The County Agent

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President's Corner

Richard Fechter
NACAA President

According to the calendar, Spring is officially here. For many of us that could not come soon enough. Many parts of the country have suffered through catastrophic weather events this winter. Our friends and neighbors in the northern Midwest are suffering from floods and other issues. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers as many agricultural producer's lives will be forever changed.

Now that all the awards applications and abstracts have been submitted, our committees will begin the hard work of determining winners and presentations for the 2019 AM/PIC. Due to the AM/PIC being a bit later in the year, this issue of the magazine will not be the registration issue. This issue will focus on a couple of NACAA's programs that sometimes do not get as much attention as some. The NACAA Scholarship program has benefitted many members over the years. Highlighted in this issue will be some of our past year's scholarship winners with a recap of what they were awarded scholarship dollars for and how they benefited. After reading some of the wonderful things that NACAA members have done with their scholarship monies, you still have time to apply for a scholarship this year. Applications are due by June 1. Keep in mind that a member must meet the vested requirements to apply for and receive scholarships. This must be done by the end of the previous years AM/PIC. For more information, contact myself or the Scholarship Committee Chair Donna Beliech.

In addition to a recap of some scholarship winners, there is an update of the Outstanding Young Farmers program in the magazine. Each year NACAA members have the opportunity to nominate young farmers that they work with for this prestigious award. Every year NACAA members nominate outstanding young farmers that place in the top 10 in the final rankings for this award.

The next issue will be the registration issue for the upcoming 2019 AM/PIC in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The Indiana association members are working hard to plan a successful 2019 AM/PIC. When the next issue of the magazine, comes out, be sure and read through it and get registered. Many of our traditional programs and activities of the AM/PIC will be taking place. In addition, there will be some slight modifications to parts of the schedule. There will be more professional development opportunities for members as there will be more super seminars and hopefully more member presentations. NACAA membership is up from 2018 and the number of communication entries this year was up as well. Hopefully that means that attendance at the 2019 AM/PIC will more than meet our expectations.

Hope to see many of you at the upcoming PILD Conference. Until next time, keep up the good work that each of you do in your communities, counties, parishes, and states and continue to make differences in people's lives.

Inside this Edition:

2019 National Outstanding Young Farmers Awards Congress a Huge Success!

NACAA Outstanding Young Farmer Representative, Tammy Cheely - Georgia

When I was chosen to serve as NACAA's Liaison to the Outstanding Young Farmers Program, I had no idea how rewarding and just simply fun this assignment would be. I started by shadowing a long-time close friend, Ray Hicks, who I replaced in this position. We attended the 2019 National Outstanding Young Farmer Awards Congress in Bettendorf, Iowa in early February. The experience was special from beginning to end. It started by being greeted at the airport and escorted to our hotel shuttle by Outstanding Young Farmer Alumni Jerry Barnes who was obviously excited to be there and thrilled to welcome alumni and newcomers to the event! Every meal, program, tour and session was filled with the same kind of enthusiasm from all of the alumni, officers and organizers of this yearly event. The alumni are like a huge family with members from all over the country. The top ten finalists are treated like royalty during the awards congress and it is well deserved when you hear all of their accomplishments. These new finalists are quickly taken into the family. It is amazing how many return for the rest of their lives.

The Outstanding Farmers of America is comprised of past nominees of the Outstanding Young Farmer Program. The group is designed to facilitate an exchange of ideas and friendship that encourages excellence and involvement in agriculture and the local, state, and national community. There are approximately 1,500 members of the OFA across the nation who utilize their connections with each other in a strong networking format to assist farmers and promote the importance of America's farming community. The group's mission is "to be the premier recognition program by celebrating the diversity, productivity and efficiency of today's agricultural professionals." Their vision is to be a Positive Voice in Agriculture by fostering Strong Relationships by offering the best opportunities in Education and Networking and recognizing efforts in Land Stewardship, Community Involvement and Modern Business Practices.

This program is administered by the Outstanding Young Farmers of America Fraternity, sponsored by John Deere, founded by the United Stated Junior Chamber and supported by us, the National Association of County Agricultural Agents.

Guest Master of Ceremonies Orion Samuelson announcing finalists

The purpose of the Outstanding Young Farmers Program is to bring about a greater interest in the farmer to foster better urban-rural relations through the understanding of the farmer's endeavors, to develop a further appreciation for their contributions and achievements, and to inform the agribusiness community of the growing urban awareness of the importance of farmers and their impact on America's economy.

As the farmer's business has changed, so has his or her involvement in the community. Today's farmer has become an active citizen, participating in everything from local and state government to civic groups and charitable organizations. It is not only fitting that farmers be honored for their contributions and achievements—it is essential. This award has been established to recognize outstanding achievements in agriculture as well as community involvement.

Guest Speaker at the Banquet, 2018 NACAA President Alan Galloway

The National Outstanding Young Farmers Awards Congress is the culmination of the intense independent judging process. Nominees from across the United States are eligible and may be submitted by anyone. Multiple nominations from any one state are permitted; however, following the judging process to determine the semi-finalists, no more than two from any state will be chosen.

Qualifications include:

- Nominees must be between the ages of 21 and 40, not becoming 41 prior to January 1 before the National OYF Awards Congress.
- Nominees must be actual farm operators, deriving a minimum of two-thirds of their income from farming.
- All the information about the National Outstanding Young Farmers Awards Congress and program can be obtained by visiting www.ofafraternity.org.

National winners are determined based

10 Finalists at John Deere Headquarters

on personal contributions in the following categories:

- Progress in agricultural career (50%)
- Extent of soil and water conservation practices (25%)
- Contributions to the well-being of the community, state, and nation (25%)

This year four of the top ten finalists were nominated by NACAA. Two of these four wound up being National Finalists. That speaks highly of NACAA's contribution to this program. The 2020 OYF Awards Congress is slated for February 6 – 9 in Westbrook Connecticut. Please take some time now and think about deserving young farmers in your area that you could nominate for this honor. If they are chosen as a top ten finalist, it will definitely be a life changing experience for them and if you chose to participate in the Awards Congress with them, it will be life changing for you too.

For more information, questions or encouragement to participate, call me at 706-465-2136 or email me at tcheely@uga.edu

Finalists for the National Outstanding Young Farmers award include (from left) Andy Fisher of Wisconsin, Brad and Jill McIntyre, of Idaho, Luke and Hilarie Petersen of Utah, Brandon and Jessica Batten of North Carolina, Ben and Kate Sowers of Maryland, Derek and Renee Martin of Illinois, Doty and Mary Gregory Porter of Mississippi, Marcus and Neely South of Georgia, Ben and Susan Albright of Iowa, and Jimmy and Anna Abma of New Jersey.

The four National Outstanding Young Farmers for 2019 are (from left) Brandon and Jessica Batten of North Carolina, Ben and Kate Sowers of Maryland, Derek and Renee Martin of Illinois and Ben and Susan Albright of Iowa.

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Editor: Scott Hawbaker - 6584 W. Duroc Rd., Maroa, IL 61756
Phone (217) 794-3700 • Fax (217) 794-5901
E-mail: nacaaemail@aol.com

NACAA Scholarship Highlights
Funded by the NACAA Educational Foundation

Each year, for NACAA members who are vested in the scholarship program, an opportunity exists to receive scholarship funding for educational development activities. Applications are submitted to the NACAA Scholarship Committee by **June 1st,** for review and consideration for funding. Funds for the scholarship program are given by the NACAA Educational Foundation - a 501 c (3) non-profit organization (a separate legal entity from NACAA). In order to be vested in the scholarship program, a NACAA member must contribute a minimum of $40 to receive up to a lifetime $1,000 in scholarship. Contributions at the $100+ level, allow for a lifetime scholarship of up to $2,000. Applications are judged and funded based on completeness, plan for training, how it will be used/applied post training, and availability of funds. The scholarship is for individual or group professional improvement which may include advanced degrees, graduate credits, tours, seminars, research or other specialized training. In order to be vested, the minimum donation of $40/$100 must be made to the NACAA Scholarship fund by the end of the previous AM/PIC. At anytime, a member may search the NACAA online database **(https://www.nacaa.com/scholarship/)** to view what level of contribution are currently recorded, as well as total scholarship funds received to date. For specific scholarship criteria please see (**https://www.nacaa.com/scholarship/criteria.php)**

Within this edition of ***The County Agent,*** are reprints of Educational Experience Reports which each previous award winner has submitted to the NACAA Scholarship Committee and NACAA Educational Foundation (a requirement for funding). These reports are from within the last 24 months and are quite impressive in regards to the educational value each individual/group experienced.

Proceeds from the NACAA Live Auction held at each years AM/PIC are used by the NACAA Educational Foundation to assist in funding the scholarships, as well as contributions made by members. On average, approximately $18,000-$20,000 per year is awarded to NACAA members for scholarship purposes.

