

## President's Corner

# Living the “Code of the West” in Extension Work

Just three short years ago, I was preparing to run for NACAA Vice President at the AM/PIC in West Palm Beach, Florida. As part of my campaign brochure, I shared a set of guiding principles known as the “Code of the West,” written by Jim Owen. These principles have continued to resonate with me and shape how I approach my work, leadership, and life.

Here is the Code of the West:

### **Ten Principles to Live By**

Live Each Day with Courage

Take Pride in Your Work

Always Finish What You Start

Do What Has to be Done

Be Tough, but Fair

When You Make a Promise, Keep It

Ride for the Brand

Talk Less and Say More

Remember that Some Things Aren't For Sale

Know Where to Draw the Line

— Jim Owen

I believe these ten principles have direct application in our work as county agents, educators, and specialists. Here are my personal reflections on each:

### **1. Live Each Day with Courage**

Face each day's challenges head-on. Whether you're navigating a tough program decision or learning something new, don't be afraid to dive in and do your best. Just as important is the courage to ask for help—sometimes that's the hardest, yet wisest, thing to do.

### **2. Take Pride in Your Work**

Your work reflects who you are. Wherever you go, whatever you do, give it your full attention and effort. Quality matters, and so does the attitude you bring to every task.

### **3. Always Finish What You Start**

Commitment means seeing things through. That doesn't mean you can't pivot or adjust as needed, but it does mean not giving up halfway. Often, the rewards come long after the effort is made.

### **4. Do What Has to Be Done**

Not every task is enjoyable—However, success rarely comes if we skip over the less desirable tasks. For example, in my world of cattle artificial insemination it is impossible to perform the task without exposing yourself to the excretions coming from the backside of the cow. :) On the plus side, it is hard to beat a newborn AI sired quality calf.

### **5. Be Tough, but Fair**

Hold firm to standards and apply them consistently. While this principle often applies to things like 4-H rules or county fairs, it's just as relevant in our daily interactions, both professional and personal.

### **6. When You Make a Promise, Keep It**

Your word is your bond. If you say you'll do something, follow through. In a world full of shifting priorities, being dependable sets you apart.

### **7. Ride for the Brand**

In the west, riding for the brand was taken very seriously. When you worked for a ranch, you were expected to be loyal to their (cattle) brand. Be loyal. Loyal to yourself. Loyal to your friends and family. Loyal to your university.



*2024-2025 NACAA President  
K. Scott Jensen*

*continued on page 2*

### 8. Talk Less, Say More

Speak with intention. Words have power, especially when chosen thoughtfully. I've always encouraged my kids to let their actions speak louder than their words. Accomplishment carries more weight than promises ever will.

### 9. Remember That Some Things Aren't for Sale

Integrity is priceless. I once heard a talk called *"Three Towels and a 25-Cent Newspaper"*. The speaker told of returning three towels he had taken from a summer job, and later, refusing a "free" newspaper someone had grabbed en masse. When asked why, he said, "My integrity is worth more than 25 cents." That story stuck with me. No matter the temptation, some things should never be compromised.

### 10. Know Where to Draw the Line

Boundaries matter. I'm reminded of the story of a stagecoach company hiring a new driver. One candidate said he could drive within six inches of a cliff; another claimed three inches. But the third said, "I stay as far from the edge as possible." Who would you hire? Knowing your limits—and staying well within them—is wisdom, not weakness.

---

I'm humbled and grateful for the opportunity to have served as NACAA President. Thank you for trusting me with this role. It has been a great ride! I hope that throughout my time of service, I've done my best to live—and model—the "Code of the West."

*Scott*



## The County Agent

**The County Agent** is a publication  
of the National Association  
County Agricultural Agents  
President: K. Scott Jensen

Volume LXXXVI No. 2 June, 2025 The County Agent (ISSN 0164-3932) (USPS 0134-900) is published four times per year (Dec., April, June, Oct.) by the National Association County Agricultural Agents, 6584 W. Duroc Road, Maroa, IL 61756. Subscription price is \$10.00 annually and is included as part of an active member's dues. Periodical Class postage paid at Maroa, IL.

POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO:

The County Agent -

*National Association County Agricultural Agents*

Editor: *Scott Hambaker* - 6584 W. Duroc Rd., Maroa, IL 61756

Phone (217) 794-3700 • Fax (217) 794-5901

E-mail: [nacaemail@aol.com](mailto:nacaemail@aol.com)

## NACAA CODE OF ETHICS

My professional standards shall note an understanding for our common humanity. My work, ambitions and relations shall always cause me to take into consideration my highest duties as a member of society.

In every position of business life, in every responsibility that comes before me, my chief thought shall be to fill that position and discharge that responsibility to lift the level of human ideals and achievements a little higher than I found it.

I shall:

FIRST: Consider my vocation worthy and as affording me distinct opportunity to serve society.

SECOND: Improve myself, increase my efficiency, and enlarge my service.

THIRD: Remember that I am a professional and want to succeed, but that I am first an ethical person and wish no success that is not founded on the highest justice and morality.

FOURTH: Respect and hold in high esteem science in all its phases and to recognize that Experiment Station and U.S.D.A. findings constitute professional authority in agriculture and to respect the opinion of those who have established themselves as authorities in this branch of science.

FIFTH: Be loyal to our State Universities, the U.S.D.A., our local, state, and national government.

SIXTH: Hold in high esteem the callings of both rural and urban activities.

SEVENTH: Recognize that the development of leadership and the building of communities is the highest service I can render as a County Extension Agent.

EIGHTH: Maintain an open mind, seeking always to understand the viewpoints of others.

NINTH: Not engage in any activity which will interfere with the proper fulfillment of my professional duties and bring discredit to my office.

TENTH: Support and contribute to strengthening my State or Regional and National Association of County Agricultural Agents in their efforts to improve and advance the Extension Service Program for the betterment of our nation.

Updated March, 2007

# NACAA Educational Foundation Notes



For 20 years, NACAA members have been contributing to the NACAA Education Foundation to fund scholarships for its members. Since that beginning, hundreds of members have taken advantage of that investment to take coursework toward advanced degrees, participated in professional conferences offered by other organizations, embarked on special individual study tours and participate in group study tours with their peers. Since 2005, over \$275,000 has been awarded to NACAA members for their professional development.

Funds of the foundation have been invested with Raymond James Investment Company at a moderate risk level to provide some growth while still protecting the investments you as members have made to the foundation. An indicator of this investment strategy is that in the early months of 2025 when the markets were experiencing large losses, we still earned a small profit on our carefully balanced investments. Our current endowment fund stands at approximately \$1.3 million. The work of the foundation is directed by a board of trustees consisting of four members. The goal is to have two active members and two life members as trustees. One of the active members is usually a representative of the NACAA board who serves a one-year term while the other trustees serve three-year terms.

