



Minnesota Crop Production Retailers

Executive Director's Report

INPUTS

Hello MCPR members,

It is fair to say that the past few years have been unlike any other in modern history. As we look back at 2021, there is no doubt that the ag retail industry faced a host of unprecedented challenges. From the extreme kinks we experienced in the global supply chain, to the impacts of hurricanes and severe weather events around the globe, to the continued effects of a global pandemic and social unrest around the country, 2021 most certainly secured its place in the annals as one of the most challenging in modern history.

Several of these factors, including a new venue, had an effect on the recent 2021 CPM Short Course and MCPR Trade Show that was held back in December. Despite a slight dip in attendance from previous years, MCPR was extremely appreciative to have the opportunity to be together once again and we can't thank our attendees, sponsors, and exhibitors enough for their generous support. For a full recap of the event, please see the corresponding articles in this newsletter. And please be sure to mark your calendars for December 6-8 for the 2022 CPM Short Course & MCPR Trade Show. Due to the success and very positive feedback we received on our gathering last month, we will once again be holding the event at the Minneapolis Hilton Hotel.

In addition, I wanted to thank all of our members who have renewed their dues for 2022. Your continued support for MCPR helps to keep our members informed and represented through excellent leadership and service throughout the

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year. Your dues also help in playing a critical role in establishing [MCPR's policy priorities](#) which are shared on occasion with elected and administration officials. Last month during MCPR's 2021 Annual Meeting, the board of directors took action and approved the 2022 state and federal policy position statements. With the 2022 Minnesota legislative session set to convene on January 31, these policies will help guide our government affairs efforts with lawmakers in St. Paul, as well as with their counterparts in Washington, D.C. We would like to thank those who took part in this member-driven process and we continue to welcome further input on any other policy issues that you believe we should be engaged on.

As we closed the book on 2021, the new year has already brought new challenges and opportunities. We look forward to continuing to face them head on and appreciate any feedback that you have for us so that we can continue to proudly represent Minnesota's ag retail sector. If MCPR can ever be of assistance or if you have any questions on any issue or membership-related matter, please do not hesitate to contact me at patrick@mcpr-cca.org or (651) 238-0089.



Patrick Murray, MCPR Executive Director

Minnesota's Ag Retail Community Comes Together for the 2021 CPM Short Course & MCPR Trade Show

Approximately 800 ag retailers, certified crop advisors, educators, exhibitors, and sponsors descended on Minneapolis in December for the 2021 Crop Pest Management Short Course and Minnesota Crop Production Retailers Trade Show. After the event was cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic, there was an energy in the air all week as many attendees connected once again face-to-face with their colleagues for what is the premier event for Minnesota's ag retail sector.

A new venue also received positive reviews from trade show exhibitors, as well as those who attended the short course to obtain their educational credits. The theme for the show was "Let's Get Real" and MCPR Board Chairman Rick Walker echoed that sentiment as he welcomed attendees back to the

Twin Cities after a challenging year and a half. He mentioned how the ag retail industry was very thankful to be back together in-person and how folks were able to partake in educational sessions, as well as social functions, with their peers from all over the Upper Midwest.

Hosted by MCPR and the University of Minnesota Extension, participants once again experienced a timely educational programming and trade show experience over the course of the three-day event. The MCPR Board of Directors and staff can't thank everyone enough – especially our generous exhibitors and sponsors – for their support of this timely and critical gathering for the ag retail sector.

Other highlights of the short course and trade show included several

thought-provoking sessions during the MCPR Plenary Session on Tuesday afternoon. Among them were presentations from the former Chairman of the U.S. House of Agriculture Committee, a discussion on the mercurial nature of fertilizer prices and supply chain issues in the current global economy, as well as an informative panel discussion on the current challenge the ag retail industry faces to hire and retain talent in the ever-changing workforce.



Former Minnesota Congressman Collin Peterson Provides Keynote Speech

As one of the chief architects of key federal legislation that has affected American farmers, ranchers, and growers on a daily basis, MCPR was thrilled to have one of Capitol Hill's most influential agricultural policymakers from the past several decades provide a keynote speech at the 2021 CPM Short Course and MCPR Trade Show. As one of the key authors of the current Farm Bill, former Minnesota Congressman and House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson discussed what life was like after serving in Congress for thirty years, as well as what the future of agriculture policy making will look like in a Congress that seems to grow more and more divided as the years go by.

