ASA President’s Message

The New Goals of ASA

In my last column, I focused on the new mission of ASA. Just in case you have not had time to commit it to memory … To empower scientists, educators, and practitioners in creating, disseminating, and applying agronomic solutions to feed and sustain the world.

Goals and supporting objectives comprise the next layer in our plan and convert the mission into measurable targets. They are actionable and critically important to us internally to understand where our collective efforts need to take us and to enable us to communicate that journey to others. “Others” include those with the capacity to offer support to our programs or even to join us in the journey through their membership.

Our new plan has four goals and a total of 15 supporting objectives. The goals are clear and distinct, but fit together well in cohesively supporting our mission. They address the needs of our science, our profession, and our individual members. The goals follow.

**Goal 1: Efficient and Effective Science.** Provide a forum for the advancement and dissemination of agronomic science. Societies like ours have a unique and potentially critical role to play in the efficiency and effectiveness of our science through publications, meetings, and data stewardship. Science is in transition today and facing numerous challenges that can become opportunities for ASA if we focus and have the courage to participate.

**Goal 2: Knowledge Dissemination and Application.** Promote the full utilization of science-based agronomic knowledge in modern, sustainable agricultural systems and policy development. The Society has access to tremendous assets for employing science-based knowledge in implementing solutions in the field through our 13,000 certified professionals and in guiding policy development through a policy office in Washington, DC that is one of the most respected in the city. The “solutions” mentioned in our mission start with scientists, but they end with those that put the science to use.

**Goal 3: Awareness of the Profession and ASA.** Develop and increase awareness about the value of ASA and the profession of agronomy to key audiences. Agronomy needs to grow to meet the challenges society faces and for which our collective disciplines hold at least a portion of the solution. To make that happen, we need to better engage educators, their institutions, and policymakers influencing funding. All three of those groups respond to public perceptions of our profession, so the huge task of public recognition of agronomy is also part of our journey. And, we need to ensure that our diverse membership segments all experience value in ASA and appreciate the role the Society plays in growing their profession.

**Goal 4: Growth of the Individual.** Expand and energize collaborations, professional growth, and career recognition. We are a membership organization with the vast majority of our members being individuals—individuals with their own unique needs, career stage, and aspirations. The only way we can accomplish our other three goals is with individual members who are realizing their full professional potential. That may involve acquiring a new technical skill, expanded understanding of another discipline, collaboration opportunities, finding a job … or simply receiving the encouragement of a pat on the back by a colleague who nominates them for an award. Each individual has unique needs … but usually out of a set of commonly held needs that ASA has the capacity to help fill.

So, what do you think? Are these appropriate goals for your Society? Is the journey outlined taking us where we need to go? Is it a journey you want to join? Let me know your thoughts—the plan remains a draft plan. The goals and supporting objectives can be viewed at [http://bit.ly/2bv9GAN](http://bit.ly/2bv9GAN).

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