The foundation has been the recipient of a handful of bequests from member estates which have been designated for specific types of scholarship awards for leadership development. Consider this in your own estate planning. As an example, one life member named the NACAA Education Foundation as the beneficiary of his FEGLI (federal life insurance policy). While it was a small amount from his estate, it was a very significant amount to the foundation. There are also a few retirees who appreciate what NACAA membership has done for their careers and make modest annual donations to continue their support of the foundation goals.

One way retirees can contribute is to designate a portion of their Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) directly to the NACAA Education Foundation. This allows you to contribute, but the distribution is not counted as taxable income to you. When you are working on your RMD's, ask your investment advisor about how this works and then consider the NACAA Education Foundation as a recipient

This is the second year members have had two opportunities during the year to apply for scholarships rather than just one. This opens more opportunities to receive support for professional conferences or other study activities. While it is too early to say for sure, it appears the number of applicants is trending upwards which is good, but it also increases the need for regular donations to keep building the endowment fund to support those scholarships.

Many thanks for the support many of members have offered in the past. We encourage you to continue contributing. Even small amounts on a regular basis add up.

# ***NACAA Scholarship Experiences 2024-2025***

*Within this edition of The County Agent, are reprints of Educational Experience Reports which each previous award winner has submitted to the NACAA Scholarship Committee. These reports are from within the last 12 months and are quite impressive in regards to the educational value each individual/group experienced.*

*If you would like to make a donation to the NACAA Educational Foundation, you can do so via credit card on the NACAA website ([www.nacaa.com](http://www.nacaa.com) - bottom left hand corner - Donate button), or you can send a check made payable to the NACAA Educational Foundation, and mail to NACAA, 6584 W. Duroc Road, Maroa, IL 61756.*

*Enjoy reading about the exciting opportunities many of our NACAA members had from receiving funding from the NACAA Educational Foundation.*

## ***NACAA Agricultural Tour of England & Scotland in June, 2024***

*By: Dave Nicolai*

Although I work primarily with corn and soybean, I am extremely interested in learning more about agriculture in Scotland and England where they have a much more diversified system than what I work with, on land that has been in agricultural production for hundreds of years. Throughout my career I have strived to help develop more sustainable practices and systems through my educational and research efforts, these efforts include work with crop rotations, integrated pest management, and economic sustainability from an agronomic perspective. I have also long been interested in alternative crops with the intent to help play a role in the expansion of a more diversified agricultural system for our state and beyond.



I participated in a professional development opportunity in Scotland and England in June, 2024. This National Association of County Ag Agents (NACAA) agricultural tour included a visit to local farms in Scotland and England producing small grains, forages, dairy production and canola etc.



In addition to touring local farms, we attended a day-long premier technological ag show for Scotland, which is the Royal Highland Ag Show in Edinburgh, Scotland as well as various cultural centers and communities. I plan to share this experience with fellow educators through a presentation to our Minnesota Association of Extension Ag Professionals (MAEAP), which is the state association tied to NACAA, and to our Crops Team at Staff Development. I would also be happy to present to the MARL program and additional groups as requested.



# Educational Experience Report: American Society of Horticultural Sciences Annual Conference

By: Wael Elwakil

I had the privilege of attending the national American Society of Horticultural Sciences (ASHS) annual conference, thanks to a scholarship award that covered approximately 50% of the trip expenses. This opportunity allowed me to present my research titled “Plant Health Aerial Mapping Integration in Precision Agriculture Systems” and engage with leading experts in the field.

## ***Presentation and Research Insights***

My presentation focused on the integration of aerial mapping technologies in precision agriculture. Utilizing various drone platforms equipped with RGB, multispectral, and thermal sensors, my research demonstrated the practical applications of these technologies in monitoring plant health and stress. The use of RGB imaging with filters like NDVI (Normalized Difference Vegetation Index) and EXG (Excess Green) proved effective in creating heatmaps for crop production fields, identifying zones of varying plant stress, and optimizing irrigation networks during freeze protection activities. Only in the past few years, the use of zoning maps generated via drone imaging or satellites has become easily possible to integrate via small-size shape files in GPS-driven field equipment. This research highlighted the potential for targeted variable rate applications of pesticides and fertilizers, enhancing decision-making processes in commercial agricultural operations.

## ***Educational Sessions and Networking***

The conference featured a diverse range of educational sessions that covered topics such as vegetable and fruit production, pest management, and new agricultural technologies. These sessions provided valuable insights into the latest research and advancements in horticultural sciences. I attended several sessions that were particularly relevant to my work, including those on advances in fruit and vegetable production, pest management strategies, and the implementation of new technologies in agriculture.

## ***Cultural and Agricultural Exploration***

In addition to the educational benefits, the conference location in Honolulu, HA offered a unique opportunity to explore the local culture and agricultural practices. Observing local agriculture and visiting many natural resource sites was a very unique experience for me as a first-time visitor to Hawaii. It was very interesting to

observe the completely different agriculture production systems on the islands of Hawaii. This experience enriched my knowledge of diverse agricultural systems and practices. Trying some of the local foods and visiting local markets was a great bonus to the trip.

## ***Outcomes and Future Applications***

Attending national conferences such as the annual ASHS conference plays an essential role in keeping up with the current trends and innovations. The knowledge gained from the sessions and interactions with fellow researchers is instrumental in advancing my work as an agricultural extension educator. The insights into new technologies in production systems and pest management strategies will directly inform my ongoing research and extension activities. Moreover, the networking opportunities provided by the conference have established valuable connections with experts and peers in the field. These connections will facilitate future collaborations and knowledge exchange, further enhancing the impact of my research.

## ***Conclusion***

The ASHS annual conference was an invaluable educational experience that has greatly contributed to my professional development. The scholarship award enabled me to present my research, learn from leading experts, and explore new agricultural practices. I am grateful for this opportunity and look forward to applying the knowledge and connections gained to benefit the horticultural community. The NACAA scholarship award program is invaluable and well worth the nominal investment, which I will reinvest in for future support.



Aloha Festival Floral Parade



Hanauma Bay State Park

# Educational Experience Report: American Society of Horticultural Sciences Annual Conference

By: William Errickson

With support from the NACAA Scholarship Fund, I had the opportunity to attend the 2024 American Society of Horticultural Science (ASHS) Conference in Honolulu, HI.

As a pre-tenure faculty member, this was a very valuable experience. I attended many excellent presentations at the conference, with one of them focused on long-term woody plant trials at North Dakota State University. This program was inspiring because I am working on newly established woody plant trials at one of our research farms in NJ, and I gained insight on some of the metrics they are evaluating for and the profound impacts that these evaluations can have for the nursery and landscape industries in a particular region. Another notable talk was from a researcher at the University of New Hampshire who was evaluating different varieties of endive to provide growers with information on producing a marketable crop, and which varieties would be most successful. While there were dozens of different endives in these 2-year trials, only certain varieties were reliably producing a saleable crop.