Leading Industry Analyst Explains Why Fertilizer Prices are Heading Towards Record Highs

Josh Linville from the StoneX Group brought passion and energy to his remarks on December 7 as to why the fertilizer industry is swarmed with Black Swan events. From the impacts of Hurricane Ida to political and climate issues entangled in a cobweb of production slowdowns in Europe and China, Linville explained in detail how these events continue to stack up. His unique perspective and years of experience on the fertilizer marketplace helped explain what is happening in this arena and why. He also went into detail on why global fertilizer prices have gone from near historic lows to historic highs in a twelve-to-sixteen-month period, as well as what to expect going forward.

Panel Discussion Focuses on Search for Ag Workforce Talent

A big problem for ag retailers, manufacturers, and distributors in the crop input industry is the struggle to find talent and create a pool of potential hires. Ag retailers need strong leadership and top employment recruits to succeed. But many are located in rural areas or smaller communities where the population is limited, and unemployment rates are so low that it's hard to find interested talent that fits the bill. This is why being proactive when recruiting an ag workforce is so important.

Keith Olander and Judy Barka from AgCentric were joined by MCPR Board Directors Dale Johnson from AgPartners and Arnie Sinclair from Heartland Ag Systems as they explained how they have dealt with workforce retention at their respective companies over the years. Abby Reiners from Heartland Ag Systems also shared her experience about how she started out as an intern at the company that eventually led to a full-time position.



MCPR Board Directors Arnie Sinclair and Dale Johnson share their thoughts during the ag workforce talent panel.



Minnesota
Crop Production Retailers

This information is believed to be reliable by MCPR. However, because of constantly changing government regulations, interpretations and applicability or the possibility of human, mechanical or computer error, MCPR does not guarantee the information as suitable for any particular purpose.



Minnesota Crop Production Retailers

REGULETTER

ResponsibleAg Names New Leadership

The ResponsibleAg board of directors named their new leaders at their recent annual meeting held in San Antonio, TX during the ARA Conference and Expo. The new officers are:

- **Chairman** - Gary Vogen (pictured middle), Vice President, Corporate and Regulatory Affairs, YARA North America
- **Vice Chairman** - Kyle Springs (not pictured), Senior Director of Safety and Health - Retail, Nutrien Ag Solutions
- **Secretary** - Kevin Frye (pictured right), Safety Services Manager, GROWMARK
- **Treasurer** - Kent McPherson (pictured left), Director of Business and Sales Development, GreenPoint Ag



Other board members include Clark Capwell, General Manager of Environmental, Health, Safety, and Sustainability with The McGregor Company (Colfax, WA); Matthew Entwistle, Sales Agronomist with CaroVail (Oriskany Falls, NY); Matt Green, Vice President of Marketing with CRV Partners (Sugar Land, TX); Megan Hill, Director of IT at the Asmark Institute (Owensboro, KY); Jeff Mize, CEO of Ag Plus, Inc. (South Whitley, IN); and Andy Spahr, Director of Sales and Logistics – Primary Nutrients, The Andersons (Maumee, OH).

Outgoing board chairman, Tim McArdle, retired COO of Brandt, and vice chairman, Dave Ito, Vice President of Regulatory Affairs for Grow West, who each served six years on the ResponsibleAg board, were honored during the closing session at the ARA Conference.

ResponsibleAg is an industry initiative launched in 2014 to help retail facilities comply with federal environmental, health, safety and security rules for safe handling and storage of fertilizer and agrichemical products. Primary objectives of the initiative

are to ensure the safety of employees and local communities served by agricultural retailers, distributors and fertilizer manufacturers. (*Asmark Institute*)

Annual Inspection of Rear Impact Guards Required

DOT has issued a final rule that requires motor carriers to inspect their vehicles' rear impact guards as part of the annual inspection. While the regulation requiring rear impact guards has existed since 1952, they have not been included on the list of components in Appendix G that must be inspected during the annual Commercial Motor Vehicle inspection. This means that a vehicle could pass an annual inspection with a missing or damaged rear impact guard.