If you would like to make a donation to the NACAA Educational Foundation Scholarship program, you can do so via credit card on the NACAA website (www.nacaa.com - bottom left hand corner - Donate button), or you can send a check made payable to the NACAA Educational Foundation, and mail to NACAA, 6584 W. Duroc Road, Maroa, IL 61756.

Enjoy reading about the exciting opportunities many of our NACAA members had from receiving funding from the NACAA Educational Foundation Scholarship program!

Agricultural Study Trip to Ireland

Kathy Flanders, Lisa Kriese-Anderson, Landon Marks, Paul Mask, Danny Miller, Kent Stanford and Kim Wilkins

Ireland is an island measuring 174 miles wide by 302 miles long, which is approximately the size of Indiana. The gulf stream provides ideal weather conditions (45°F to 65°F with 35 to 45 inches of yearly rainfall) to grow perennial ryegrass and white clover pastures. Many producers commented it rains one-third of the time in Ireland. Some commented that was every 3rd day or 8 of every 24 hours. Agricultural enterprises occupy almost 64% of the land in Ireland and pastureland is 81% of that total. Dairy and beef are the largest two agricultural sectors. In fact, there are more cattle in Ireland than people. With the amount of pastureland and livestock, greenhouse gas emissions represent 32% of all emissions in Ireland.

In September 2017, agricultural Extension professionals from Alabama traveled to Ireland to study nutrient management, livestock and crop enterprises and extension methods. The group was able to interact and learn from Teagasc (pronounced Cha-gas) scientists and advisors, producers and industry for 11 days.

As part of the European Union, Ireland must comply with many environmental regulations. From a nutrient management standpoint, producers must strictly adhere to their nutrient management plans. Commercial fertilizer and manure applications are regulated, including cutoff dates in the fall for application of

nutrients from each source. Farmers soil test annually. Soil test results will dictate the maximum amount of nutrients that can be applied and nutrient purchases are

closely monitored by Irish officials. To apply more nutrients than soil test results allow, farmers must apply for a Nitrates Derogation. Typically, farmers will apply 70 units of nitrogen in the spring, along with any needed phosphorous and potassium. An additional 30 units of nitrogen may be applied after grazing events when additional growth is needed. One dairyman shared with our group that inspectors had visited his farm three times this year already to compare his fertilizer purchases to the application records he maintains.

Phosphorous is heavily regulated, with the ultimate goal of no net-P in the soil at the end of the growing season. Nutrient management plans only allow phosphorous to be applied at the crops removal rate. No banking of additional phosphorous in the soil is permitted.

Soil organic matter ranges from a low of 2.5% to a high of 8% in many areas. These rich limestone and sandstone soils are basically a sponge that absorbs the frequent rainfall easily. There is little or no evidence of erosion. Field borders and property lines are marked by thick rock walls and hedges throughout the country. Although rain falls almost one-third of the time, there is little runoff. While buffers and filter strips are common in the United States, Irish producers do not have either to contend with. The land is intensively managed with every available acre utilized correctly.

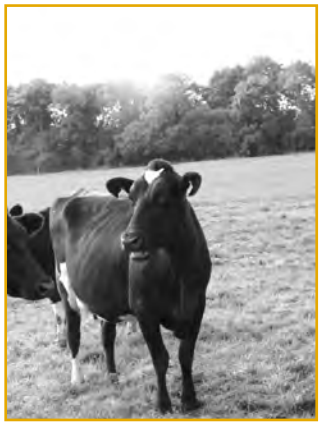
Perennial ryegrass is the primary forage with some white clover. Farmers commonly discussed plans to replant these paddocks on a routine basis, often every five years. Ryegrass stands were composed of many ryegrass varieties which created incredibly thick and dense stands. Seeding rates are similar to our recommendations in the U.S. but with a dramatically different result. The cool weather and continuous, light rain creates ideal growing conditions for the crop. Similar to New Zealand in this regard, dairy production is the wisest, best-use of the resources they have to work with.

Scientists at Teasgasc conduct ryegrass variety trials yearly. Teagasc is the Agricultural and Food Development Authority in Ireland and is responsible for agricultural research, student education and extension. From these ryegrass variety trials, they have developed pasture profit indexes (PPI) on varieties. There are 5 PPI including early spring growth, overall season growth, persistency, nutrient quality and silage quality. Ireland has set a national goal of producing 15 T DM/ha for pastures. Farmers use rising plate meters to measure ryegrass production and report measurements in an app created by Teasgasc scientists. Currently, average forage production is 12 T DM/ha.

Perennial ryegrass paddocks in Ireland have very few weeds. The main reasons for this are effective use of rotational grazing and proactive use of herbicides. The greatest weed problems were observed in lower input farms in southwestern Ireland, where farmers contend with poorer soil and hilly terrain. Frit flies are a key pest affecting establishment of perennial ryegrass stands and are managed through a timely insecticide application.

It is common practice for Irish livestock producers to take their animals off the grazing paddocks for the winter months. This is not due to harsh winter conditions, but instead as a way of preserving the grass stands. Barley straw is used as bedding material for those animals that will be

housed in barns. It is not uncommon to see slatted-floor barns utilized, for both. Contractors provide services such as silage/balage harvest, manure spreading, and fertilizer applications. Dairy producers in particular find it much more cost-effective to pay for these services versus owning the equipment. These contractors drive their equipment to each farm versus the hauling of equipment commonly seen in the U.S.



There are approximately 14,000 dairies in Ireland. Most of the dairies are grass based dairies which produce milk from February to December each year. This milk is used to produce cheese, ice cream and infant formula. Ireland is the world's largest producer of infant formula. Milk production was measured and paid by protein or solids instead of fluid milk as we are accustomed to in the United States. 90% of dairy production in Ireland is exported as solids such as cheese, ice cream, butter, creams, and whey. Grass based dairies begin calving in February and finish by April. Until April, mixing rations of ryegrass silage, barley and other minor grain supplements is a common practice on grass-based dairy farms. The goal is to have all cows rebred in 9 to 12 weeks post-partum. The average production of grass based dairies in Ireland is slightly over 15,000 lbs. milk/year. Approximately

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10% of Ireland's dairies produce the fluid milk needed for consumption and are run similarly to U.S. dairies. Companies like Dairymaster, Alltech and Keenen provide cutting edge technology and equipment for the dairies that milk year round.

Most beef producers are part-time farmers. Primary beef cattle breeds used in Ireland are Limousin, Simmental, Belgian Blue, Salers, and Charolais. Most beef farmers use traditional (red and white) Simmental cows mated to Continental terminal sire breeds. It is not uncommon for calves to wean between 750 and 1000 lbs. at 7 months of age. The European Union does not allow beef producers to use growth implants. Most bull calves are fed intact except if they were very heavy at weaning. Calves are finished primarily on ryegrass and ryegrass silage with limited use of concentrates. Calves are generally slaughtered between 16 and 24 months of age. Cattle are sold based on conformation (muscling) and age. Having cattle ready for slaughter at Christmas is desirable since 47% of Irish beef is exported to England and beef is the protein of choice at Christmas in England. Average herd size is similar to the U.S.

There are approximately 2.4 million ewes in Ireland. Sheep are raised on range land (less fertile) as well as improved rotational grass systems. Teasgasc developed a maternal composite breed of sheep in the 1970's named Belclare that many commercial sheep producers utilize. They are mated to terminal sire breeds of Charollais, Texel, Suffolk and Vendeen. Most of the lambs are exported to Scotland for finishing.

Over 300,000 hectares of the best land in Ireland is used for tillage. Cereal crops are the main output led by barley, followed by wheat and oats. Because of the fertile soils, Ireland produced the most wheat per hectare in the world. Irish farmers also grow maize, beans, peas, oilseed rape, sugar beets, and potatoes. Potato farming has become very intensive. Most potatoes are grown for consumption but a few potato farms grow the crop for seed trade only. Rooster is the variety that is most commonly grown, representing approximately 55% of the crop. More potatoes are still eaten in Ireland today than in most other countries in the world.

English grain aphids injure barley and wheat by direct feeding and more importantly by spreading viruses such as barley yellow dwarf virus and cereal yellow dwarf virus. Many populations of English grain aphids are resistant to the pyrethroid insecticides which had been the most effective management tool. Researchers at Teagasc are exploring alternatives, such as use of native flowers in the field borders to encourage natural enemies of aphids. Disease management is a challenge in a country where statistically rain can be expected a third of the time. Potato growers rely on fungicides with various modes of action, both curative and preventive, to control diseases such as late blight. The pathogen causing Septoria leaf blight on wheat and barley has become resistant to most fungicides. In order to manage this disease farmers have to apply a combination of three fungicides three times throughout the growing season. Specialty crop farmers face their own challenges. A black currant grower is trying grass strips to help manage pests in as natural a way as possible. A leaf curl midge is one of his greatest problems at this time.