The presenter also documented the reasons why each of the unsuccessful varieties were not being recommended, for example quantifying the percentage of each crop that was either too small, affected by several specific pathogens, or did not have enough time to finish (too long of a season required). This level of detail was impressive, and it was delivered in a very practical way that could be useful for growers.

Additionally, I attended several networking events, including a reception for the national society, which offered opportunities to connect with colleagues from across the United States, as well as with colleagues from Rutgers who I do not often get to see in person because our offices are located across the state. Later in the week, I also participated in a Northeast networking reception that involved a smaller group of colleagues, allowing us to connect on a regional level.

I also delivered three presentations at the conference: one oral and two posters. My oral presentation focused on Native Plant Extension Programming for Commercial Horticulture Professionals was well received and I made connections with colleagues working in similar fields from the University of Florida and the University of Hawaii, who

attended the talk. I am currently collaborating with some of these colleagues on a larger USDA SCRI grant submission and this was a great chance to interact with one another in person. The two other presentations I made were both posters, however the format differed from a traditional poster session and involved projecting the poster on a screen and giving a 10-minute rapid presentation about it, including time for questions from the audience. One of my poster presentations focused on our native azalea container trials to evaluate which species might be good candidates for growers in the Mid-Atlantic. One of the audience members made a suggestion of a follow up study to look at consumer preferences for the different species that were in our trials. I thought this was an excellent idea, and I am now working to distribute the plants from our trials to public garden spaces along with a survey to collect this data. I was the presenting author for a second poster, in which my colleague, Dr. Timothy Waller was the primary author, but was unable to attend the conference. This poster focused on our work on oomycete root pathogens, such as *Phytophthora* spp. and *Phytophthora vexans*.

These pathogens can cause problems on many different crops all over the world, so it was a great opportunity to share our work with this national/international audience.

A final highlight of the conference involved a tour of Oahu's botanical gardens, led by two Extension Specialists from the University of Hawaii. First, we stopped at the Waimea Valley Botanical Garden and were able to see a behind the scenes look at their greenhouses in addition to the gardens. We then went to the Foster Botanical Garden, which is a 14-acre public garden in the middle of urban Honolulu. This garden was started in 1850 and included many incredible tree specimens. The last stop on the tour was at the University of Hawaii's Harold L. Lyon Arboretum, where they maintain an extensive tissue culture collection, with some plants that have actually gone extinct in the wild and now only exist in their tissue cultures. They also conduct traditional plant propagation at the arboretum, with an emphasis on propagating and preserving rare and endangered native plants. Many of these plants have specific propagation requirements and they had an impressive setup with various substrates specific for each species they were working with.

Overall, this conference was an incredible experience and I greatly benefited from seeing how my colleagues are working on similar topics, such as plant trials, native plants, and propagation, but in ways that are specific to their region and their unique stakeholder groups. I returned to NJ inspired to continue this work locally, and encouraged to stay in touch with the contacts I had made at the conference.

# Educational Experience Report National Association of County Agricultural Agents Scholarship September 30-October 4, 2024

By: Susanne Hinrichs

A University of Minnesota Extension Educator put a National Association of County Agricultural Agents Scholarship to good use by pairing the funding with other sources to become certified as a CliftonStrengths Certified Coach. Susanne Hinrichs, an agricultural business management educator, leads the Extension Women in Agriculture and the Annie's Project efforts in Minnesota, among additional valuable programming in the area of Farm Transition & Estate Planning, as well as business planning.

The CliftonStrengths Certification course was held in-person in Omaha, Nebraska, the week of September 30 - October 4, 2024. This certification program prepares individuals for becoming a certified coach by multiple hours of coursework on understanding and appreciating strengths-based development including a focus on the 34 strengths themes of CliftonStrengths.

In addition to a basis of understanding on the strengths themes, the program provided an opportunity to build skills through 1:1 role playing in coaching others using a strengths based understanding. Also provided, was training on coaching managers and coaching teams. A manager of a team can be a crucial component for effective team performance and reaching the team's greatest potential.

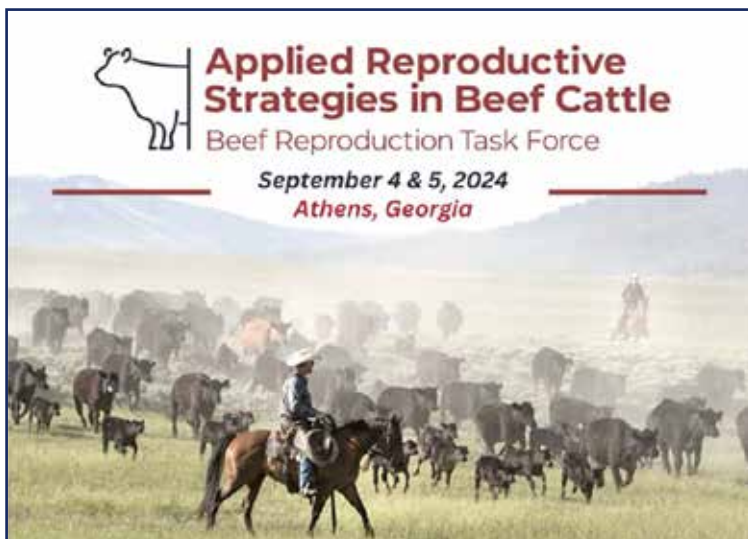
When a manager encourages their team members to do what they do best, rather than trying to improve weaknesses, this can lead to high engagement and overall team success. In this, managers are key to improving the impact on employee engagement.

Bringing this information home and using it will be the next steps for Susanne as she looks to integrate this information into team meetings, into classes and workshops, as well as collaborations with organizations in northern Minnesota, where she serves in her role. She has already used this information with a group of Anne's Project participants to explore personal growth and developing learning about their strengths profile and providing activities for deeper reflection and growth.

Thank you to the NACAA Educational Foundation for this opportunity.

# Educational Experience to ARSBC

By: Denise Schwab & Russ Euken



First thank you to the NACAA Scholarship program for supporting our trip to the Applied Reproductive Strategies in Beef Cattle conference. It was an outstanding conference and with great speakers.

As a part of my notetaking, I took photos of many of the slides to utilize similar concepts in future programs. Our beef team will have in-service in October to compile program plans for 2025, with one of our priorities being a series of reproduction meetings across the state. The topics on reproductive strategies to increase profitability, using with natural services, and nutrition definitely fit well with our initial thoughts on topics that our producers need to hear. The topics on the impact of tall fescue on fertility and heat stress may also be useful in parts of our state. The hands-on lab classes also may be useful in our programming efforts, particularly the anatomy of pregnancy, semen management and handling during artificial insemination, and bull fertility evaluations.