49 CFR 393.86(a) currently requires most trailers and semitrailers manufactured on or after January 26, 1998, to be equipped with rear impact guards. This final rule does not require installation or maintenance of rear impact guards beyond the current requirements in section 393.86. The final rule is effective December 9, 2021.

2022 Agendas for DOT, EPA & OSHA

DOT, EPA and OSHA have all published regulatory agendas with target dates through the end of the fiscal year. We have reviewed the lists and identified upcoming regulatory and deregulatory actions that could impact our clients. All in all, there are plenty of proposals in the pipeline for 2022. View the entire list [HERE](#). (Asmark Institute)

AGCO Names 2021 Operator of the Year

Congratulations to Kolby Watson, J.R. Simplot Company, on receiving AGCO's 2021 Operator of the Year Award, at the Agricultural Retailers Association Conference & Expo in San Antonio, TX on December 1, 2021. The award recognizes professional applicators for skills, dedication and service to their local communities.

AGCO has supported and recognized the industry's top professionals through the AGCO Operator of the Year Award program since 2005. The Asmark Institute collaborated with AGCO to offer the Applicator Training Center in Bloomington, IL, a training program dedicated to educating and developing both new and experienced custom applicators of crop protection products and plant nutrients. (Asmark Institute)

OSHA ETS on COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing Reinstated

The 6th US Circuit Court of Appeals has lifted the stay of OSHA's Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS). OSHA issued the ETS to protect unvaccinated employees of large employers (100 or more employees) from the risk of contracting COVID-19 by strongly encouraging vaccination. Covered employers must develop, implement and enforce a mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policy, unless they adopt a policy requiring employees to choose to either be vaccinated or undergo

regular COVID-19 testing and wear a face covering at work.

The ETS also requires employers to do the following:

- Provide paid time to workers to get vaccinated and to allow for paid leave to recover from any side effects.
- Determine the vaccination status of each employee, obtain acceptable proof of vaccination status from vaccinated employees and maintain records and a roster of each employee's vaccination status.
- Require employees to provide prompt notice when they test positive for COVID-19 or receive a COVID-19 diagnosis. Employers must then remove the employee from the workplace, regardless of vaccination status; employers must not allow them to return to work until they meet required criteria.
- Ensure each worker who is not fully vaccinated is tested for COVID-19 at least weekly (if the worker is in the workplace at least once a week) or within 7 days before returning to work (if the worker is away from the workplace for a week or longer).
- Ensure that, in most circumstances, each employee who has not been fully vaccinated wears a face covering when indoors or when occupying a vehicle with another person for work purposes.

The emergency temporary standard does not require employers to pay for testing. To account for any uncertainty created by the stay, OSHA is exercising enforcement discretion with respect to the compliance dates of the ETS. To provide employers with sufficient time to come into compliance, OSHA will not issue citations for noncompliance with any requirements of the ETS before

January 10 and will not issue citations for noncompliance with the standard's testing requirements before February 9, so long as an employer is exercising reasonable, good faith efforts to come into compliance with the standard.

OSHA is seeking [comments](#) on all aspects of this ETS and whether the agency should adopt it as a final standard, through January 19, 2022. Several groups have already filed a petition with the US Supreme Court for an emergency stay of the rule. (Asmark Institute)

IRS Increases Standard Mileage Rates for 2022

The IRS has issued the 2022 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes.

Beginning January 1, 2022, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) changed to:

- 58.5 cents per mile driven for business use, up 2.5 cents from the rate for 2021,
- 18 cents per mile driven for medical, or moving purposes for qualified active-duty members of the Armed Forces, up 2 cents from the rate for 2021 and
- 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations; the rate is set by statute and remains unchanged from 2021.