Teagasc is also responsible for extension. Extension agents are called advisors in Ireland. Currently, there are 52 advisory offices located throughout Ireland employing 1000 to 1200 people. Advisors are hired as dairy, beef, sheep or crop advisors. There is no program equivalent to 4-H in Ireland. Teagasc advisors provide a mixture of fee based and free programing. Advisors generate approximately 50% of their yearly salary helping farmers with paperwork regarding EU agricultural subsidies and filing for derogations. Another very successful fee based program is Discussion Groups. The fee to belong to a Discussion Group starts at $140 euros/year. These are small groups of like-minded farmers organized by advisors that meet regularly at each other's farms and discuss challenges to efficient and profitable production. Producers indicated Discussion Groups were important for their success. Advisors also organize an annual Teagasc Advisory Program. This program provides farmers throughout the country an opportunity to see new research and technology applied to farm conditions. This event attracts several thousand farmers and is a no cost program. A wide range of practical, financial, technical, and

educational training is available for farm family clients. Each advisor has specific expectations. For example, a dairy advisor is expected to work with 150 clients, 5 discussion groups, make 100 farm visits and 300 consultations per year.

Studying in Ireland was extremely beneficial in better understanding agriculture on a global scale. In Alabama, it is expected Discussion Groups will be implemented into extension programming in 2018. It is also expected that we will strongly encourage producers to soil and forage test to better manage their nutrients. This study trip was organized by Explorations by Thor, who is a NACAA partner in providing professional development to NACAA members.

L to R: Kent Stanford - Nutrient Management Specialist, Kim Wilkins - Regional Agent for Agronomic Crops, Landon Marks - Regional Agent for Animal Science and Forages, Danny Miller - County Coordinator in Cherokee County, Paul Mask - Assistant Extension Director for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Kathy Flanders - Entomology Extension Specialist and Lisa Kriese-Anderson - Beef Cattle Extension Specialist

Dickeya and Pectobacterium - Potato Disease Summit NACAA Scholarship Educational Report

Bonnie C. Wells, DPM
Extension Agent II, Commercial Agriculture
UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns County

Dickeya and Pectobacterium are bacterial soft rot pathogens that cause the potentially devastating disease of potato, blackleg. In recent years, blackleg has been causing significant economic losses in potato production nationwide. In Florida, our potato producers have been no exception. Currently, there are no resistant cultivars or treatment options available once the potato is infected. Yield reductions as much as 100% have been seen with blackleg disease. Being the commercial agriculture agent in St. Johns County, the official 'Potato Capital of Florida,' I serve over 15,000 acres of potato production, helping growers find solutions to their production challenges, and of the challenges faced, blackleg has been on the forefront for several growing seasons. Growers in the area have been facing significant losses from Pectobacterium both in seed, field and storage, and now, more recently, Dickeya an associated pathogen, is sweeping across the nation. To date, Dickeya has been reported in 16 states, including Florida, on at least nine potato varieties.

The University of Maine responded to the situation by hosting the Dickeya and Pectobacterium Summit, an international symposium focused on the latest research and steps needed to help the potato industry face these pathogens in the US and beyond. The summit was held in beautiful Bangor, Maine, and featured the current advances in the detection and diagnosis of Dickeya and Pectobacterium, and the spread, risk and management of these pathogens in potato cropping systems across the US. More than 170 people from four countries attended the important event. Speakers included potato experts from the Netherlands, Scotland, Maine, Colorado, New Jersey, North Dakota and New York.

The key take-home points from the summit were that Dickeya is a seed issue and the initial sources of infection need to be determined for proper management of the disease. Blackleg development is related to seed inoculum levels. When comparing Dickeya and Pectobacterium, lower levels of Dickeya are needed to cause damage. Dickeya's survival rate in the soil is much

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less than in water and field losses can occur even without visible seed problems. The spread of Dickeya is rapid during potato handling, and inoculum buildup increases with seed generations. Dickeya is most damaging in temperatures of more than 77 °F.

Both pathogens can be airborne, soil-borne, mechanically spread, and perhaps even spread by insects, but the initial sources of seed infection are largely unknown. Seed lot inspection before planting and sanitation are currently the front line of defense for managing the spread of the disease. Because these are bacterial pathogens, they proliferate in wet conditions, so avoiding waterlogged soils is a way to control the disease during cultivation. Also, avoiding crop damage is essential as any damage will allow bacterial pathogens to enter potato plants and spread to tubers.

Blackleg symptoms from infected seed start to show up about 45- 55 days after planting. Non-emergence is the most common symptom in the field, and infected tubers can be symptomless on the outside but rotten on the inside, or the infection can be latent altogether, and disease may not show up until conditions are favorable in subsequent years.

Steve Johnson, UMaine, shows Dickeya distribution in U. S.

The summit had a reoccurring theme after each speaker. Each expert was asked, "What needs to be addressed now? What research needs to be done to help us move forward with this issue?" Consensus was that we need to establish Dickeya thresholds for seed certification, as well as understand sublethal infection and spread. The epidemiology and etiology of the pathogens in potato systems is unclear and diagnostics of the pathogen needs to be improved. Diagnostic tests should yield less false negatives, and there is a need to develop protocols for surface water detection and epidemiology.

Thank you to the National Association of Agricultural Agents for the professional development scholarship funding to travel to the 2017 Dickeya and Pectobacterium Summit. This opportunity was an excellent way to get up to speed on the current status of these pathogens. I will now pass the knowledge learned on to the commercial potato producers in St. Johns County so they are well-equipped with the know-how on how to face and manage these pathogens in 2018 and the subsequent growing seasons. I will be updating the St. Johns County potato growers on what I learned during a "Lunch and Learn" series on December 9, 2017.

District 11 TCAAA Professional Development Tour of Agriculture in the Southeastern United States

By: Michael Hiller and Jason P. Ott

On May 6, thirteen County Agriculture Agents from the Coastal Bend of Texas departed for a week long tour of agriculture in the Southeastern United States. Texas'Coastal Bend District stretches from Bay City south to Corpus Christi and inland to Brenham in the northeast corner. Our district is dominated by cotton, cattle, and grain sorghum production and we were eager to learn about the diversity of agriculture in the Southeast and the way cooperative extension in other states functions. Funded with a NACAA Professional Development Scholarship the group flew out of Houston into Atlanta.

On the ground in Atlanta we met with Melissa Mattee, Fulton County Extension

agent who arranged for a unique tour of urban agriculture in Fulton County, Atlanta starting with a tour of the Georgia Tech University campus. We were able to see the green evolution trends throughout the campus. One student center had a rooftop garden and they are currently constructing a "living building" that will recycle all water that goes through it for use on plants on the rooftop and landscape and it will also supply its own energy. The campus as a whole is transitioning from large open turf areas to vegetation more native to Atlanta; a theme that continued through our next stop at the Atlanta Belt Line. The Belt Line is an old railroad line 22 miles long around Atlanta. They are taking out the railroad and making it into a walk way and bike route a section at a time. Like the Tech campus they are bringing back native trees and plants all along the Belt Line. That afternoon we toured the Atlanta History Center. Viewed gardens and visited with the 4-H agent for Fulton County, Georgia who offices out of that facility. She discussed the programs being conducted there and the challenges of managing a 4-H program in a large urban county. We then visited Farm Chastain with Fulton County Master Gardener, Rosie Davidson. The program is being run totally by volunteers and is

heavily dependent on Master Gardeners. Their main purpose was to educate any visitors, adults and children, about plants and gardens.

The following day we departed Atlanta to meet Kip Balkcom at USDA ARS National Soil Dynamics Laboratory in Auburn, Alabama and other research scientists. At the NSDL we discussed their work on soil compaction, carbon content, cover crops, and fertility management. Andrew Price, research scientist spoke about weed resistance management and their work on rolling cover crops to control tough weeds. Ted Kornecki showed us equipment used for reduced-till and no-till systems and cover crop termination. We then traveled to the "The Old Rotation" maintained Dr. Dennis Delaney. The test has been experimental test plot in continuous cotton production since 1896. Since 1997 all plots have been planted using conservation tillage.

Leaving Auburn we departed for the Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama where African Americans trained to become pilots. The field of aviation excluded African Americans until 1939 when Congress passed the Civilian Pilot Training Act designed to turn out large numbers of pilots who could move quickly into military aviation if needed. In May 1940 the first class of CPT pilots completed

elementary flight training at Kennedy Field near Tuskegee. While in Tuskegee we went to see the George Washington Carver Museum and learned how Carver became famous not for his great wisdom, nor for his brilliance as an educator, but for his servant leadership to a poor and under served audience in rural Alabama. He was an early pioneer of extension work.
Prior to our departure we toured "The Oaks" the home of Booker T Washington Tuskegee University's founder.

