

CSA Newsletter

Canadian Society of Agronomy

November 2005



President's Message

Over the coming weeks, the CSA executive will put the finishing touches on the goals for 2006 and marshal the resources needed to achieve them. The review and planning process was geared up to determine what worked, what didn't, why and why not. Would improvements in the structure and content of our annual conference, as well as activating new programs, allow us to achieve our goals over the next three years? Would expanding the governance structure to include representatives of younger members, graduate students and post doctorates, insure the continued relevance or revitalization of our organization? Our plan for 2006 is partly about energizing the CSA presence nationally and internationally, by expanding programs delivered by the CSA and increasing member involvement. It is also time to have former members reactivate their involvement and their membership, as well as consider how to attract young agronomists back into our organization.

While actively exploring new plans and options, your executives have been working closely with the memberships in the Maritimes and Saskatchewan, planning for invigorating our conferences during the 2006 and 2007 annual meetings in Halifax and Saskatoon, respectively. I believe the CSA is yours and the elected executives are responding to your suggestions. New ideas can and will be added to the newly developed strategy as we receive them. Once again I encourage you to become more involved and help us fulfill the CSA mandate.

Yousef A. Papadopoulos, President

From the Office

Things are getting exciting. The dominant action in CSA at the moment is planning the upcoming meetings. The Atlantic Canada Agronomy Workshop is this winter, thanks to Jerry Ivany, Yousef Papadopoulos and their volunteers.

The 2006 CSA Annual conference and business meeting is in Halifax. This is along with Animal Science, so there is a good selection of forage type papers along with the usual other agronomy topics. The setting is right on the harbor, so both the program and the venue sound excellent. I'm planning to book flights now to burn off some Aeroplan points. There are only a limited number of rooms reserved for CSA people, there are lots more available but the early birds get the discounts. There are more details in the newsletter and on our web site www.agronomycanada.com.

Planning for the 2007 meeting is already well underway. This will be in Saskatoon along with Plant Canada – our second meeting with them. This is a good synergy, Plant Canada brings lots more people and papers, and a broader perspective. At the same time, we have to be sure to put a strong 'CSA stamp' on the meeting. Same as this year in Halifax, the meetings are as good as we make them. The planning horizon for CSA meetings is now out to 2009, but is less certain there.

About membership renewals. The on-line system with SPORG is up and running for 2006. So you can join on line with credit card or check, but we will also send you a hard copy invoice. On line is efficient. A note to make things simpler. When you link to the SPORG registration page, there is a slot for user name and password. You do not need this to renew. However, if you do set one up, the system will save your address information so you will not have to enter it again next year. It does not save any credit card information, just like any other reputable on-line credit card service, that information exists only for a few seconds on the system, just long enough to register the purchase.

Look for some new initiatives from CSA this year. The Executive Committee (Yousef, Tom, Shabtai and I) had a 'think tank' session Nov 3, and the full Executive are engaged now too.

Thanks

Steve S.

Executive Director, Canadian Society of Agronomy

Growing Our Membership

Consolidation and down-sizing have reduced the numbers of active agronomists, both in industry and in academia. Nonetheless, agronomy is a science essential to sustain the development of the intensive crop production that the future demands.

Though our numbers be small, what we do impacts all people on the planet. It is especially when our numbers are small that we need to network to ensure the maximum benefits from our efforts, and that we need to strive to include all whose work has relevance to agronomy.

Canada possesses resources for crop production that are both unique and enormous, and our role in world agriculture is distinctly different from that of our neighbour to the south.

Most of us are involved with the American Society of Agronomy (ASA), and we will continue to be. But there are activities that only a Canadian society can help us with.

The ASA membership roll currently lists more Canadians than our current total number of members. There is no doubt that ASA offers member services that we can-

not compete with – broader networking opportunities, and more widely read publications. But being smaller and nimbler, we can do unique things to support a distinctive Canadian agronomy. There are differences in the way we approach agricultural sustainability, and in the way we deal with international agreements on greenhouse gases.

Getting specific about our distinctives is not an easy task. We need to get together and discuss which of them are real and which are perceived. And we need to identify the opportunities around the world where Canadian agronomic scientists have something distinctive to offer.

