Harold Watters was recently named the 2018 International CCA (ICCA) of the Year. The award is designed to annually recognize a CCA who delivers exceptional customer service, is highly innovative, has shown that he/she is a leader in their field, and has contributed substantially to the exchange of ideas and the transfer of agronomic knowledge within the agriculture industry.

Watters, a CCA and CPAg since 1994, has enjoyed a career that unites viewpoints. His experience in industry as well as public service, in Ohio and Ukraine, and views as an agronomist and an environmentalist all blend together.

“I’m a realist. I try to make both sides understand,” Watters says. “I’m a moderate in a world where no such thing exists anymore.”

Moderation has been especially important in Ohio where Lake Erie water quality concerns have peaked. Phosphorus in the lake resulted in algal blooms, making Toledo’s main water source temporarily unusable a few years ago (see http://bit.ly/1wx1nHN). Now, growers with more than 50 ac need to be certified in fertilizer application—a training Watters helped spearhead. Approximately 17,600 producers were trained in four whirlwind years to comply with new Ohio legislation. In addition, employees at more than 40 retail locations were certified in the 4R approach.

By Martha Pings, Public and Science Communications Coordinator for ASA, CSSA, and SSSA