The ASA Extension Education Community might differ from other communities in that our members likely span every subdiscipline of crops, soils, and agronomy. What binds us together is our purpose, which is to extend information to the people that we engage. I’d use this space to talk about our community’s program that recognizes outstanding extension materials because it exemplifies what we are focused on: Producing relevant resources and making those available in modern (and usually, multiple) formats for our current and future clientele. To do this, we do applied research to generate new information, actively engage in scholarship of extension to assess the needs of our users, and evolve with our uses to develop new media technologies (paired with more traditional methods) to deliver multiple media delivery formats for our information.

Excellence in Extension Materials Awards Program

The Extension Education Community sponsors a program to acknowledge outstanding scholarship of extension products. As our clientele shifts in the way that they expect to find our information, so must the delivery methods change to stay relevant and to meet the demand from our long-standing, and new, users of extension-developed products. The Extension Education Community received 66 entries in six topic areas in 2015 to recognize excellence in extension materials. The lead judges for the Extension Educational Materials Awards were Brian Arnall, Ignacio Ciampitti, Olga Walsh, Aaron Patton, David Holshouser, and Daniel Fromme. Thank you to the lead judges and all of the volunteers that they recruited to assist.

The categories are as follows:

1. Publications¹ (<16 pages)
2. Publications¹ (>16 pages)
3. Newsletters
4. Audio Visuals (videos, slide sets, and displays)
5. Digital Decision Aids (software, web-based tools, and mobile apps)
6. Websites, Blogs, and Social Media

The guidelines, deadlines, and past award recipients are posted on our website at www.agronomy.org/membership/communities/extension-education. We welcome you to submit your materials in 2016.

Plans for the 2015 Annual Meeting

At the upcoming Annual Meeting in Minneapolis (www.acsmMeetings.org), we’ve planned several sessions, and I’d like to highlight our activities on Tuesday, 17 November below. Both our morning and afternoon sessions will take place in Room L100D, and they are:

Lessons Learned from Yield and Efficiency Contests | 8:55–11:00 am

Yield contests are conducted in most U.S. states. While yields represented in these contests are atypical, they provide evidence of yield potential under different environments and also an overview of the management practices of top producers. A few states conduct “maximum efficiency contests,” where production costs are integrated. Also, certain commodities might use entire farm production, not just a few acres. Advantages and disadvantages of the contests could be discussed as well as examples of information gleaned from the unique data sets generated by the contests.

Extension Community Business Meeting | 11:00 am–12 pm

We will recognize Excellence in Extension Materials award recipients, including the poster contest placings (judged on Monday), and will elect the incoming 2017 community leader. (Ignacio Ciampitti will be the 2016 leader.)

Showing Your Work Matters: Program Evaluation and Impact Strategies for Agricultural Programs | 1:10–4:45 pm

In today’s funding environment, proving the value and relevance of your work is more important than ever. This session will focus on evaluation tools and methods to document the impacts of agriculture and natural resource programs. Invited speakers will provide examples of evaluation methods used to document impacts of actual programs on nutrient management, climate change, and integrated pest management (among others). The goal of this symposium is to help extension professionals and researchers communicate the impact of their work simply and effectively.

D. Presley, 2015 Community Leader

¹Includes e-books and e-pubs, submit to the appropriate length category.