way to do that is to provide your input.

MACA is successful because of all of you. The 2019 growing year in the Midwest has been one of the most challenging in years, yet the membership has responded positively in so many ways. New sponsors for the Young Leader Scholarship Program stepped up and committed their support while others stepped up to be a sponsor for the MACA Annual Meeting, and others are planning to be sponsors in 2020. It was amazing!

By working together we can accomplish so many things.



SEPTEMBER 8-10, 2020
MACA ANNUAL MEETING
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