Continuing on our journey, we arrived mid week at the Coastal Plain Experiment Station to meet Eric Prostko, Weed Specialist, with UGA Tifton Campus. Dr. Prostko gave us an overview of agricultural statistics for the state of Georgia, discussed how Extension and Research work in the state, and then showed us some of his trials on weed management in corn and peanuts. That afternoon we arrived at the Wiregrass Research and Extension Center and meet with Larry Wells, director of WREC. They conduct trials on peanuts, cotton, cattle, citrus, and more. We also had the opportunity to interact with Ricky Hudson, Regional Extension Agent for beef cattle. We learned how his daily responsibilities varied from ours as an agent who supports beef cattle production in a 9 counties region verses an agent serving all aspects of agriculture in a single county.

After spending the night in Mobile, AL we arrived the next morning at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab Estuary to meet John Dendo who talked to us about the Lab which was founded in 1971. It was an old air force base built in 1955 that now houses the Shelby Center of Fisheries and has programs for undergraduate and graduates. The Estuarium is a public education aquarium also at the lab. All total the lab consists of 32 acres and 28 buildings. The Shellfish Laboratory at DISL has diploid, triploid and tetraploid oysters. They have a hatchery set up for selling these to farmers and to help keep the population of oysters up. After spending most of the day at the DISL we briefly toured historic Fort Gains and the Jefferson Davis Museum in Biloxi, Mississippi as we traveled to New Orleans, LA.

Friday morning we were greeted at our hotel by Dr. Bobby Soileau, Ag Leadership Director with the LSU Ag Center. He was born and raised in New Orleans and he spent the day with us showcasing the southern portion of the state including Orleans and Jefferson Parishes starting with the Bucktown Marina. The Mississippi River has three man made diversions into Lake Ponchitrain. All this fresh water has changed fishing and marine life for the area and local fishermen discussed the challenges of making a living shrimping the waters in the local area.

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We then went to Zen-Noh Grain Corporation's export elevator located in Convent, LA. Zen- Noh's primary mission is to serve Japanese Agriculture. The elevator can load or unload, simultaneously, more than 120,000 bushels per hour. To this day, the Convent elevator is considered to be the fastest export elevator in the world and it is currently in the process of being upgraded to improve operational efficiency. They employ around 200 people who keep the elevator working 24 hours a day, 364 days a year in 12 hour shifts. They have the capability to load out over 2 million bushels each day. Their record for one month is nearly 400 million bushels set in October of 2016. They serve a critical need in feeding a hungry Japan that imports 90% of the calories its citizens consume. Leaving the elevator we visited Brandon Gravois' farming operation near Convent, LA. He farms over 10,000 acres of mostly sugarcane and about 100 acres of tobacco. The tobacco is an extremely labor intensive crop. From planting to marketing it takes nearly 18 months to generate revenue from a tobacco crop. We were also given an opportunity to view much of the specialized equipment used for sugarcane and tobacco production, as well as, some of the unique on-farm modifications he has made to his equipment to improve its efficiency in order to meet his needs. That evening we enjoyed a final meal as a group in the French Quarter of New Orleans before catching an early departing flight back to Houston.

Bovine Vet Conference

Jerry Bertoldo, DVM or Gerald R. Bertoldo, DVM

The annual conference of the American Association of Bovine Practitioners was held in Omaha, Nebraska on September 14-16, 2017. It brought together 2,029 individuals of which over 1,400 were veterinarians, veterinary students, graduate students or vet techs. This year's theme was "What We Know That Isn't So", a humbling proclamation for the veterinary world! This was probably the best AABP conference I have ever attended.

From the opening keynote address by Mark L. Gruber, MD, a noted pioneer in the study of human medicine diagnostic error, dozens of "myths" and long held "truths" were exposed and discussed throughout the three days. Scientific evidence repeatedly was used to explain why we need to leave our comfort zones and relearn what we believe at times.

Through general sessions, beef and dairy tracts, research summaries and poster sessions a mix of university faculty, graduate students and industry delivered a wide array of information on nutrition, reproduction, genetics, infectious disease, metabolic issues, vaccines, zoonotic disease, antibiotic stewardship and the human side of animal production.

The trade show was a great opportunity to be updated on new products and diagnostic technologies. Not being in veterinary practice for almost two decades limits my exposure to sales representatives and the parade of "new and exciting" things they detail. The networking with the players in the cattle industry at a venue of this scope proved as always to be quite valuable.

More immediate in impact to my Dairy Specialist position with Cornell Extension

The photo is one of my dairy colleague Libby Eiholzer and myself at our 2017 "Artificial Insemination & Bovine Reproduction" training that we do every year or so. It is part of the "Dairy Skills Trainings" series mentioned in the article. Even though it is not just of me, it is one of the better representations of on-the-farm-living and we are 'dressed' for the part.

were the wide array of subject areas to consider for writing newsletters, developing or modifying on farm "dairy skills trainings" and subjects for discussion groups. One special bonus was the ability to hear presentations on topics that will be featured in a young stock focused conference that I am the annual chair of in December. Visiting in person with four of the speakers on the agenda of the upcoming meeting was very useful. Being up to speed on potential presentation content helps greatly in guiding presenters for continuity and learning objectives.

With tight budgets a universal concern, the NACAA scholarship program is a welcomed avenue to pursue for educational opportunities whether of a large and small nature. The Scholarship Fund enables us to leverage relatively small contributions into awards many times that dollar value. Just another great benefit of being a part of the National Association of County Agricultural agent's family!

Sunbelt Ag Expo: Quite an Educational Experience

Lenny Rogers, North Carolina State University

Attending the Sunbelt Ag Expo was quite an educational experience. My first stop in the gate was to stop by the office and chat with Chip Blalock the Executive Director or the Sun Belt Ag Expo. During the next two days I visited many educational booths, sessions and exhibits. There were hundreds or probably thousands of agriculture supply/equipment booths, various University buildings and much more. Many of these were very helpful and informative as I made business contacts as well. I'll now list four or so of my most educational experiences there.

First of all the TeeJet booth and spray nozzle display was quite impressive. It showed spray patterns of many different nozzles such as flat fan (with and without air induction), turbo induction nozzles and many more. Coverage of surfaces and spray drift was demonstrated with fans and at different pressures. This was very eye opening and helpful to me and my future pesticide education with growers.

SUNBELT AG EXPO
NORTH AMERICA'S PREMIER FARM SHOW ™

Another educational exhibit and class I attended was that on vegetable aquaponics. Various types of aquaponics systems were set up and functioning with fish bio-solids providing a nutrient source to the various vegetables and production systems. During the instructional class the Auburn specialist spoke on types of systems, vegetables best utilizing this system, packaging and food safety issues when dealing with produce from these systems.

Another great session I attended was that of Aquatic Weed Management. The instructor from Edge's Aquatic Services spoke on pond management. The importance of testing pH and alkalinity in ponds before treating with herbicides for various weed problems. He spoke on the importance of liming ponds, on the problems encountered when fertilizing ponds, proper methods of treating algae and also on specific treatment of various pond weed problems. He spoke on biological control with diploid grass carp and chemical herbicide treatments. He also gave us some good University web sites for pond weed ID. After the class, he then helped me devise a treatment plan for a watermeal problem in one of my client's ponds here in my home county. This plan consists of using the aquatic herbicide, Sonar, utilized at appropriate rates. Followed up by the addition of approximately 17 diploid grass carp beginning at the 8-9 inch length.

Another educational site at the Expo was the horticulture garden site. Here displayed growing were various varieties of rows of cabbages, broccoli, parsley, spring lettuce mixes, corn and several other vegetables. These were all displayed under a state of the art drip irrigation system. Also displayed here were various raised bed garden structures for consideration.

Horticulture Garden Site

The Sunbelt Expo provided a great opportunity to network and visit with fellow NACAA members from Georgia, Florida, Tennessee and Alabama. The Georgia Association of County Agricultural Agents have an impressive food stand that they use as a major fundraiser for their association.

All in all, attending the Sunbelt Ag Expo was much larger and more informational than I had imagined. What an experience! I hope to be able to attend it again one day.

22nd International Farm Management Association Congress in Australia

NACAA Scholarship Ohio Group Experience Report - 2019
Amanda Douridas and Chris Bruynis, Ohio State University

Five Extension educators ventured to Tasmania Australia to participate in the 22nd International Farm Management Association Congress March 2-9, 2018. Approximately 300 people attended from more than 30 countries to discuss the challenges facing Agriculture around the globe. Three common themes that were incorporated into the conference were:

1. Feeding the world population in the future
2. Production sustainability during changing weather patterns
3. Educating the non-farm population about agricultural production practices.

There were futuristic speakers discussing food production in urban centers to reduce transportation, packaging, and food waste that is inherent to our current system. There were presentations on precision agriculture, genomics, agricultural labor trends, and a variety of related topics.

In addition to the keynote presentation, there were 18 opportunities to attend a breakout session with an assortment of management related topics to learn about. The highlight of the conference in our opinion was the farm tours that occurred on two separate days. This was an opportunity to learn about applied management practices that could be adopted, locally, to solve some management challenges. Here are two examples of the information gained.