I offer you a challenge: pick up the telephone today and call a colleague who isn't on our membership roll. Talk, not only about the value the Canadian Society of Agronomy is providing today, but about how we as Canadian agronomists could provide more if our Society was twice its current size. This is an achievable goal. All it takes is each one of us to make one convincing call. Let's see what we can do!

Tom Bruulsema, PhD Chair-elect, Canadian Society of Agronomy

Call for Papers THE ATLANTIC AGRONOMY WORKSHOP Rodd Charlottetown Hotel, Charlottetown, PEI January 17-18, 2006

fees.

including;

Crop Production

- Crop management practices conventional and organic
- Crop rotations.
- Crop fertility
- Cropping effects on environment and Crops and Livestock Research Centre greenhouse gasses
- Cultivar development and evaluation
- Soil and water

Pest Management (diseases, insects, nema- EM: IvanyJ@agr.gc.ca todes, weeds)

- term / rotation studies.
- Interaction of management practices for
- Plant and pest bio-diversity and changes STRACT IS JANUARY 6, 2006 in cropping systems
- pest species and weeds.

tions on selected areas of the above listed sub- Agronomy jects. The organisers invite offers of spoken www.agronomycanada.com

The Canadian Society of Agronomy (CSA) is and poster presentations. Slots are available organizing a meeting for agronomy people for approximately 35 oral papers which are (cereals, corn, forages, pulse crops, soybeans, related to the session topics. The papers are to etc) to get together to exchange ideas and re- be 12 minutes in length plus a 3 minute period search results. The meeting which will be run for questions. Volunteer papers will be asas an "at cost" event covered by registration signed to appropriate session based on topic of submission and offers that cannot be accommodated in the oral sessions will be allotted This meeting, aimed at both researchers/ space for a poster presentation. Abstracts of graduate students and advisers, is planned to all papers/posters will be published in a volprovide a forum for presentation of new infor- ume of Canadian Journal of Plant Science. A mation and discussion on all aspects of agro- prize will be offered for the best paper and nomic crop production in the Atlantic Region poster presented by a graduate student. Authors must indicate on the form whether the paper or poster is intended for the graduate student competition.

Titles and abstracts are to be submitted to:

Jerry A. Ivany PhD, P,Ag.

Agriculture and Agri Food Canada

440 University Ave.

Charlottetown, PE, C1A 4N6

Tel: 902 566 6835 Fax: 902 566 6821

Field experiments and results from long- Deadline for offer of Paper / Poster Title is December 9, 2005

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF AB-

Management and control of individual Additional information concerning the program, submitting volunteer papers / posters, hotel, and registration is available un-Invited guest speakers will give lead presenta- der Events on the Canadian Society of web http:// page at:

2005 Annual Meeting Best Paper Awards

The CSA executive instituted two "best paper" awards for the 2005 Annual Meeting to promote the quality of presentations from our technical sessions. The CSA's members themselves participated in the competition as all members in attendance were invited to cast their ballots for these two recognition awards. After totalling all the ballots, we are pleased to announce the following winners and the abstracts from their presentations:

1. Best Overall Presentation:

Intercropping pulse species with barley: assessing agronomic feasibility and benefits. Strydhorst, S.M. ¹., King, J.R. ¹., Lopetinsky, K.J. ², Harker, N.K. ³ and Clayton, G.W. ³

- 1. Univ. Of Alberta, Dept. Of Agricultural, Food and Nutritional Science, Edmonton, AB T6G 2P5.
- 2. Alberta Agriculture Food and Rural Development, Crop Diversification Centre North, 6203-49 St. Barrhead, AB T7N 1A4
- 3. AAFC, Lacombe Research Centre, 6000 C&E Trail, Lacombe, AB T4L 1W1

Research is being conducted to develop more sustainable cropping systems for the black soil zones of Alberta by intercropping pulses with barley to increase spatial species diversity. To assess intercrop feasibility and benefits, field experiments were conducted at three sites in north-central Alberta in 2004. Faba bean (*Vicia faba*), lupin (*Lupinus angustifolius*) and pea (*Pisum sativum*) were grown at four plant densities (50, 100, 150, 200% of the recommended monoculture planting density (PD)) as monocultures and intercropped with barley (at 25% normal PD). All tests were grown without added nitrogen (N) fertilizer. Preliminary results indicate that plea and faba bean can successfully compete and grow with barley. Faba bean comprised 46-78% of the intercrop seed yield (depending on pulse PD) while