The standard mileage rate for business is based on an annual study of the fixed and variable costs of operating an automobile. The rate for medical and moving purposes is based on the variable costs. Taxpayers always have the option of calculating the actual costs of using their vehicle rather than using the standard mileage rates. (Asmark Institute)

MCPR Board of Director Elections

The Minnesota Crop Production Retailers held elections for several seats during the MCPR Annual Meeting which was held on the afternoon of Tuesday, December 7. We would like to congratulate the following directors who won their respective elections:

- District 2 Director – Dale Johnson (AgPartners)
- District 4 Director – Andy Oeding (Nutrien Ag Solutions)
- At-Large Director – Tim Woelfel (Farmward Cooperative)
- Custom Applicator – Brian Meyer (Central Region Cooperative)
- Plant Food Representative – Kevin Crandall (Nachurs)
- Technology Representative – Kyle Kraska (Heartland Ag Systems)

MCPR would like to thank all of the candidates who ran for these board seats that were up for election. This democratic function ensures all members have an equal opportunity to run for the board of directors that is selected by the organization's membership during the annual meeting.

AGRONOMY CHALLENGE WINNERS!

First Team Place Prize - \$1,000 for the team

Jon Morsching, *AgPartners*

Lizzy Kienlen, *AgPartners*

Second Team Place Prize - \$500 for the team

Isaac Anderson, *Land O' Lakes*

Storm Sammon, *Land O' Lakes*

**CONGRATS
TEAMS!**



MCPR Bids Farewell to Former Executive Director Bill Bond and Outgoing Board Director Jeff Arnold

The Minnesota Crop Production Retailers officially recognized two long-time fixtures with the organization during the MCPR Annual Meeting on Tuesday, December 7.

Former Executive Director Bill Bond and outgoing board director Jeff Arnold were presented with plaques on behalf of the entire membership and thanked for their critical contributions to the association over the years.

Bill served in his role for 16 years, while Jeff served on the board for just over 20 years.

We cannot thank them enough for their dedication to MCPR and the ag retail industry as a whole. We wish Bill all the best in the next chapter of his life, as well as Jeff who will be winding down his career in the next year with Trico Ag Service, Inc.



MCPR Board Chair Rick Walker presents former MCPR Executive Director Bill Bond (left) and Jeff Arnold (right) plaques to commemorate their years of service to the organization.

2021 Craig Sallstrom Memorial Scholarship Recipient: **Connor Ruen**



“I am very honored to have received the Craig Sallstrom Memorial Scholarship. I am a Junior at South Dakota State University majoring in agronomy and minoring in horticulture, pest management and soil health. Once I finish my bachelor’s degree, I plan to get my master’s in plant science or soil health. On campus I am a member of the Farmhouse Fraternity, agronomy club, horticulture club, and I am a community advisor in Pierson Hall supervising around 50 underclassmen on my floor. I am very thankful for your support as I continue my education at South Dakota State University.”

Connor Ruen,
South Dakota State University

Rick's View

Hello MCPR Members,

I am happy to report that we had a very successful CPM Short Course and MCPR Trade Show. I heard many compliments and some suggestions on improvements we can make for the 2022 Trade Show which will be held December 6-8, 2022 at the Minneapolis Hilton Hotel once again. During the MCPR Annual Meeting in December all current Board members running for re-election were elected. You may also remember the Board of Directors developed an idea several years ago to add advisors to our board team for increased communication and representation throughout Minnesota.

At the recent January Board meeting the MCPR Board exercised the MCPR Bylaws authority to reappoint three Advisory Board members who will serve two-year terms. They include Travis Brekken from Crystal Valley Co-op, Jeff Moon from Corteva, and David Voller who is with BASF. In addition, two new members were also selected by the Board. They include Justin Schroeder from Central Counties Co-op and Scott Barnes from Nutrien Ag Solutions Harmony. Both were candidates in the December 2021 annual meeting election and we welcome them in their new roles on the MCPR board.

In closing, I would like to thank all of our members for their continued support of MCPR. Without you, the MCPR team and board of directors not be able to conduct the work we do on your behalf to support and promote Minnesota's ag retail industry. I hope your new year is off to a good start and we look forward to seeing you in 2022.

Rick Walker
MCPR Board Chair



MCPR Board

Rick Walker, Board Chair
Doug Becher
Kevin Crandall
Jeff Einck
Dale Johnson
Kyle Kraska
Brian Meyer
Andy Oeding
T.J. Phillips
Arnie Sinclair
Bryan Strickler
Tristan Wilmes
Tim Woelfel

Advisory Board

Travis Brekken
Jeff Moon
David Voller
Justin Schroeder
Scott Barnes

Staff

Patrick Murray, Executive Director
Jessica Brunelle, Executive Vice President


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