a field tour to highlight some of the exciting ag-related research and locally grown crops important for the region’s economy. In 2016, the tour included potatoes, wheat, corn, mint, onions, hops, and a variety of fruit trees. The visit to the University of Idaho Parma Research and Extension Center’s farm and the nearby orchard was filled with interactive presentations of remote-sensing equipment, a UAVs demonstration, and a guided tour of specialty crops.

This conference provided an opportunity to pay tribute to the late Dr. Marvin Stone, an extraordinary scientist. Attendees were able to learn about a wide variety of precision nutrient management research that graduate students are working on across the country with the first annual Marvin Stone Memorial Poster Competition for Graduate Students. The quality of student poster presentations was excellent. Following are the 2016 winners:

- **First place**—Calli Feland (North Dakota State University): “Impact of Nitrogen Type, Timing, and Additives on Grain Protein in Hard Red Spring Wheat”
- **Second place**—Curtis Ransom (University of Missouri): “Field-scale Nitrogen Recommendation Tools for Improving a Canopy Reflectance Sensor Algorithm”
- **Third place**—Maryam Shahrtash (Louisiana State University): “Silicon and Nitrogen Fertilization Effects on Nitrogen Use Efficiency of Wheat Under Biotic Stress”

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See you next August at the 15th Annual Nitrogen Use Efficiency Conference!

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## Letter to the Editor

### Defending the Proper Use of the Term ‘Monoculture’

Many bloggers have it wrong, Wikipedia had it wrong, even *Agronomy Journal*, and CSA News magazine got it wrong. Monoculture is not the year-after-year production of the same crop in the same field. That is mono-cropping or continuous cropping where the alternative is crop rotation. Monoculture is “when only one crop species is grown in a field at a time” (Loomis and Connor, 1992), and the alternative is polyculture or intercropping. You can take a picture of monoculture but not of mono-cropping.

Just where this widespread misuse of “monoculture” started, I am not sure. Monoculture, Monsanto… perhaps people believe there is a link and that Monsanto invented monoculture-as-mono-cropping? After all, when redefined this way, monoculture, like Monsanto, has come to represent (wrongly in both cases) all that is wrong with agriculture. More likely, it has to do with the similarity of monoculture and mono-cropping.

More recently, it was Wikipedia. For years, it had a definition that combined the meanings of monoculture and mono-cropping. I suspect that this incorrect definition, and the fact that many people without agricultural backgrounds write about agriculture, has led to the widespread misuse we see today.

I am not about to trot off on some quixotic quest to correct this. My wife won’t let me (see illustration), but I would like to encourage all of us who work in agricultural science to be vigilant. Our communications depend on maintaining the technical accuracy of these and other words. Monoculture has a specific meaning, one that no other word shares (that I can think of), so we’d best maintain it for future use.

### Reference


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