ASA President’s Message

Focus on Budgets, Membership, and the Annual Meeting for 2014

One of the important jobs of the ASA president is to try to keep the members informed of some of the things going on within their Society. While it seems like I know a lot of ASA members from my long involvement in Society activities, most don’t know who I really am, and I thought this first column would be a good opportunity for you to get to know a little more about me.

First, I am a “senior” member of the Society. This year marks my 45th year as a member of ASA. Like most of our members, I have also belonged to one of our sister societies, SSSA, for that same period. ASA and SSSA have been very important to me over the course of my career, and I very much appreciate the opportunity to give back to the Societies through this position.

I am also a career academic. Since graduating from North Carolina State with a Ph.D. in soil fertility in 1975, I have been fortunate to do research at the LSU Rice Experiment Station and Kansas State. During that time, I also done research (mostly as an extension specialist), managed two soil-testing labs, directed a teaching program and a research center on campus, and managed two soil-testing labs. I have been a soil fertility and advised some. I have also been a soil fertility and advised some. I have been an extension specialist, managed two soil-testing labs, and managed a soil-testing lab director of an environmental education program and a research center on campus.

Through these many experiences I have practiced agronomy in a lot of different ways, and no surprise to those who know me well, formed some strong opinions.

I also am a Certified Professional Agronomist (CPAg), Certified Crop Adviser (CCA), and Certified Professional Soil Scientist (CPSS). I have used my CPSS certification over the years to work with a number of companies to develop land application plans for the disposal of industrial waste on farmland. I still do some of that. As an extension specialist, I regularly get calls from people who need help with land application. I use the certification directory maintained by the ASA and SSSA certification programs to help them find a CPSS or will help them myself when we can't find someone else to do the job. While the effort to gain my CPSS certification has paid off well for me (it paid for my wife’s and kids’ college education over the years), I haven’t found the CPAg to be profitable. So I can understand why that program has never been as successful as the soils certification. Now that I am a CCA also, not by choice but by mandate, I frankly wonder if I’ll be able to make that cost pay off in my situation.

I also am a farmer. Since 1993, I have operated a small farm operation. What started as a small hobby farm in Indiana has grown to a small (300-acre) commercial operation in Kansas. While the time commitments of my research program have prevented me from producing the grain crops alone, I have run a small dairy herd and managed the pastures and produce needed for several years. Last summer, I

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