Example 1: During one of the tours we were able to meet with 3 farms who have implemented very successful succession plans. Farm transition is a struggle for many farms, not only in the U.S. but across the globe. It was interesting to see the generation in their 30s and 40s as the primary managers of the farm with their parents stepping down in their 50s and 60s (but still working as much as they want to).

Example 2: At one farm, the older generation decided to become more of an employee showing up at work every day at 7:30 am and taking a wage. He and his 33 year old son still very much talked and discussed the future of the business daily but his son ultimately made the decisions. Another advantage to developing the succession plan at an early stage was most children did not have significant others involved yet, which can be a cause for contention in some cases when conducting transition plans.

Tasmania has the best climate in the world for growing freesias. This farm also grows Dutch Iris and Cannas.

Ohio State Group at IFMA 22. Left to right: Brad Bergefurd, Kathy Bruynis, Chris Bruynis, Amanda Douridas, Peggy Kirk Hall.

In each instance, on and off-farm children knew where they stood within the operation and were better able to plan for their future. This is crucial for the younger farming generation especially. They know the future of the farm is secure and are able to expand or change to fit their family's needs. Another common denominator in the younger generation is nearly all spent 5-10 years working outside of the operation after school. Many worked on another farm or in the agriculture industry gaining valuable ideas and insights to bring back to the farm.

One farmer gave 4 rules for succession planning:

1. Set a timeline for the plan to be finalized.
2. Appoint someone outside the family as a mediator.
3. Everyone needs to come to the table in a conciliatory state of mind.
4. Start thinking about what you will do for the rest of your life.

The next generation is likely to have a different management style. That does not make it right or wrong. The older generation received the farm at a young age themselves and were able to keep that going with their children. Lastly, have a retirement party to thank the businesses you've worked with and show them the next generation is in charge. This will notify salesmen that they need to stop calling you and allows the next gen to handle business partners in a way that fits the future of the operation.

Grape vines must be covered to protect from bird damage such as migrating Cockatoos.

On another tour, we met people in a small rural community that discussed the challenges facing rural Australia where the agricultural processing industry consolidated and their community lost their processing plant. They discussed how this affected their community in several ways. Transportation costs of agricultural commodities increased changing the economic equation for certain crops. This eventually led to a change in the crops being grown in the region. They also discussed the exodus of displaced workers from their community, leaving empty housing. Housing became cheap and attracted residents from the nearby cities that were more taxing to the social services provided by the community. Problems such as meth production, increased robberies, more need for food assistance and increased tutors in the school system started occurring. The community leaders discussed how they were trying to rebuild the community through tourism, creating jobs, and working at better integrating new residents into the rural culture they were trying to maintain.

We also visited a vineyard winery on this tour. The owner was explaining how the location provided the right air movement and temperature for the grape varieties he was growing. He also explained that, because of global warming, the effect the slight temperature changes over the past 20 years was having on the grapes and how that affected wine quality. He mentioned that in 30 years he would have to move the vineyard to a slightly higher elevation to maintain his wine quality.

Overall, this experience allowed us to understand that some of the issues we face in our respective positions are common around the world. With this commonality, we were able to compare ideas and solutions that are being implemented to solve these problems. It is that exchange of information that made this conference extremely valuable to us as educators and agricultural professionals. We are grateful for the NACAA Scholarship funds that made this opportunity possible.

2018 National Wild Turkey Federation Convention and Show

Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center
Nashville, TN February 14-18, 2018

Cliff Covington, Mississippi State University Extension

As a first-time attendee at the 42nd Annual National Wild Turkey Federation Convention and Trade Show, I was somewhat overwhelmed at my experience. Among the speakers I was able to meet included: United States Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue, United States Forest Service Chief Tony Tooke, Representative Bruce Westerman (R-AR), Acting Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service Leonard Jordan, and National Wild Turkey Federation Chief Executive Officer Becky Humphries. The sheer volume of seminars and educational programs had my schedule completely booked. Yet, I was still unable to attend some that I had hoped to see due to many seminars running concurrently. Attendee participation and injecture was not only allowed but often encouraged at all seminars and workshops.

Some of the more intriguing and insightful seminars and workshops I was fortunate to attend included: Private Land Management, Successful Food Plot Strategies, Eye on the Wild Turkey, The Truth about The Truth, How to Build a Successful Mentoring Program, Government Affairs, Applied Research and Management, Partnership Success Stories, Hunter Retention, Recruitment and Reactivation, and the Conservation Conference.

The 2018 National Wild Turkey Federation Convention and Trade Show set a new record in attendance with nearly 56,000 attendees. The concurrent Conservation Conference brought together agency and industry partners, along with more than 150 wildlife biologists from across the country, to focus on ways the hunting and conservation industry can come together to Save the Habitat. Save the Hunt. The seminars focused on sharing information, research data, conservation techniques, and hunter recruitment strategies. Those individuals in attendance completed much work furthering wildlife and habitat conservation across the United States.

United States Forest Service Chief Tony Tooke, speaking to the group

When the National Wild Turkey Federation was founded in 1973, there were about 1.3 million wild turkeys in North America. After decades of work, that number hit an historic high of almost 7 million turkeys. To succeed, the NWTF stood behind science-based conservation and hunters' rights. The NWTF Save the Habitat. Save the Hunt. initiative is a charge that mobilizes science, fundraising and devoted volunteers to raise $1.2 billion to conserve and enhance more than 4 million acres of essential wildlife habitat, recruit at least 1.5 million hunters and open access to 500,000 acres for hunting. At the time of this year's Convention, the NWTF had already reached half of these 3-year goals in only the first year. Expectations are that NWTF will far exceed their 3-year goals of habitat enhancement, hunter recruitment, and hunting access.

By attending this year's Convention, I was able to garner the latest information and research data that will allow me to enhance my wildlife and habitat conservation education efforts in my daily work with clientele.

NWTF
Conserve. Hunt. Share.

Class B - Certified Waterworks Operator Short-Course

Biloxi, MS on August 20-24, 2018

Dr. Jason R. Barrett, Mississippi State University Extension

Safe, clean, uninterrupted drinking water is something that many Americans have come to expect every day. The fact that we have had safe, clean, uninterrupted water for decades is what has allowed Americans to expect it every day without knowing and/or fully understanding how that drinking water is pumped, treated, and/or distributed. The Federal Safe Drinking Water Act requires every community water system in the United States to employ a certified waterworks operator at the treatment classification level of the community water system. Even though the classification name may change from state to state, the treatment classifications are reciprocal. In Mississippi, there are five treatment classification and from lowest to highest they are: Class D, Class C, Class B, and Class A. Class A is for surface water pumping and treatment. There are less than 10 Class A plants in Mississippi. Class B, Class C, and Class D are all groundwater treatment plants. Class B is the highest classification for groundwater treatment plants. Class B groundwater treatment plants have two or more Class C treatment facilities of different types; with iron or manganese removal facilities breaking pressure or requiring flocculation and/or sedimentation. An individual that possesses a Class B Waterworks Certification can be the certified water operator for a Class B, Class C, Class D, or a Distribution system.

The short-course pertained to all aspects needed in order to operate and treat groundwater for specific treatments that fall under the Class C requirements. Throughout the week long short-course the topics covered were: public water system compliance issues, safety, math, hydraulics, water chemistry and treatment, chlorination, microbiology, cross connection, geology, well design, pumps, distribution, fluoridation, and sample collection. All of these topics are needed for a certified waterworks operator to understand and incorporate into adequately performing his/her job. The format of the short-course was eight hours of classroom teaching on Monday through Thursday for a total of thirty-two classroom hours. The examination was conducted on Friday morning. It was 100 questions that must be completed within three hours. The 100 questions came from the classroom material covered during the week. The short-course is organized and coordinated by the Mississippi Rural Water Association which is a trade association for community water systems in Mississippi. The instructors for the short-course are the Regional Engineers with the Mississippi State Department of Health. Mississippi State Department of Health is the regulatory authority over public water supplies in Mississippi. The Mississippi State Department of Health Regional Engineers proctored the certification exam on Friday.

My daily, weekly, and monthly efforts revolve around water and that can range from drinking to waste water treatment. On the drinking water efforts, I direct a program focusing on best management practices of private well owners across Mississippi as well as providing technical assistance to drinking water systems across the entire state. There are approximately 1,100 drinking water systems in Mississippi and 1,090 of them are ground water systems. Class B waterworks certified operators can operate/manage any of the 1,090 which allows for a lot of freedom, flexibility, and value to the certification. Having the Class B certification provides me with a heightened level of expertise when providing technical assistance. Also, the number of individuals in Mississippi with the Class B level of certification is minimal which puts a greater demand on that level of certification. This level of certification allows me, as a statewide

Extension specialist, to pursue and apply for more contracts and grants associated with technical assistance and expertise of water system management and/or treatment.