The information presented and contacts made during the conference will aid our team in developing educational materials and presentations that will benefit Iowa beef cow operations. From those materials and presentations producers will understand the reproductive technologies available and how they can implement them in their own situation to improve reproductive efficiency and profitability.

Having several of our team attend this conference will aid in material development and being able to collaborate in delivering programs.



# NACAA Horticulture Tour of Ireland

By: Cyndi Lauderdale, Wilson County Horticulture Agent, NC State Extension

I want to thank NACAA for offering me a scholarship and the opportunity to travel with the NACAA Ireland Cultural, Gardens, and Horticulture Tour hosted by Danny Lauderdale, NC State Area Specialized Agent-Commercial Ornamental Nursery & Greenhouse, Eastern Region.

On our first day, we met our two guides, Erin and Kim, plus the 50 participants on the tour. We had two bus loads of excited Americans to see all Ireland has to offer. We headed south out of Dublin to Kildare (Kil=church, dare=oak, Church of the Oak) for our first stop at the Irish National Stud and Gardens. The Irish National Stud's Japanese Gardens were created between 1906 and 1910 by Japanese



master horticulturist Tassa Eida. His vision was through trees, plants, flowers, lawns, rocks, and water, to symbolise the 'Life of Man'. (A journey of a soul from birth, childhood, marriage, parenthood, old age, death, and the afterlife.) This Garden was created as a private garden, so the narrow paths and steep steps took some maneuvering for our large group. Then we went to Tipperary County to see The Rock of Cashel, one of Ireland's most iconic medieval ruins. It served as the seat of kings dating back as far as 360 until 1101. Then it was granted as a church. St. Patrick did baptisms here. When ended our day in Cork.

The next morning, we awoke to a gorgeous sunny day. The weather for the entire trip was sunny and rain-free. It was glorious to us and the Irish alike. Most parks were crowded with people taking in the sun since it is rare to have such weather. Our first stop was Nagle and Niesen Tree Wholesale Nursery. This is a field tree nursery. We did not see their tree spade, but it is different then our traditional one. Their spade is more of a scoop. They grow a lot of the same trees we do, and of course, some we don't. They grow crapemyrtles, but they don't flower because they don't have high enough temperatures. (Why bother?) They also seem to train their trees more than



we do into single or multi-stemmed. Have you ever seen a single-stemmed 'Nellie R. Stevens' Holly? I have. Next stop was the Blarney Castle and Gardens. This may have been my favorite garden. Lots of Gunnera, Azaleas, Alliums, etc. A day is not complete in Ireland without a little whiskey. Jameson Distillery in Middleton has special blends, only crafted there. We learned about single and triple-distilled spirits and, of course, had a tasting. My drink of choice was a Jameson and Ginger (Jameson and ginger ale).

We left Cork and headed to the coast to visit Garnish Island (37 acres) in Bantry Bay. Before getting on the ferry, we stopped in Bantry and witnessed a traditional Irish funeral. Members of the town walked down the street from a pub to the local cemetery carrying the casket. We stopped our activities to pay respect. You have to take a small passenger ferry to get there. On the ride there, we saw seals sunning themselves. The Gardens were designed by Harold Peto. The island enjoys a mild and humid microclimate that makes for flourishing plant life all year round. Some of the highlights were a walled garden, a sunken garden, and an Italian garden. Then we visited Derreen Garden, a private garden, dating back to 1657, and still belonging to the same family. 400 acres were planted in collections of trees, shrubs, and ornamental plants. The most remarkable tree ferns, *Dicksonia antarctica*, are grown here.

No trip to Ireland is complete without driving the Ring of Kerry. You get a magnificent view along the water and see sheep and cows grazing. We stopped at several viewpoints along the way. Our lunch was at O'Carrolls Cove Beach Bar with a pint of Guinness and fish and chips. The view was like looking out at a Caribbean blue sea! The last stop was Muckross House, 1843, within the Killarney National Park.

We had one overcast day at the Cliffs of Moher. The cliffs are 702 feet high and home to puffins, which we could see through binoculars. Many days this area has dense fog, and



you may not even be able to see the cliff, so again, our Irish luck held out.

In Dublin, we went to the National Botanical Gardens of Ireland. This 48-acre garden has 40 gardeners! The Gardens had beautiful collections arranged by plant families, an Irish Native garden, and a glasshouse full of tropical plants, including ORCHIDS! My plant passion is orchids, and while many were not in bloom, I got some wonderful photos to share of those that were. I was also able to take photos of the native terrestrial orchid in this garden. I was impressed by their insect control in the glasshouses with the use of sticky traps and the release of beneficial insects. The garden is research-based, and they collect endangered plants to propagate them to release them back into their native habitat.

Our final day was a guided tour of Dublin, seeing the sites, including St. Patrick's Cathedral. Free time was spent going

to St. Stephen's Green Park. While there, we talked to one of the three gardeners employed there. The Head Garden position is open if anyone is looking for a new opportunity. Most gardeners we met, horticulture is their second career. They have to train to be employed as a gardener, and the one we met here was trained at the National Botanical Gardens, which we had visited. They use students from France and Ireland to help maintain the gardens (work-study).

This educational experience was a true highlight. I appreciate NACAA for all the educational experiences I have had over my 29-year career. If you are a new agent, I highly recommend getting involved with NACAA, you can't beat the opportunities and friendships you will make with other agents across our nation. Thank you, NACAA, for the tour and scholarship to experience and learn so much.

## Entomological Society of America Annual Conference in Phoenix AZ

By: Laura Johnson



Thanks to generous support from a NACAA Education Foundation Scholarship, I had the immense privilege of attending the 2024 Entomological Society of America (ESA) annual conference in Phoenix, Arizona. This is THE conference for those working in the insect sciences, with over 3,500 attendees. The event brings together both students and professionals of diverse backgrounds. It was my first time in attendance, and it did not disappoint. The conference was five days of meetings, presentations, poster sessions, social mixers, exhibitors, and networking opportunities. These opportunities for knowledge sharing and learning were filled with topics covering themes such as genetics, outreach and education, women in the sciences, pollinators, integrated pest management,

biodiversity, plant-insect interactions, emerging crop specific pest control technologies, and even insect themed art.

