ASA President’s Message

Scientific Inquiry and Innovation

Scientific inquiry and innovation are core values that ASA is built upon. As students, we practice the scientific method, learning to develop our hypotheses, design experiments to test those hypotheses, carry out experiments without bias, and analyze our data statistically. When we communicate our results, whether at our national meeting or in writing through our various publications, we know that the scientific method depends upon the careful review of our peers. Although sometimes questions may challenge our assumptions or approach, we know that this peer review improves our science and ultimately strengthens our knowledge base.

As practicing agronomists, this scientific foundation gives us confidence as we make recommendations for farmers and other land managers. We can rely upon published results, which have been tested and reproduced by others. Our recommendations are not based on our experience alone but also on the careful analysis and review of others. On this basis, our farmer-clients share in our confidence and invest their time and resources based on scientific results. Knowing our potential impact in the field and on the ground, we take extra care to be precise and unbiased throughout the scientific process.

Ultimately, the scientific method provides the language and culture that brings diverse agronomists (and other scientists) together. Agronomists from around the world working for industry, academia, government agencies, and crop consulting groups come together around the scientific method as it guides us to discover new knowledge. The scientific method helps us to work together to better understand our world and to figure out how best to manage it for the long-term good. Today science is questioned, from climate change to vaccinations, but we agronomists stand on science as the basis for decision-making in the lab and in the field.