So, what is next? I am not sure we ever know truly what is next. To me, the best we can do is be lead and take that next step. The idea of getting an advanced certification has been on my mind for a while now and my desire is to possess the highest levels of certification for drinking water systems and waste water treatment systems. These certifications bring credibility to the assistance that Mississippi State University Extension can provide. Next year, I may sit for the Class IV waste water certification short-course which is the highest waste water certification in Mississippi. My aspiration is to be as educated as possible on the subject matter that people call us about. The time, resources, and efforts to achieve these certifications is great. I cannot thank the National Association of County Agricultural Agents enough for the scholarship which has provided the financial resources to achieve this certification.

Texas District-8 Pacific NW Agriculture Tour

District 8 TCAAA Tour of the Pacific Northwest was an agriculture tour beyond everyone's expectations. The group of 33 agents (14 scholarship recipients) spent from August 12-17, 2018 traveling 950 miles in a tour bus touring different agriculture operations and businesses throughout Oregon, Washington and Idaho.

The week started with the Wheat Marketing Center in Portland, Oregon. Janice Cooper presented an overview of the education to farmers, worldwide consumers and international educational programs through research projects. We toured the facility learning about research highlights, toured the wheat innovation lab where we went through the process of making crackers. Of course, "we all enjoyed the crackers coming out of the oven." Educational displays were viewed in the lobby that tell the story of how wheat is grown and what happens after it is harvested.

We traveled to Yakima, Washington and toured Sunshine Ranch, Gamache & Sons. The Yakima Valley produces 70% of the hops in the United States. The Sunshine Ranch started in 1918 with the planting of alfalfa, wheat, corn, potatoes, apples and grapes. The Gamache's began planting Amarillo brand hops in 1932 just as prohibition was coming to an end. The farm had grown from 15 acres to over 1000 acres. We toured their highly mechanized and automated operation from harvest to storage.

Tuesday started with Whitby Ag in Moses Lake, Washington. Whitby Farms is another well established farm of over 50 years in the Columbia Basin. The Whitby Ag Facility process alfalfa, timothy orchard grass, blue grass, rye and fescue hay, for complete control of hay production from field to a final package style. We were able to tour the facility and were able to see single press, double compress, half cut wrapped hay. It was very fascinating seeing the small compressed bales. Whitby Ag is an international business that ships with barges to other parts of the world. We found it interesting that it is cheaper to ship to China than within the United States.

Then we traveled to Connell Washington to tour the BB Cattle Company. We were able to visit with 90-year-old Bill Bennett and family operation. Mr. Bennett has registered more Hereford Cattle than anyone in the world. We toured the ranch seeing his herd bulls and operation. We enjoyed the trailer hay ride through the ranch and found it interesting to see a cow to the acre under an irrigation pivot system. We also made a connection when he had mentioned that he sold bulls in a sale in Texas. Thanks to the Bennet Family we enjoyed a nice BBQ lunch under the trees in their backyard.

Tuesday evening, we traveled to Ritzville, Washington to visit the Stahl Hutterite Brethren Farms. This had to be the most eye-opening tour of the trip seeing how they embrace technology and education. The entire farm is financially supported by one budget. Everyone owns the same amount of the farm whether you are eighty or three months old. They have over 90 residents in the Colony. The farm is totally self-sufficient from the farming to all the youth education occurring on the farm. The facilities were top notch. We were able to see potato harvesters that are used on the farm. There are only fifteen in the world and they own six of them. All the men have responsibilities on the farm and they meet every morning to discuss the day and direction of the farm. The women stay at the house to cook, sew and take care of the children. We were able to enjoy a great meal that was cooked by the ladies. We enjoyed learning about their culture and modern farming methods.

Wednesday, we travelled to Pullman, Washington to learn more about the Washington State and Idaho Extension Service. We were able to see a lot the similarities and struggles that they have amongst the system. Several of the issues that we discussed are similar in Texas. Overviews were given by Extension Specialist, Agents and Department heads. We then travelled to Genesee, Idaho to tour portion of the University of Idaho Campus.

That afternoon we traveled to Lewiston, Idaho and met with the Pacific Northwest Grain Co-op.

They are anchored in a heritage of more than 100 years. This coop has evolved from a single silo filled by horse and wagon to network of more than 20 facilities feeding multiple barge, rail, and state-of-the art processing terminals. This coop has a membership that exceeds 750 local producers. The Pacific Northwest Coop is within the Columbia-Snake River System which makes
it able to move containerized and bulk shipments anywhere in the world. We were able to watch videos of the operation in action and the changes being made.

We then traveled to Zenner Farms. Being from Texas most of us had never seen

farming on the side of mountains with what we thought were extreme slopes. They were in full harvest of wheat and barley. We were amazed to see the combine move up and down through the slope of the mountain. The soil type was interesting in that they could farm to the complete edge of a slope without slipping and sliding. Wheat yields were beyond our imagination being able to get over one hundred bushels of wheat to the acre on a lot less rainfall then we have in Texas. Later we toured a barge loading facility and discussed from arrival of grain from the producer to the loading of the barge.

Thursday, we traveled to Three Rivers Winery in Wala Walla, Washington. It was very interesting hearing about the grape production in the Valley. We were able to tour in the vineyard and then went indoors to a behind the scenes tour on how wine is produced for the winery.

Thursday afternoon we traveled to Pendleton Oregon and toured the Pendleton Roundup Fairground. We really appreciated all the history and the desire to keep the history and not move to the modernization of rodeo. Everyone enjoyed having the opportunity to walk thorough and take photos of the historic facility and grass covered rodeo arena.

Following the Pendleton tour, we traveled to the Oregon Grains Facility. This was a locally owned facility that uses grain from the surrounding area in their distillery. Agents enjoyed a light tasting of the product and touring of the distillery process.

Friday, we traveled back to Portland, Oregon for our flight back to Texas.

The traveling on the tour bus was as educating as the stops. It was very interesting traveling along the Columbian Basin and seeing the different agriculture along the way. Once we got out of Portland we were in the heart of the diverse Pacific Northwest Agriculture including farms and industry.

This Northwest Pacific Agriculture tour not only provided the opportunity for education, but also camaraderie and exchange of ideas by agents. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the tour and not only learned a great deal, but also made memories and photos to go along with them. Thanks to NACAA Scholarship Committee for your assistance with scholarship funds to make this trip of the Pacific Northwest possible.

2018 NCBA Stockmanship & Stewardship Livestock Seminar August 24-25, 2018

Nick Simmons, UF/IFAS Extension, Escambia County

The NCBA Stockmanship and Stewardship is a unique two-day educational experience featuring low-stress cattle handling demonstrations, Beef Quality Assurance educational sessions, facility design sessions to best run a cattle operation. The seminar also provides industry updates for current issues that are facing that cattle industry. This session was led by stockmanship experts Curt Pate and Ron Gill on science and experience-based cattle handling demonstrations. A mix of cattle producers, industry professionals, and extension agents from 5 states took part in the multi-day experience.

The full agenda included:

- Marketing strategies for challenges, led by an industry panel of marketing experts.
- Future of Marketing in the South
- Specialty cuts from the beef loin
- Breaking the mold in cattle production, led by a cattle production family in South Carolina
- Overview of the beef quality audit
- Stock trailer and transportation safety
- Breakout sessions with topics of new producers in the industry, body condition scoring, feeder calf grading and environmental stewardship

This was a great educational experience. I enjoyed meeting with fellow livestock producers and agents to discuss industry issues and programming ideas. I made connections to outside agencies and have started writing articles for one of the livestock publications. I gained program ideas and have already implemented one that was part of the seminar 'Doing a Primal Cut Demonstration' at my local county cattlemen's meeting. I also plan to implement trailer safety in my next livestock field day, Spring 2019. I hope to find more opportunities like this to learn and continue to develop my Extension program.

Primal Cut Demonstration

2018 Extension Master Gardener Coordinator Conference August 6-9, 2018

Nicole Pinson, Urban Horticulture Agent
Master Gardener Coordinator
UF/IFAS Extension Hillsborough County

During the 2018 national Extension Master Gardener Coordinator Conference, I met faculty from Wisconsin, Tennessee, Hawaii, Oregon, Maine, Georgia, Arizona and Minnesota. Since the conference, I have worked on the multi-state Extension Master Gardener Diversity, Equity and Inclusion subcommittee team. Faculty from the University of Minnesota shared ideas with me to develop a strategic plan for my program. I became aware of teaching strategies for online education, and as Chair of the Florida Association of County Agricultural Agents (FACAA) Teaching and Educational Technologies Committee, I used conference information to update our Committee job description and facilitate professional development opportunities.

I am grateful to the National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA) for the scholarship to attend this conference. A poster presentation at a national conference is an important component of my promotion packet. Moreover, it was wonderful to meet people that I have "seen" online in webinars or heard on conference calls. Nothing replaces the ability to meet and talk with people one-on-one.
This year and next year, I coordinate a national monthly Zoom webinar series for Extension Master Gardener Coordinators. Participation in this conference enabled me to meet other faculty and discuss opportunities to share their work via a national webinar to their peers.