Exposure to the breadth of insect related research and education efforts shared at this type of conference is important to my extension work with farmers. I work at the University of Vermont as Extension's Pollinator Support Specialist. In this position, I support farms in the Northeast, like many extension programs do, with technical assistance, education, outreach, and applied research efforts. The way in which I do this, is all specifically related to wild and managed crop pollinators and their habitat on farms. My work is grounded in understanding farm priorities, like economic well-being, while layering in practical, low risk ways to support pollinators in the working landscape. By attending this conference, I was able to learn from



*continued on page 10*

other specialists working in a similar field and about their successes and failures in on applied on farm research and educational efforts. I look forward to bringing new ideas and approaches back to share with farms and explore with farmer stakeholders what might also work in the Vermont context.

One example of applied research translatable to Vermont farms was shared during this year's specialized symposium on one group of important crop pollinators, ground nesting and solitary bees. A researcher from North Carolina State University shared findings on identifying and creating blueberry farm nesting habitat for blueberry specialist pollinators. Their findings identified extensive on-farm nest locations of key economically important blueberry bees. Ground nesting bee habitat preferences identified included flat areas, bare ground, berms along field margins, and man-made nesting boxes of mounded soils installed by the researchers. These habitat preferences can extend to wild bees and farm types in the Northeast. Since most farms in Vermont do not utilize managed pollinators and depend on wild bees for production, understanding and bringing these details to the attention of stakeholders about how to protect key nesting areas in the farm landscape is essential to this industry's well-being.

Another series of talks I attended highlighted women in extension. As a woman myself who first discovered extension work as a Peace

Corps Volunteer in Paraguay in 2011, I find myself still enthusiastically pursuing this profession 14 years later, despite the inevitable ups and downs along the way. I heard several women speak to the challenges and breakthroughs of working in a male dominated career path that is now becoming a field with more gender diversity and more equal pay. Though equality has yet to be totally achieved in this industry, the number of women working in this world continues to grow. Many speakers emphasized that working in extension as a woman is living a lifestyle rather than working a job. We are always on call for our farmers or other stakeholders, days, nights, and weekends. This inevitably poses a unique challenge of balancing personal responsibilities, mental and physical health, and homelife obligations, like caring for children and family farms. But some key inspiration and advice shared broadly by women



mid-career to end-of career (some exceeding 40 years of service!) were the following: be resilient, build a diverse team, say "I don't know, but I can find out" and follow up, have a wellness journey, and be kind. Remembering and applying these strategies helps cultivate and sustain an environment of mental and physical well-being in the unique lifestyle of extension work. It was affirming and encouraging to hear shared sentiments from women in extension from all parts of the country. I greatly valued the sense of shared comradery this conference made space for in a career that can sometimes bare a lot of physical and emotional exertion, but also great reward.

Extension careers, like farms, have simple goals for being productive, yet the pathway to achieving desired outcomes is inevitably complex and full of decision making leading to successes and failures. At surface level, my work focuses on engaging stakeholders on the importance of insect mediated pollination services on farms and in working landscapes. This conference provided numerous opportunities to expand my knowledge base in this field. At a deeper level, extension work demands one's whole physical and emotional self. This conference offered the opportunity to take time and build connections to reflect on how applied technical assistance and research requires so much more than knowing the facts. It takes significant, and often slow, relationship building with key stakeholders and oneself in order to provide high quality and effective programming. I am so thankful for having the chance to expand my knowledge base and network. I look forward to staying in touch with new friends and colleagues and for the next time I am able to connect with the community again.



# Annie's Project Facilitator Training October 22-23, 2024 St. Louis, MO

By: Ashley Stonecipher

Annie's Project is a nationally recognized program designed to empower women in agriculture through education, networking, and hands-on experience. The Facilitator Training aimed to equip participants with the skills necessary to lead these programs effectively. The objectives of this training included:

1. Understanding Program Goals: Learning about the mission and objectives of Annie's Project.
2. Facilitation Skills Development: Enhancing skills in group facilitation, communication, and engagement.
3. Resource Familiarization: Becoming acquainted with the curriculum and resources available to facilitators.
4. Networking: Connecting with other facilitators to share best practices.

The training comprised of two half days of engaging activities, including interactive workshops where participants practiced facilitation techniques through role playing and learned more ways to engage our class with hands-on experiences. We reviewed the comprehensive curriculum designed for Annie's Project, covering key topics such as financial management, marketing, and risk management in agriculture. Notably, we also explored a new curriculum on crop insurance, discussing its modules and their application with participants. This new material will be piloted for six months and made available to all facilitators next spring.

Experienced facilitators shared their success stories and challenges, providing valuable insights into effective program delivery. Additionally, participants had the opportunity to network, discuss local challenges, and collaboratively brainstorm solutions.

## Key Learnings

1. Facilitation Techniques: Emphasizing the importance of creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all participants, with practiced techniques such as active listening and open-ended questioning.
2. Curriculum Application: Highlighting how to tailor the curriculum to meet the unique needs of local participants, ensuring relevance and engagement.



3. Community Building: Underscoring the role of facilitators in fostering a sense of community and encouraging collaboration among participants.

4. Resource Utilization: Familiarization with various resources, including online tools and local support networks, essential for effective program implementation.

The training was an invaluable experience that deepened my understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing women in agriculture. As an agriculture extension agent, I had many questions about how to connect the business aspects of the curriculum directly with my community. Now, I feel more equipped to facilitate discussions, provide resources, and empower participants to achieve their goals. The camaraderie among fellow facilitators was truly inspiring, and I look forward to implementing the strategies I learned. I am eager to apply these insights in my role and contribute to the success of Annie's Project. Currently, the program is not well-known in Florida, but I am excited to move forward with these efforts. My goal is to strengthen Annie's Project not only in my county but also to present it to other extension agents throughout the state.

The scholarship I received was instrumental in enabling me to participate in this training by providing the financial support necessary for me to attend. This opportunity has expanded my knowledge and skills while reinforcing my commitment to empowering women in agriculture.

The training has equipped me with valuable resources and connections that I can bring back to my community, making the scholarship a vital catalyst for my personal and professional growth.



# 24th Congress of the International Farm Management Association

By: David and Emily Marrison, OSU Extension

We were very fortunate to attend the **24th Congress of the International Farm Management Association** held in the province of Saskatchewan, Canada on July 7-12, 2024. This conference brought farmers, farm management consultants, and university professionals together from across the globe to sharpen their farm management skills.



The theme of the congress was **“Resiliency through Innovation.”** The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines “resiliency” as an ability to recover from or adjust easily to adversity or change and “innovation” as the introduction of something new. The conference planning committee did a wonderful job in designing this conference to showcase how farm businesses, families, institutions, and ecosystems in Canada are adapting to today’s world through innovation.

During the conference, three days were dedicated to conference keynote addresses and academic presentations at the



University of Saskatchewan and two days spent out on farm tours throughout the province of Saskatchewan. There were 191 attendees from 20 countries stretching from New Zealand to Wales to Israel and beyond.

