

Conservation Agriculture Systems Alliance

Conference Call

Tuesday, Oct. 7, 2008 at 11 a.m. (eastern)

Participants:

Blair McClinton
Peter Gamache
Russ Evans
Bill Kuenstler
Brian Lindley
Karen Scanlon
Randall Reeder

Agenda:

Message Committee Report

Draft CA principles distributed to entire CASA group. Dick Wittman compiled and resent. Blair – geared too much on increasing soil carbon vs benefits of CA (of which soil carbon is one benefit). Better to phrase in terms of what is CA, what are benefits and why care. Comments similar to Dick's edits/comments. Paraphrase Kimble's list of benefits and cite reference.

Brian – Jason written preamble to book with definitions of CA. He will send to CASA.

Blair – reason we aren't plagiarizing FAO?

Russ – FAO leans toward promoting organic production and CASA wanted to be broader than that. Lots to use from FAO, but would need to broaden beyond organic.

Committee will set deadline for more comments. Then will prepare revised document for meeting on Oct. 31.

Operations Committee Report

Brian Lindley reporting: sent out spreadsheet to all of CASA to build list of potential funders. Sub-committee working on the CASA pledge; comments expected by Oct. 10. Another sub-committee is developing CASA by-laws. Jason Bergtold suggested CASA needs mission statement first; from that he can develop structure. Develop articles of incorporation first (before by-laws).

Calls to other CASA members to get

Brian will call Jeff Mitchell

Bill will call Jimmy Dean

Bill will call Alan Ness

Brian will call Brian Noyes

Randall will call Randy Raper

Karen will call Dean Graumann/Larry Wright

Blair suggests adding Guy LaFond, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Will send contact information. Will also ask Dennis Haak to stay for CASA meeting.

2008 CASA meeting

Theo

Steve

Tim

Develop CASA mission statement

Message Committee report
Operations Committee report
Annual conference
Connecting with Mexican partners

Attendees: David, Peter, Joel, Bill, Russ, Brian, Blair, Jerry, Juan Manuel. Randall by conference call.

Member Updates

Reduced Tillage LINKAGES: Conference Nov. 19-20, expected attendance 160. Farm Tech will be Jan 28-30; expect 1300-1400 attendance (agronomy conference). In Nov, 4 carbon offset meetings. New projects in the works. No membership, but farmer-to-farmer network is 900 (been growing but reached equilibrium). Mtg attendance strong in winter, lower in summer for field days.

Saskatchewan Soil Conservation Association: New project for policy development related to carbon sinks in Canada. Hoping to "tweak unknowns" in favor of agriculture. Dec. 4-5 2008 Crop Advisors Workshop; will also be in webcast Annual conference Feb. 11-12.

Another project is conservation technology web directory, still waiting for funding confirmation. Participation is stabilizing around 700 (was up to 1,000 a few years ago). Expect to increase.

Ohio No-Till Council: Annual Ohio No-Till Conference Dec. 9; 175 attendance anticipated. Feb. 26-27 CT Conference; over 700 expected. Cover crops/soil quality workshop on Feb. 25. Active with Midwest Cover Crops Council; emphasis on cover crops to help with no-till. Participation numbers are up.

PNDSA: Most harvest is done. Direct seed breakfast meetings in 3-4 locations every three weeks. Conference Jan 21-22 in Kennewick. Project funded to develop web-based farmer-to-farmer network (similar to Peter's program). Participation/membership has stabilized (not decreasing).

NTOP: Seasonal meetings now. Conference Jan 27-28. Funding is headache. Hosted cover crop field day (SARE grant) in Nebraska. More competition in summer from companies. Summer events (field days) usually get 64-300 people. Membership will be offered at winter conference. Numbers have been consistent for annual conference (average 1,400-1,600). Number of new people has risen. 3,500 members total.

NRCS: Planning to have meetings of NRCS, ARS, University throughout northern central region to discuss cover crops. Purpose: new cover crop files in RUSLE to share with NRCS; regionalize cover crop database. MWCCC meeting Ontario on Feb. 11.