Each session helped me consider new ways to teach horticulture to my county clientele. I learned methods to engage and motivate volunteers. And, I met great people and had a lot of fun!

Madison, WI was not necessarily on my bucket list to visit. However, I am so glad I got the opportunity to visit Wisconsin.

Badger - University of Wisconsin mascot

The food was excellent and I ate way too many cheese curds and enjoyed craft beers. I took photos at the local farmers' market – vegetables that I can't grow in Florida, fresh-cut bouquets bursting with colorful flowers, baked goods – and tasted my 1st ground cherry. Being a native Floridian, I had never eaten an apple right off the tree until I ate one at the on-campus garden.

The horticulture was impressive: alpine and Czech crevice gardens at the Allen Centennial Garden, perennial gardens at Olbrich Botanical Gardens, and colorful pots of flowers placed around campus with petunias growing in summer! (It's too hot to grow petunias in Florida in summer.) I rented a bike and explored the Capitol building, admired the Abraham Lincoln statue, toured the Geology Museum, and visited campus buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places. During this trip, I crossed a life-long dream off my list: to stand-up paddleboard. It was wonderful to be out in the middle of a peaceful Wisconsin lake in summertime, feet dangling in the water with no fear of alligators. The presentation Using the Horticulture Continuum of Learning to Build Community Engagement: Tool-kits for Volunteer Educational Outreach made me think differently about the language we use in Extension to market our programs and services. Presenters' discussed how to carefully choose language that expands the reach, instead of limiting reach, of Extension clientele. For example, using words such as "your lawn," "your yard" or "your home" could eliminate some members of the community; better examples include "Vegetables for Everyone" and "Here's How You Can Help Pollinators Thrive." The presentation challenged us to re-evaluate how we write to be more effective Extension educators.

The Guiding Tool for Measuring and Reporting the Public Value of Volunteer Activities presentation provided tools to identify the outputs, outcomes and impacts of volunteer work so that we may communicate volunteers' efforts more effectively in our marketing materials and annual reports to the public, stakeholders and our university. As a Master Gardener Volunteer Program Coordinator, I look for ways to quantify volunteers' efforts beyond the dollar value of their hours. This presentation gave me insight on how to report the value of volunteer activities. University of Minnesota Extension shared their tools to help me identify outputs, outcomes and impacts of volunteer work. I will use this information in my 2018 Report of Accomplishments and 2019 Plan of Work.

Developing Program Priority Topics and a Strategic Plan to Expand Volunteer Base encouraged Extension faculty to orient training around relevant issues such as pollinators, clean water and civic engagement. The presenter gave information that I will use to develop a strategic, long-range plan for my program that aligns with University of Florida and local county government initiatives.

The majority of our volunteers, and many residents who access local county Extension services, do not represent the population makeup of my county. Staff and horticulturalists from Allen Centennial Garden shared tips and activities in their talk Engaging Millennials and New Audiences about how to engage nontraditional gardening audiences and to promote "placemaking" at your Extension office.

For this activity, visitors were asked "If you could travel anywhere for 1 month, where would you go + why? Write your answer down and attach it to the Larch

Placemaking is a host of "lighter, quicker, cheaper (LQC)" activities that go back to the basics whereby people can get involved and interact with a place, farm, garden, field, etc.

The garden's Executive Director and the Director of Programs and Community Engagement shared strategies of how they went from a gated, urban botanical garden with few visitors and low membership, to a popular, family-oriented, center of community engagement. After a few months of implementing their strategies to engage new audiences, visitors lined up to participate in garden events. The garden boasts higher attendance, higher engagement, increased number of memberships, and increased financial endowments. Garden staff used ideas from the Project for Public Spaces website, ideas that may also be useful to Extension. This information was shared with the Executive Director of my local Farm Bureau and with Florida State Parks' management. More information from the Pew Research Center about the millennial generation may be found at http://www.pewresearch.org/topics/millennials/.

Again, I am thankful to the NACAA for the opportunity to attend the Extension Master Gardener Coordinator conference, meet faculty from other U.S. universities, gain ideas to improve my programs and make lasting Wisconsin memories.

'ASHS Conference - 2018'

E. Vanessa Campoverde, University of Florida / IFAS Extension

Thanks to the 2018 NACAA scholarship, I attended the 2018 annual conference of the American Society for Horticultural Science (ASHS) association, older than most of plant societies with 115 years of existence. This association (ASHS), is recognized around the world as one of the most respected and influential professional societies for horticultural scientists.

This year, the ASHS 2018 annual conference was held in Washington D.C. I would like to share with you all the amazing benefits that this professional development opportunity allowed me to bring into my professional advancement within Extension.

During daily sessions, I found old colleagues and met new ones from other states. Researchers, extension educators, graduate students were all there. In my field, as a Commercial Agriculture / Ornamental Crops Extension Agent, who provides research-based information to growers in South Florida, I was able to choose between: Floriculture, Plant Nutrient Management, Nursery Crops and International Horticulture Issues/ Commercial Horticulture sessions. All these sessions provided emerging research studies and allowed me to connect with people and organizations at national and international levels.

ASHS American Society for Horticultural Science

Another benefit of this conference was to be able to put a face to names I only saw on journal papers before. Did you ever wonder where all these scientists are, besides your own institutions? They meet and greet in meetings like this one.

But if you get overwhelmed by the great amount of scientific presentations every day, you can take a break from oral presentations, by walking over the posters exhibition area. There were hundreds of abstracts from hydroponic evaluations, alternative crop production, to breeding experiments in every area. Additional educational opportunities outside of the conference is by taking one of many tours in the area organized by the association.

I learned about organizations whose aim is to empower women farmers, low cost technologies to increase nutritious foods and the work on chimney solar dryer by UC Davis. Also, about porosity of

Continued on page 20

horticultural container substrate and the novel sources of resistance to Florida isolates of Bacterial Leaf Spot among other topics for plant lovers.

During this conference I presented "Internationalizing Extension through Agricultural Volunteer Opportunities" to a variety of Extension educators) and I Presented talk about "Internationalizing Extension through Agricultural Volunteer Opportunities". I attended the Extension Advisory Council meeting to discuss future learning opportunities for Extension educators nationwide. This meeting was followed by the Extension lunch where I was recognized by the Extension committee with the National ASHS Outstanding Education Materials Award for the UF/IFAS Extension Blog I have created since 2012 and maintained now with other colleagues. Also, if you would like to learn about local and regional impact of collaboration between Extension specialist/agents and local growers/farmers. This lunch is a great opportunity to listen from growers themselves about how they partnered with Extension with research and demonstration projects. During this year Extension's lunch, we listened to their experience with fungicide resistance of Botrytis and their regulateddeficit irrigation systems application during their talk titled: "Long-Term Mutual Benefits of Partnering between the University of Maryland Extension and Butler's Orchard" by Dr. Chris Walsh from University of Maryland Extension and Mr. Wade Butler from Butler's Orchard.

Thanks to this opportunity I found that this conference is full of innovative applied research applicable to the commercial ornamental nursery industry. And it is my duty to be able to educate myself to provide up to date research-based information to my clients. Oh, and after the conference I got the chance to explore DC a little more.

I encourage you to apply for these professional opportunities and do not get discourage for one, two or maybe three denials. Who is counting? Otherwise I will not have had this chance. We have so many wonderful fields of expertise and our job never ends but that should drive you to push your limits even more and never stop learning because we should remain relevant to our clientele. We owe it to ourselves and to the people that depends on us. And, because it provides a chance to meet the state or regional specialist you usually only communicate by emailing each other. We went out for a nice Mexican dinner in Washington DC and got to meet cool scientist and their families.

IFTA New Zealand Study Tour

Amy Irish-Brown, Commercial Tree Fruit Production, Michigan State University Extension Educator

Kia Ora ("hello") NACAA members!
I was fortunate to receive a scholarship from the NACAA to attend the 2018 IFTA New Zealand Study Tour. IFTA is the International Fruit Tree Association and I couldn't be more grateful for the opportunity. The tour lasted 12 days with visits to apple orchards and nurseries, and concluded with a day-long conference in Napier, NZ, featuring international fruit tree research presentations.

Attending the study tour in February was just before the apple harvest time in the southern hemisphere and there was much to be taken in. New Zealand is comprised of two main landmasses – the North Island and the South Island - and 600+ smaller islands. It is home to about 4 million people. Located roughly 900 miles east of Australia, the NZ maritime climate lessens the gap between temperature extremes. "Sea breezes" — created when warm air over land rises and cool sea air rushes landward to replace the rising air during the day — provide comfortable summertime temperatures. I have to say, it was a nice break from a rather cold Michigan winter.