Sheryl Strydhorst

pea comprised 50-76% of the intercrop seed yield. Over-yielding (land equivalent ratio >1) occurred in 63% of the faba bean-barley and pea-barley intercrops. Barley from faba-barley intercrops had a higher protein content (119.6 g protein kg-1) than monoculture barley (104.3 g protein kg-1), while barley from pea-barley intercrops contained 115.6 g protein kg-1. This suggests that high protein barley could be grown without additional N fertilizer thereby reducing input costs. Lupin did not compete will with barley and may be unsuitable for intercropping as it comprised only 7-22% of the intercrop seed yield. Lupin, however, showed promise as a new monocrop. In high rainfall environments, lupin monocultures yielded 2.2-3.5 t seed ha-1. This pulse crop may be suitable for increasing temporal and economic diversity in Alberta cropping systems. Using pulses to increase species diversity in Alberta cropping systems appears feasible. To further understand intercropping ecology this project is also investigating plant competitive interactions, soil microbial diversity, plant residue decomposition and nutrient cycling.

2. Most Thought-Provoking Presentation:

Influence of forage management and species on soil mineral nitrogen supply rates and seasonal dynamics

Baron, V.S.¹, Lemke, R.L.², Chanasyk, D.S.,³ Naeth, M.A.³ and Greer, K.⁴

- 1. AAFC, Lacombe, AB T4L 1W1
- AAFC, Swift Current, SK S9H 3X2
- 3. Univ. Of Alberta, Edmonton, AB T6G 2P5
- 4. Western Ag. Innovations Inc., Saskatoon, SK S7N 4LB

Soil mineral-N (MN) supplies have ecological, agricultural and environmental implications. Grasslands are noted for low MN dynamics under short term forage stands and impacts of management. Species were 30-yr-old grass (OG), 3-5 yr.-old alfalfa (A) (*Medicago sativa* L.), meadow bromegrass (MB) (*Bromus riparius* Rhem.) and annual cereal (ANN). The OG was a mixture of smooth bromegrass (*Bromus inermis* Leyss.), quackgrass (*Elytrigia repens* (L.) Nevski) and Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis* L.); the ANN was mixture of winter triticale (*X Triticosecale* Wittmack) and oat (*Avena sativa* L.) Management was either hay or pasture. Pasture was a grazed, 1.2 ha-paddock, while hay was an exclosure within each paddock, all replicated three times for 3 yr. Each year OG, MB and ANN received 100 kg N ha-1 of fertilizer-N; all species received 30 kg P2O5 and K2O. MN supply rate was determined as a biweekly flux using



Vern Baron

paired cation and anion probes (PRSTM) inserted and removed form identical slots in three locations within the paddock and exclosure from May to October. Nitrate-N (NN) and MN supply rates were 9 to 10 times higher in May compared to Oct. Initially, MN and NN supply rates for hay > pasture, but my mid summer pasture > hay and by fall hay = pasture. Averaged over season and years NN supply rate for ANN was 2 to 5 times more than OG; A and MB were intermediate and similar. Spring MN and NN supply rates for ANN were higher than others; by July OG was very low and remained constant until Oct. MN and NN supply rates of others declined more slowly from spring to fall, but ANN, MB and OG were similar by Oct.; A maintained higher MN and NN supply rates into fall despite receiving no fertilizer-N. In spring ammonium-N (AN) supply rate for OG was 3 times other species, then, decreased to the same level as others by July. The NN: AN ratio peaked for hay in June, then decreased until a low level by fall; the ratio for pasture rose above hay to peak in July after one grazing then decreased. The NN:AN ratio for OG was 5 to 20 times lower than other species from May to August. The NN:AN ratio of ANN was 3 to 4 times greater than MB and A from May to July. MN supply rates of short term species were larger, had higher NN content and were more dynamic throughout the season than OG. Management effects were more subtle than species effects on MN supply.