## Conference Presentations

At the conference there were 47 contributed papers presented, three resilient-themed panel presentations, and 8 academic poster presentations highlighting farm management research and education from across the globe.

On day one, the lay of the land with regards to the agricultural economy in Saskatchewan was provided by J.P. Gervais, Chief Economist from Farm Credit Canada and Jason Newton, Chief Economist from Nutrien. Forty percent of Canada’s farmland is in the province of Saskatchewan and in 2021, Saskatchewan farmers grew 12 million acres



of canola making it the largest producer in the world. Saskatchewan is home to Nutrien (formerly known as PotashCorp), which is the largest potassium producer in the world. They are also the world’s third largest nitrogen producer.

Insight on how institutions can be resilient was provided by Derek Brewin from the University of Manitoba, Wayne Thomas from the Western Grains Research Foundation, and Adam Carer from the University of Saskatchewan. Finding stable funding sources was highlighted as a pressing need and all three stressed the need for farm management to a focus of academic institutions.

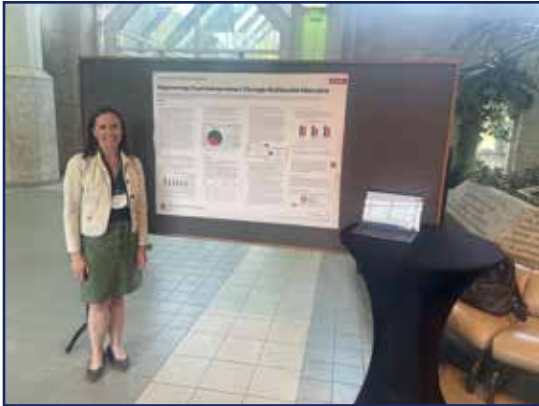
A very thought-provoking panel examined resilient ecosystems. This panel included presentations by Paul Thoroughgood from Ducks Unlimited, Darrin Qualman from National Farmers Union, and Jenna Sarich from the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef. Each presenter stressed the need for a paradigm shift in how we maintain healthy ecosystems through conservation. They emphasized that production practices need to be more holistic and less focused on maximizing yield through increased inputs.

The third resilient themed panel addressed resilient farm families. Panelists included John and Barb Cote (Black Fox Farm and Distillery), Melanie Boldt (Pine View Farms) Jake Leguee (Leguee Farms), Duane Thompson (Tee Two Land and Cattle Company), Jack Cocks (Mt Nicolas Station in New Zealand), and Megz Reynolds and Bob Wilkie (I Got Mind). Each stressed the need for strategic planning, investing in management skills, and focusing on mental health.

Nearly 50 contributed paper presentations were also offered highlighting a variety of resiliency themes. These themes included: standardized farm records, benchmarking, agricultural policy, farm transition, climate policy, technology advances, business management, extension, farm financial management, and innovation.

We were both honored to present poster presentations at this conference sharing a slice of farm management

education from The Ohio State University. Emily (along with Peggy Hall, Nicole Arnold and Garth Ruff) presented a poster presentation titled **“Empowering Food Entrepreneurs Through Education”** and David presented a poster (co-authored with Barry Ward, Dianne Shoemaker, Ben Brown, Robert Moore, Jeff Lewis, Wm. Bruce Clevenger, Eric Richer, and Clint Schroeder) titled **“Farm Office Live- Resiliency and Innovation in Providing Farm Management Education.”** We both appreciated the conversations that we had about these programs at the Monday evening (July 8) poster presentation reception.



### Tour Recap

IFMA participants had the option to attend two of seven planned tours. The tours available included Barley to Beer, Value-Added Agriculture, Livestock, People and Poultry, Dairy, Grain and Oilseeds, Research and Innovation, and Irrigation.



On the July 9 tour day, we attended the Barley to Beer tour. We learned more about advancements in Canada’s barley production and craft brewery industry with stops at the University of Saskatchewan’s barley research plots, Maker’s



Crafted Malts, IntelliYeast, and 9 Mile Legacy Brewery. This tour captured the barley to craft beer production cycle. We learned about barley production research being conducted by the University of Saskatchewan and then visited two innovators in the malt and yeast supply chain sector. Though craft beer in Canada is about 8-10% of the market, smaller breweries use about 25% of the malt which is produced. An additional bonus of the trip was to learn about Canada’s canola industry as well as barley, oats, wheat, crops, flax, peas, lentils, and chickpeas.

On the July 11 tour day, we participated in the dairy tour which visited the heart of the Saskatchewan dairy industry with visits to the Raynor Dairy Farm at the University of Saskatchewan, Twin Peaks Creamery, Hyljon Holsteins, and Prairie West Dairies. Each of these operations showcased a variety of management approaches utilizing scale, efficiency, innovation, and value-added opportunities like ice cream to create viable business models. We really enjoyed learning more about the Canadian milk quota system which is completely different from our milk pricing system.

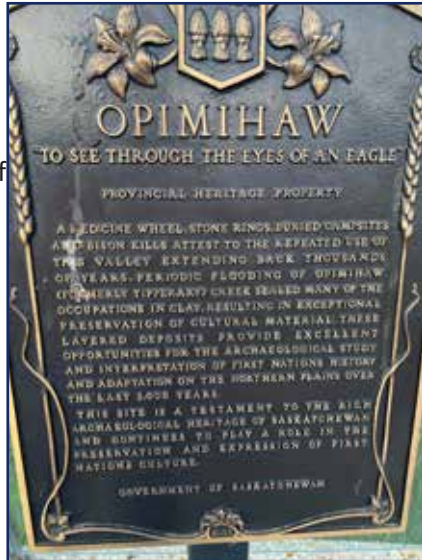






## Conference Reflections

A highlight of the conference was learning and growing our appreciation for the heritage of this province of Canada. This year's IFMA conference kicked off with a welcome to Canada dinner at the Wanuskewin Heritage Park in Treaty 6 Territory on Sunday July 7. While the bison-themed dinner was exceptional, we took home a greater appreciation for the history and culture of the Northern Plains Indigenous people. On this site, the bison roamed the plains and many different tribes gathered for hunting and other spiritual ceremonies. In 1987, Queen Elizabeth II declared Wanuskewin a national historic site and in 1992 the visitor's center and trails were opened to the public. Indigenous peoples account for 17% of the population in Saskatchewan and 70 First Nations are represented in this province. Just as there are many efforts to restore race relations in the US, there is a desire to make restitution with the indigenous people groups in Canada. It is a complicated situation, but our outside observation is that there is a genuine effort to learn from one another and a desire for a better future for all people in Canada. Wanuskewin Heritage Park is currently under consideration to earn UNESCO World Heritage



Site designation. We encourage you to learn more about this incredible facility at: <https://wanuskewin.com/>

As we reflected on the conference, we also tried to define the attributes which make the farmers we met more resilient, innovative, and profitable than their counterparts. Here are a few common themes which we observed:

**Strategic Planning** - If you fail to plan, plan to fail. Each farmer and presenter stressed the need to make strategic planning a normal part of business management. Emphasis was placed on not being afraid to pivot away from what has always been done. The key is knowing when to change and when to stay the course.

