As agricultural production systems become more complex and intensified, agricultural producers increasingly rely on professional practitioners to assist them in developing and maintaining their production systems. The Soil and Water Management Professionals Community of ASA is meant to focus on soil and water issues and provide a framework to carry on discussions of those issues. In addition, the community provides an opportunity for members to advocate for these issues whether as representatives to industry, government organizations, or other related groups. Topics of discussion may include: 4R nutrient management, water quality, fertilizer use and application, environmental quality, soil health, precision technologies and practices that reduce soil erosion, and degradation of soil and water.

As a group of professional practitioners, we have approached the International Certified Crop Adviser Program (ICCA) to help bring a perspective to agriculture that comes with working closely with growers and a range of cropping systems. In this way, we provide a venue for CCAs and scientists (ASA members including Certified Professional Agronomists, or CPAg’s) to discuss, evaluate, and communicate issues and provide educational opportunities that are identified by the ICCA Soil and Water Rapid Response Team. We also provide a pool of qualified certified professionals who are ASA members to participate on committees and/or to present on, testify on, or advocate for requested soil and water topics. This also allows facilitation of other organizations to link with ASA and ICCA through the Soil and Water Management Professionals Community.

Since this community was organized in 2014, our membership has grown to more than 1,000 professionals. During the 2016 International Annual Meeting, the community sponsored a symposium on “Soil and Water Management as Related to CCA Specialty Certification Exam Prep” (see http://bit.ly/2hxGsrG). The symposium focused on management of water and nutrients in areas of the U.S. where runoff and drainage are implicated in environmental issues. In addition to presentations to symposium attendees, this symposium was live-streamed to registered participants and provided 3.5 CEUs for those CCAs who were either present or had registered and viewed the live streaming session. Each of the presentations has been archived and will soon be available at http://soils.peachnewmedia.com.

If you have any questions about our community or have any inputs for future community activities, feel free to contact any of our community leaders.

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