Plant Canada 2007

Plant Canada 2007 will be held in Saskatoon, June 10-14. The plenary sessions have been established as follows:

Plenary 1: Natural products: Biology, Chemistry and Application

Plenary 2: Plant Health Network: Quarantine and Invasive Issues

There will also be invited and volunteer paper sessions and mini-symposia (may be concurrent). This will include student and industry sessions.

The mini-symposia will relate to the plenary subjects and/or feature volunteer papers intermingled from the six disciplines (Agronomy, Horticulture, Pathology, Botany, Physiology and Weeds). We have been asked to poll our society members to get ideas for mini-symposia sessions. Please send your suggestions to Bruce Coulman at coulmanb@agr.gc.ca who is the CSA representative on the Plant Canada 2007 organizing committee.

American Forage and Grassland Council 2005 Merit Award

Shabtai Bittman Pacific Agri-Food Research Centre, British Columbia

Dr. Shabtai Bittman is a highly innovative agronomist who has made substantial wide ranging contributions to our knowledge of the management of forage crops and livestock waste. After spending the last 25 years doing forage research in British Columbia, Dr. Bittman has earned the respect and admiration of his colleagues. He has pioneered in North America the use of sub-canopy surface banding of dairy slurry to improve the effectiveness of slurry nutrients. Dr. Bittman also invented a procedure enriching Selenium (SE) in annual crops by supplying Se through a seed coating. While collaborating with the University of Missouri, Dr. Bittman was instrumental in the application of Magnesium and Calcium in conjunction with a new fescue variety to reduce grass tetany.



Dr. Bittman contributed to the education of producers through his development of a farmer-oriented website with the latest forage informa-

tion. He has been one of the driving forces behind the British Columbia Forage Council. Because of his efforts, Shabtai has become known as "Mr. B.C. Forage," in British Columbia.

Dr. Bittman has published 44 peer reviewed scientific publications, 60 conference proceedings and over 90 popular press articles on all aspects of nutrient and fertilizer management in forage crops. He has also authored two books on forage management and garnered many prestigious awards. Dr. Bittman is currently working with Agassiz Research Center, British Columbia.

Dr. Bittman's faithful dedication in the field of fertility management will continue to benefit agricultural development for years to come.

TERRY L. ROBERTS TO BECOME PRESIDENT OF POTASH & PHOSPHATE INSTITUTE

October 1, 2005---The Board of Directors of the Potash & Phosphate Institute (PPI) has named Dr. Terry L. Roberts to become President of the international agricultural research organization, effective January 1, 2006. The announcement came from Bill Doyle, Chairman of the PPI Board and President and CEO of PotashCorp.

"Terry Roberts is highly qualified as an agronomic scientist and also as an effective administrator with a wide spectrum of experience. His understanding and insight related to PPI programs, staff, the academic community, and the fertilizer industry will be great assets in the transition to this new responsibility," Mr. Doyle explained. "This is an important time in meeting the challenges of growing more food on limited land, while protecting the environment and using resources wisely. We are pleased that Dr. Roberts is accepting this key position with PPI."

He will be only the sixth president in the 70-year history of the Institute. Dr. David W. Dibb, who had served as president since 1989, recently announced his retirement effective December 31, 2005.

Currently serving as Senior Vice President of PPI and the Potash & Phosphate Institute of Canada (PPIC), Dr. Roberts is International Programs Coordinator and in charge of member services and communications. He previously served as president of the Foundation for Agronomic Research (FAR) and continues as a vice president of that organization. A native of Alberta, Canada, Dr. Roberts grew up in a family fertilizer business. He received a B.S.A. degree in Crop Science in 1981 and a Ph.D. in Soil Fertility and Plant Nutrition in 1985 from the University of Saskatchewan. He joined the PPI/PPIC staff in 1989 as Western Canada Director, with responsibility for agronomic research and education programs in the region.