**Holistic Management** - Farmers are on a treadmill which is hyper-focused on increasing output through the increasing use of commercial inputs. Many cited the need to look at our production systems more holistically. Our global counterparts are very in tune with the Paris Climate Accords and seem to be more aggressive in reducing their carbon footprint. Some of the questions and statements posed in this area included: Why are we planting the below average ground? Would this land be better positioned to capture carbon or be used to increase biodiversity? Have higher crop profits hurt sustainability efforts? Many stressed the need to shepherd the use of fertilizer and treat it as precious and powerful. The paradigm must shift to farm the best land, and farm it better.

**Financial Management** - Small gains matter and farmers can go broke even if they work hard. Each farm we visited had strong accounting practices and cited the adage that you can't manage what you don't measure. Take time to review your financial ratios and benchmark yourself against others. The key is to have standardized and accurate data.

**Relationships Matter** - Iron sharpens iron. Who are your closest advisors? Each of the farms we visited have utilized mentors, consultants, and advisory boards to sharpen their management skills and to help them stay resilient. Who is on your team and how are they helping to sharpen your management skills?

**Nuggets of Wisdom** - There were so many great nuggets of wisdom shared at this conference. Here are just a few that resonated with us:

- "Efficiency—find 5%. Small gains matter."
- "Is your legacy driven by profit or by heritage?"
- "I would worry a lot less, if I thought you were worrying enough."
- "Maybe farmers need to just stew in their predicament."



- “Don’t bounce back, bounce forward.”
- “No is a complete sentence.”
- “Resentment is a cancer on a family farm.”
- “If you are not around the table—you are probably on the menu.”

#### Thank-You

We appreciate the financial support which the NACAA Education Foundation provided us to attend this conference. For those interested in farm management, we would encourage you to add this conference to your professional development list. The next conference will

be held in Argentina in 2026. More information about the International Farm Management Association can be found at: <https://www.ifma.network/>

David Marrison is Professor and Field Specialist, Farm Management, Ohio State University Extension. David can be reached at 740-722-6073 or [marrison.2@osu.edu](mailto:marrison.2@osu.edu)

Emily Marrison is Assistant Professor and County Extension Educator, Coshocton County, Ohio, Ohio State University Extension. Emily can be reached at 740-622-2265 or [marrison.12@osu.edu](mailto:marrison.12@osu.edu)

## NACAA Mission Statement

The mission of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA), an organization of professional extension educators, is to further the professional improvement of its members, communication and cooperation among all extension educators and provide for enhancement of the image of extension and the development of personal growth opportunities for extension professionals.

## Goals for NACAA

In order to improve the County Extension Agent’s role as a professional educator, the goals for the National Association of County Agricultural Agents are:

Promote the Extension educator as a credible, research based educational resource. . Enhance their leadership skills.

Increase participation in NACAA Programs and activities, including the Annual Meeting and Professional Improvement Conference, and professional improvement programs as access to academic credit and educational resources.

Strengthen the involvement in NACAA of early career Agents, women and minorities.

Enhance NACAA’s visibility with NIFA (National Institute of Food and Agriculture) and the Land Grant Universities.

# NACAA Horticulture Tour of Ireland

By: Danny Lauderdale, Area Specialized Agent-Nursery & Greenhouse, NC State Extension

I was fortunate to be part of the NACAA Horticulture Tour to Ireland from May 7-14, 2025. Our tour started in Dublin and departed south toward Cork on day one to visit the Irish National Stud, thoroughbred horse breeding facility, which featured a tour of their authentic designed and installed Japanese gardens created between 1906 and 1910 with their head gardener. The gardens use flowers, trees, lawns, rocks, and water to symbolize the path that mankind takes through life. The second stop of day one was the Rock of Cashel with the most impressive group of medieval buildings in Ireland. The site's protected location high on a hill provides dramatic views of the surrounding Irish rolling landscape and green pastures full of sheep.

Day 2 of the tour took us to my favorite stop, Nangle & Niesen Nursery in Cork, a family run wholesale tree nursery that focuses on Irish and European export



markets. We had a tour by the owner/manager Ronin Nangle that featured their 154 acres site with their focus on use of technology to increase efficiency of production and dedication to soil management. They grow and sell trees larger than many of the nurseries I work with and use different digging equipment due to rocky soils. It was interesting that they are growing many species familiar to us in the eastern US including some species native to the US like bald cypress and popular southern US landscape plants like crapemyrtle. Our second stop was Blarney Castle and Gardens originating in 1446 with 40 acres featuring a boardwalk and water garden, carnivorous, poison, fern, tree, Himalayan valley, tropical, and Vietnamese woodland gardens. The site is most famous for the Blarney Stone that, when kissed, offers the gift of eloquence. We finished the day with a tour of the Jameson Distillery.

After departing Cork on day 3 we visited the 37 acre Garinish Island garden in Bantry Bay run by the Ireland Office of Public Works (OPW). It features sunken Italian gardens which interestingly featured a Bonsai collection

(Irish gardens are definitely not pretentious). Other features include a Grecian temple, veranda, and walled gardens.



Our second visit of the day was the privately run Derreen Garden (not typically visited by tour groups). Derreen means little oak wood and the 60 acre subtropical garden features a large number of tree ferns, bamboo, eucalyptus, conifers and oaks. The head gardener shared that they are uncovering plants they did not know were there as they are undergoing the biggest renovation and planting program in 100 years, adding rare and exotic trees and shrubs.

Day 4 started in Killarney and followed the Ring of Kerry, Irelands most spectacular drive featuring coastal villages and views of the Skellig Islands featured in Star Wars Episodes VII and VIII. We finished the day at Muckross House and Garden, part of Killarney National Park with a tour by a former head gardener featuring hydrangeas, rhododendrons, azaleas, camellia, their natural limestone rock garden, woodland and stream gardens, and formal landscapes.

Leaving Killarney we headed across the Shannon River on day 5 to visit the Cliff's of Moher that stretch for 5 miles and reach a height of 702 feet above sea level. We were able to view nesting puffins and wildflowers along the cliffs and surrounding area before heading to Galway.

On day six we had time to explore Galway and traveled to Dublin for a tour of the National Botanic Gardens (run by the OPW) featuring their tropical greenhouses, wild Ireland natives,



rock garden, yew walk, arboretum, and fruit and vegetable gardens. They have over 15,000 plant species on site and feature genres from Abelia to Zygopetalum.