My study tour began on the South Island with about one hundred other tree fruit industry people. We visited pipfruit (pomefruit = apples and pears) in the Nelson/Tasman and Timaru regions on the South Island before moving northward to the Hawke's Bay Region near Napier on the North Island. Roughly 70% of NZ's apples are exported along with kiwi fruit and wine, so top quality is of the utmost concern. Over the last decade, the value of the country's apple export market has more than doubled reaching $691.8 million NZ (about $505 million U.S.) in 2016.

Super High Density Gala apple planting with white Extenday fabric to enhance red fruit color.

The apple industry was valued at about $350 million NZ ($255.5 million U.S.) from the mid-90s to 2010. According to NZ's Plant and Food Research, Royal Gala was the leading export variety in 2016, followed by Braeburn, Jazz, and Fuji, with major export markets in Asia and Europe. Honeycrisp is a familiar apple variety grown in the U.S. that also is grown in NZ, and it was the first highlight of our tour. Unlike in Michigan,

Honeycrisp is a regulated or club variety here, and the majority of the 470 acres of Honeycrisp produced in the country are grown on the South Island near Timaru. This area was selected to be the primary Honeycrisp growing region because Super High Density Gala apple planting with white Extenday fabric to enhance red fruit color. the soils are suitable for this variety. The climate is cooler than other NZ fruit-producing regions. That offers a boost in near-harvest timing — cool evening temperatures help Honeycrisp obtain a nice red color. Furthermore, a nearby port facilitates efficient fruit exporting, critical to ensure that high-quality fruit is delivered.

Honeycrisp planting with hail netting.

When the IFTA group moved to the North Island, we were greeted by Cyclone Gita. This was my first experience with a major tropical weather event and after a day of solid rain and wind, there was much flooding in orchards in the Hawke's Bay region. The storm put a damper on only one day of travel and didn't seem to bother the New Zealanders much at all. We visited very progressive orchards and growers, including a commercial organic apple producer, as well as stops to the Plant and Food Research Station, an apple and pear breeding operation, and sites where mechanization strategies for harvest, pruning and hail netting installation will be demonstrated.

The IFTA Fruit Study Tour in New Zealand was limited to 100 lucky participants which made for a more interesting learning.

Tree growth and vigor is both a blessing and a curse in NZ. With some areas receiving 2,500 hours of sunlight per year, most vegetation — including apple trees — grow rapidly. This is a benefit for establishing new, young blocks. However, after the young trees fill their space and establish, minimizing vigor can be difficult. Vigorous trees require substantially more pruning and can shade fruit, preventing ripening if the foliage is not adequately managed.

Multi-leader apple plantings are popular.

Agricultural labor has been a hot topic lately in the United States and New Zealand is no different. In Michigan, fruit growers have begun to use labor programs and/or contractors to meet on-farm workforce needs. New Zealander fruit growers are having to use similar labor programs. They have attributed the ability to expand their farm businesses — while also rapidly growing NZ's apple industry — to investment in labor programs.

Having travelled over 70 hours by plane and nearly 16,000 air miles to and from New Zealand, I've concluded that apple growers from many places in the world face the same major issues – labor, markets and various production challenges. Honeycrisp planting with hail netting. Multi-leader apple plantings are popular.

Many sincere thanks for providing me with scholarship funding to take in this one in a career opportunity.

Life Member Corner
Are We, as County Agents Relevant?

By Milt Green - Life Member - Wyoming

When I was asked to write this article on behalf of the Life Members I was honored. I had the honor of being inducted into the Hall of Fame this past year, an honor that I will cherish forever. I was graciously nominated by my state association and selected. I want to thank all of those that made the honor possible. Pipeline Ag Alliance sponsored the award and I am grateful to them for their partnership with NACAA. In my address to the association I talked about the relevance of the County Agent and the need for strong partnerships. Thus, the purpose of this article is to recognize that partnership and emphasize the relevant role the professional County Agent plays.

As a life member I enjoyed a 32 year career engaged in a strong symbiotic relationship with partners in the food, fiber and rural living industries. The relationship between NACAA and the organizations partners is, in my opinion, one of the strongest in all industry. As life members I further believe we continue to have an important role to serve in promoting those partnerships for the future. Most of the life members remain engaged in some way with industry partners on a daily basis. Sustainable professional partnerships require trust, energy and perseverance to build and maintain. Promoting strong partnerships in the food and fiber industry is a role that I as a life member feel I can serve. My hope is that all NACAA life members will continue to strengthen industry partnerships with this professional association.

As a young agent I did not realize how important the NACAA/industry partnership was to my success as a representative of a land grant university. Later in my career and as I got more involved in my professional association it was more obvious how important the role of the partners (sponsors) played in my everyday work. My first annual meeting was in Rapid City, South Dakota and it was a good meeting but professional improvement was what I needed from the national meeting and I felt that component needed to be stronger. A few years later I attended a meeting where the Professional Improvement Committee lead by Steve Munk presented a professional improvement program proposal sponsored and supported by industry partners. I was "all in". I started participating in the new professional improvement program by giving presentations and being Committee Vice Chair and Committee Chair. I later got selected to serve on the National Board and that was where the "rubber hit the road" as far as developing partnerships with industry.

In 1978 the local extension office across America was pretty much the sole source of land grant university information.

Milt Green - NACAA Life Member

Technology revolutionized that system to the point that I had a producer tell me that with the internet America no longer needed the County Agent. She was wrong and I was right! The entire body of research done by all universities and most private research done is readily accessible on line but the need for a trained professional educator to be able to find a specific body of research and apply it to a specific on the ground application at the local level still needs to take place. The relevance of that trained professional is as important today as it was in 1914. Granted, the process and administrative structures of how that gets done have changed but I believe the basics remain the same. This world does not seem to be getting any larger but population continues to increase. There are more of us and we are living longer. The food and fiber challenges of the future are overwhelming but the NACAA/food and fiber industry partnership will meet those challenges with courage and determination.

Pesticide Stewardship Brochures

NACAA has partnered with Syngenta on eight general pesticide stewardship brochures and two flyers to assist with pesticide educational efforts. These brochures are not specific to any geography, target site, pest, product, or company. These brochures are available to NACAA members FREE of charge for your use in programming efforts. Enter the number of copies you are interested in next the specific brochure/flyer and submit to the address listed below. Your supply will be sent at no charge.

____1) 50 Ways to Treat Your Pesticide - English edition
____2) 50 Ways to Treat Your Pesticide - Spanish edition
____3) 50 Ways to Treat Your Pesticide - Aerial Applicator edition
____4) 50 Ways to Treat Your Pesticide - Pest Management Professional edition - (*for commercial, licensed or certified applicators and technicians under their supervision, for treating in and around structures*)
____5) The Value of Buffers for Pesticide Stewardship and Much More
____6) Insect Pollinators and Pesticide Product Stewardship
____7) Dress for Success! Some Things to Know About Personal Protective Equipment BEFORE You Handle a Pesticide
____8) For Pesticide Mixers, Loaders, and Applicators - Some Things to Know About Personal Protective Equipment BEFORE You Handle a Pesticide (English, 2 pages, 8th gr. reading level)
____9) For Pesticide Mixers, Loaders, and Applicators - Some Things to Know About Personal Protective Equipment BEFORE You Handle a Pesticide (Spanish, 2-pages, 8th gr. reading level)
____10) An Ounce of Prevention! Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for Schools and Child Care Facilities – *(discussing all aspects of IPM, including safe pesticide use)*

Available Formats:

Quantities of the actual brochures that will be "well-used" can be ordered free of charge from carol.somody@syngenta.com by emailing this order form or a short note. No PO boxes, please! A copy of this form is also available at: **http://www.nacaa.com/countyagent/PesticideStewardship.php**

PDF versions of the brochures can be viewed or downloaded from the Pesticide Environmental Stewardship (PES) website at http://pesticidestewardship.org/Pages/Resources.aspx or from any of the partner websites. Any organization is also welcome to post these brochures on their own website.

Word versions of the brochures can be requested by any organization desiring to modify or extract content. E-mail carol.somody@syngenta.com to discuss logo swaps with or without content changes. Artwork and photos can be used if conditions of use are met. PowerPoint presentations to go with the brochures are also available upon request.

Pesticide educators are also welcome to use or adapt any content that appears directly on the PES website – it is not copyrighted. Thank you for your continued efforts on behalf of pesticide safety and stewardship education!

Thank You - NACAA Sponsors/Donors

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2019
Fort Wayne, Indiana .....September 8-12

2020
Virginia Beach, Virginia.....July 19-24

2021
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania....July 4-8

2022
West Palm Beach, Florida.....July 17-22

Upcoming Issues of The County Agent Magazine

June, 2019	October, 2019	December, 2019
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Deadline for Articles: April 20, 2019	Deadline for articles: September 25, 2019	Deadline for articles: November 15, 2019
Mail Date: May 20, 2019	Mail Date: October 25, 2019	Mail Date: December 28, 2019