In June 1999, Dr. Roberts was transferred to PPI's headquarters in Norcross, Georgia, and named President of FAR. At the same time, he was appointed Vice President of PPIC for the Latin American Program, and coordinated the Institute's regional programs in Brazil, Northern Latin America, Latin America-Southern Cone, and Mexico/Northern Central America. In February 2002, Dr. Roberts was appointed PPI Vice President, Communications and Member Services. In that role he directs the communications group of the institute, including publication of *Better Crops with Plant Food* magazine, as well as the website and electronic communications.

In November 2004, Dr. Roberts was elected Senior Vice President, PPIC, and in January 2005 he became Senior Vice President, PPI, and International Program Coordinator.

An effective communicator and internationally respected as a speaker and writer, Dr. Roberts has given more than 300 invited lectures, seminars, symposia, and other presentations around the world and has written more than 160 technical and non-technical papers. He is a Fellow of the American Society of Agronomy.

Dr. Roberts and his wife, Marianne, have five children and now live near Atlanta, Georgia.

The Potash & Phosphate Institute/Potash & Phosphate Institute of Canada (PPI/PPIC) is a not-for-profit organization which encourages and supports agronomic research and education programs involving sound agricultural use of potash, phosphate, and other inputs in a way that is efficient, profitable, and protective of the environment. Funding for PPI/PPIC is provided by member companies that are producers of potash and phosphate.

CSA - New Executive Members.

<u>Tiequan Zhang</u> (Eastern Director):

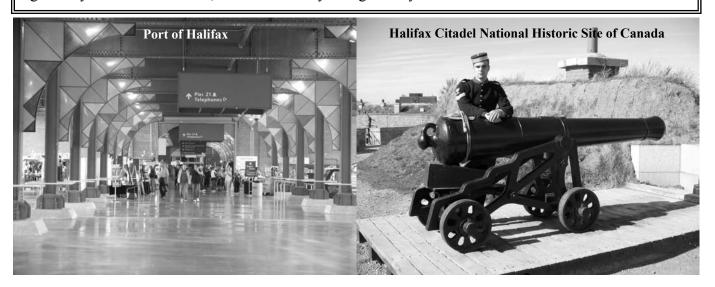
Dr. Tiequan Zhang obtained his B.Sc. (1982) in Soil Science and Plant Nutrition and M.Sc. (1988) in Soil Chemistry and Fertility from Shanxi Agricultural University, China; and his Ph.D. in soil Chemistry and Fertility from McGill University (1997). Dr. Zhang has been employed as a Research Scientist working in soil fertility area by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada since 1998.

Dr. Zhang's major research has focussed on soil fertility management and its relationships with crop productivity and water quality. This includes research on bio-availability of nitrogen and phosphorus from livestock manures and composts, agronomic values of soil residual phosphorus, both short- and long-term transformation pathways of soil phosphorus and their relationships with phosphorus losses, and development of soil phosphorus index and BMPs for commercial fertilizers and organic wastes. Other areas of research are relationships between nutrients (nitrogen, phosphorus, and po-



tassium) and crop (both field and horticultural crops) productivity and quality (e.g. isoflavones in soybeans and lycopene in processing tomatoes). He has authored/co-authored numerous peer-reviewed scientific papers, book chapters, technical reports, and scientific meeting/conference presentations.

Dr. Zhang has been invited to conduct external review for grant proposals submitted to NSF (U.S.A), FCAR, and OMAF New Direction Research Program. He has been an advisor on one graduate student committee and a principle advisor for three others since 2000. He serves as a member for 4 Ontario Soil and Crop Management Research and Services Committees. He served as the Secretary/Treasurer (2003/04) and Vice-President (2004/05), and currently serves as the President for the Association of Chinese Soil and Plant Scientists in North America. He serves as a member for the International Service in Agronomy Award Committee, America Society of Agronomy.