The final day of the tour in Dublin included a bus tour of the city featuring O'Connell St., the 1705 acre Phoenix Park, Christchurch Cathedral and garden, and St. Patrick Cathedral. I also had time to adventure through St. Steven's Green, a city center garden park and speak to a gardener about how the care for the 28 acres with just a few gardeners and rotating interns. We finished the day and tour off with a visit to the Merry Ploughboy to enjoy dinner and Irish singing and dancing.

The tour provided a unique perspective into the culture and horticulture of Ireland. I saw a widely diverse industry and plant pallet including unique ways to blend different gardening genres and combine varied plant species. The dedication to hands on gardening practices and when necessary, mechanization, such as at the nursery to improve efficiency was impressive. Thanks to the NACAA Scholarship Committee for providing support to allow my participation in this educational experience.



# **INTERESTED IN VIEWING ALL AWARD WINNERS (STATE/REGIONAL/NATIONAL) ? GO TO ....**

**<https://www.nacaa.com/award-winners>**

**Proceedings & Photos of the 2025 AM/PIC will  
be posted at the conclusion of the AM/PIC at**

**<https://www.nacaa.com/am-pics/billings-2025>**



## U.S Territories Grant

*By: Jose D. Arocho Jimenez, University of Puerto Rico*

Thank you for all the hard work that was put into the success of the 2024 AM/PIC held in Dallas, Texas. Thank you for the opportunity of participating of the U. S. Territories Grant which helped me attend this meeting. Throughout this year's AM/PIC, I engaged in workshops, seminars, and took an active part in the Extension Education poster session with a poster titled "True Yam Rust IPM: Utilizing Extension and Educational Approaches with True Yam Farmers in Puerto Rico." Additionally, I served as the National Voting Delegate (Southern/Puerto Rico) and participated in the 2023-2024 NACAA Leadership Academy. I delivered an oral presentation in the "Leadership and Administrative Skills" category titled "Guiding Change and Innovation. All these experiences will contribute to my professional and personal development as an Extension Agent at the University of Puerto Rico College of Agricultural Sciences.

Being able to participate as National Voting Delegate (Southern/Puerto Rico) in this year's voting delegate session was an amazing experience. It was a real honor for me. This exposure allowed my curiosity and ambition to shine, helping me to understand what it takes to someday become a leader in this organization. Along those lines of continuing to explore and discover, I was able to be part of the first class of the NACAA Leadership Academy 2023-2024. With the experience gained from this academy, I will develop and learn leadership skills, which I will use throughout my professional career and as a feature leader in this association. Due to the exposure of these two experiences now I have a clearer picture of the wide variety of opportunities available as part of this professional society, including taking on other leadership roles or publishing in the Journal of NACAA.

I was able to establish professional networking with other extension colleagues. With this networking I was able to understand how other extension agents work and use this knowledge with my farmers in Yabucoa, Puerto Rico. These relationships allow me to have more partnerships with extension professionals all over the U.S. Also, I was able to explore innovative Extension strategies, which will support my own work.

I am excited to encourage other UPR Extension Agents to participate actively in NACAA in the upcoming years. Also, to help strengthen this idea I've coordinated with other members of the Puerto Rico group to work on publishing an article for the "Revista SEA" (P.R. Extension Magazine) about the positive professional development experience at NACAA AM/PIC 2024. We would like to distribute the article at our Agricultural Agents Association Annual Meeting in December 2024 to discuss and promote the experience with other Extension Agents in Puerto Rico. Finally, we want

to organize and host an informal Q&A where we can help other Extension Agents be part of NACAA and with any questions they might have about applying for awards or preparing for AM/PIC 2025.

Again, on my behalf and my colleagues THANK YOU for all your efforts and to all those involved in having Puerto Rico members in this year's NACAA AM/PIC U. S. Territories Grant.

## U.S Territories Grant

*By: Armando Sanchez Nazario, University of Puerto Rico*

Thank you for the dedication and effort that led to the success of the 2024 AM/PIC. I am grateful for the chance to participate in the U.S. Territories Grant, which facilitated my attendance at the meeting. During this year's AM/PIC, I engaged in various workshops and seminars, and took part in the Extension Education poster session with a presentation titled "True Yam Rust IPM: Utilizing Extension and Educational Approaches with True Yam Farmers in Puerto Rico." These experiences will significantly enhance my growth as an Extension Agent at the University of Puerto Rico College of Agricultural Sciences.

As a first-time attendee, the exposure to these experiences has broadened my view of the various opportunities within this professional society, including potential leadership roles and publishing in the Journal of NACAA or Extension Journals.

I also had the chance to build professional connections with other extension colleagues, which has helped me gain insights into their methods and apply this knowledge with farmers in Patillas County, Puerto Rico. These relationships will foster further partnerships with extension professionals across the U.S. Additionally, I explored innovative Extension strategies that will benefit my own work.

I am eager to encourage fellow UPR Extension Agents to become actively involved in NACAA in the coming years. To support this, I have coordinated with other members of the Puerto Rico group to prepare an article for the "Revista SEA" (P.R. Extension Magazine) highlighting the positive professional development gained at NACAA AM/PIC 2024. We plan to distribute this article at our Agricultural Agents Association Annual Meeting in December 2024 to share and promote the experience with other Extension Agents in Puerto Rico.

Once again, thank you for all your efforts and for including Puerto Rico members in this year's AM/PIC U.S. Territories Grant.

# Thank You - NACAA Sponsors/Donors



Science For A Better Life



## ENJOY THE 2025 AM/PIC

### JUNE 29 - JULY 2, 2025

### BILLINGS, MONTANA





# The County Agent

POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO:  
**The County Agent** - NACAA, 6584 W. Duroc Rd.,  
Maroa, IL 61756 - Attn: Scott Hawbaker

## ANNUAL MEETING AND PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT CONFERENCE DATES



2025

Billings, Montana.....June 29-July 2

2026

Denver, Colorado.....July 8-12

2027

St. Paul, Minnesota.....September 12-16

2028

Atlanta, Georgia.....August 6-10

## Upcoming Issues of The County Agent Magazine

October, 2025

AM/PIC Recap

Deadline for articles: August 15, 2025

Mail Date: September 1, 2025

December, 2025

Awards/Committee Edition

Deadline for articles: November 20, 2025

Mail Date: December 28, 2025

April, 2026

AM/PIC Registration Edition

Deadline for articles: February 10, 2026

Mail Date: March 15, 2026

## Utility Depth

Underground lines can be located  
less than 12 inches below the surface.  
Always contact 811 before digging.



Request NEW 2025 Safety Guides!  
Email [Whitney@AligningChange.com](mailto:Whitney@AligningChange.com)



More resources at [www.PipelineAgSafetyAlliance.com](http://www.PipelineAgSafetyAlliance.com)