CSA 2006 Annual Meeting

The 2006 Annual Meeting of the Canadian Society of Agronomy (CSA) will be on August 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The Meeting will be jointly conducted with the Annual Meeting of Canadian Society of Animal Science (CSAS). We have compiled a list of possible symposia for this conference which include:

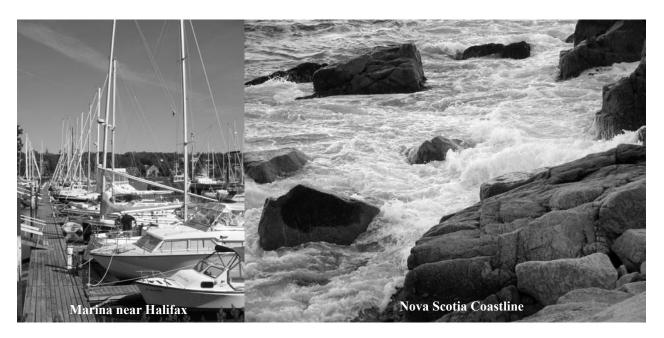
- Whole Farm Nutrient Management
- Organic Food Production and Farming
- Feed and Food Quality
- Farm Nutrient Management
- Forages and Pasture Management
- Cropping Systems
- Oil Seeds and Other High-Value Crops
- Heavy Metals and Other Toxins in Soils, Plants, and Animals
- Genetics for an Uncertain Climate
- Novel Animal, Feeds, and Foods
- Modeling Biological and Agricultural Systems Dynamics and Complexity.

We would appreciate any input regarding selecting the right program for the 2006 conference. Suggestions for other symposia are welcome. Please forward your comments and ideas directly to the co-chairs of the local organizing committee.

Co-chairs of the local organizing committee from the CSA:

Dr. Yousef Papadopoulos at AAFC, Ph: 902 896 0400, papadopoulosy@agr.gc.ca

Dr. Kris Pruski at the NSAC, Ph: 902 893 6032, kpruski@nsac.ca



The First Canada-China Forum of Agriculture and Agri-Food Science Managers

culture and Agri-food, on October priorities for both countries. 11 and 12, 2005.

met to exchange views regarding Canada. in animal production, food processing, biotechnologies and the environ- Contact: Dr. Joe Zhou ment.

In tandem with the 35th anniversary This forum saw ratification of an of the establishment of diplomatic agreement between the State Adrelations between Canada and the ministration for Foreign Expert Af-People's Republic of China, the In- fairs (SAFEA) and Agriculture and ternational Scientific Cooperation Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) to pro-Bureau of Agriculture & Agri-Food mote cooperation and exchanges of Canada held the First Canada-China managers, researchers and graduate Science Managers Forum on Agri- students in research areas that are

The success of this event made it Nearly one hundred managers, scien-possible to develop bonds of trust tists and university representatives and to anchor mechanisms for scienworking in agriculture and agri-food tific cooperation between China and The Chinese representaresearch and to explore partnership tives expressed an interest in orgamechanisms for the next few years nizing a next one in Beijing in 2006.

zhouj@agr.gc.ca



Signing ceremony: Dr. Li Bing (left). Vice-President of SAFEA and Dr. Yvon Martel (right), Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Research Branch, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

CSA Executive Committee Think Tank

So what is 'agronomy'? Could you ever sell that done more effectively. One area that has potential is name to the public? Does it register with anyone mentoring. Agronomy should be recognized as a other than us? The Think Tank on November 3 discipline at a level that employers and future started from this most basic position, and developed agronomists know exactly what it means and how from there to ideas to move forward. Yousef led the valuable an agronomist can be. This means we need session, and Tom, Shabtai and Steve bounced ideas.

A revised Mission Statement was proposed:

'The Canadian Society of Agronomy promotes the sciences of plants and soils applied to sustainable production systems'

We like it because it says 'science', 'plants', 'production' and 'sustainable', and it is short and simple enough to be memorable. There are things about it we are less sure of. Of course, every word in a mission statement needs to be debated, and you will all have ideas. Let us know what you think!

We did a score card for CSA. CSA passed on average, but there were a lot of things that could to be

to describe ourselves as agronomists, define what we are compared to others, and mentor new agronomists. Two ideas came up. One was agronomy clubs at universities, such as the soils clubs orchestrated by the American Society of Agronomy. Another was to link students and dyed-in-the-wool agronomists face to face or by phone contact. A little more extroverted a role than CSA has played in the past.

The ideas from the Think Tank are still incubating. One day was not really long enough, and the full Executive need to weigh in on this. You will hear more.

Thanks! Steve Sheppard

CSA Corporate Sponsors 2005















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