



MICHIGAN
CROP IMPROVEMENT
ASSOCIATION™

Michigan Seed Bulletin

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The Official Seed Certifying Agency

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Seed Performance

BY CHRIS TIEDJE

Each of us who plants a field has great expectations for the seed. In these days of food shortages, high prices, global insecurities, transportation challenges, climate change, inflation, and labor shortages – we need everything to count. Seed performance matters. The seed industry has refined production, seed cleaning, and testing to the degree that performance is sometimes taken for granted. However, there are many little things which contribute to its success. Variety performance + seed Quality = Seed Performance. Variety performance is a primary focus of certification and private quality systems.

When a person is gifted in a particular area, it is common to say that it is in a person's genes. That saying bears much truth. Plant breeders are very aware of genes, heritage, and genealogy. Genes are responsible for traits. Sometimes traits can be seed visible like blue eyes or hidden like the gift to play a piano. In plants, genes are responsible for traits seen like soybean blossom color and wheat awns, or unseen like herbicide resistance.



Field inspection is a good way to observe plant traits which are characteristic of a variety. Often there are more distinguishing plant

characters than in the harvested grain for a variety. Plant characteristics, often referred to as phenotype, are used to verify the genetic identity and seed purity of a variety.

Field inspectors are gearing up for the season. Their trained eyes are able to distinguish between genetic plant characteristics and the influence of environment or disease. These days a person in a field without a tractor is an uncommon sight. However, it is hard to beat the opportunity to observe the thousands or more plants in a typical field inspection. It is interesting to watch a dog with its nose to the ground constantly taking the smells in along its path. A field inspector can do a similar thing, looking at thousands of plants along the path through the field while taking random counts to document and support findings. All this occurs so the variety is true and performs as it is intended.

Need your seed tested?

Because seed is alive it has the potential to be injured, sometimes resulting in death. At the MCI Seed lab, seeds are tested to determine viability and vigor. MCI offers a full service seed testing laboratory for both seed certification and the commercial seed industry.



To learn more, scan the QR code or visit [MICHROP.COM/LAB-TESTING](https://www.michcrop.com/lab-testing)

The President's Post

BY CHRIS SCHMIDT, MCIA PRESIDENT



Has it been an extremely long winter or is it just that I'm getting older every year and tire more

quickly of cold and snow? I'm just done with Carhartts, muck boots and being cold all the time.

As I write this from my home office in Auburn it's the first week of May, but you'll be reading this weeks from now and spring will be essentially in the rear view mirror. Hopefully you've all had a great 2022 spring planting season or are at least looking at the finish line from the tractor seat.

I want to talk with all of you readers of the quarterly newsletter about something that doesn't get much attention but affects every one of us seed growers/processors - that being the organization that goes by the name of the Association Of Seed Certifying Agencies (AOSCA). AOSCA operates in the background and is seldom noticed unless you read the fine print at the bottom of the blue certified seed tag where you'll notice that Michigan Crop Improvement is a member of AOSCA.

AOSCA was established in 1919 and is a federation of seed certifying agencies across the United States as well as Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The mission of AOSCA is to promote and facilitate the movement of seed in local, national and international markets through the coordinated efforts of official seed certification agencies acting to evaluate, document, and verify that a seed meets certain accepted standards.

OK... but how does that affect us growers in Michigan? Well, to begin with, it assures each of us that MCIA is operating within an established set of guidelines that applies not only to Michigan but to every other agency from east coast to west coast and to other countries beyond. What it does is it allows me (and all of you) to bring seed in from Idaho or Washington, as an example, and I'm assured that the seed that I receive from these western states has met the same stringent testing requirements as if the seed had been produced right here in Michigan. It evens the playing field, making certain that each state is adhering to the same set of standards/rules. This is hugely important because imagine, if every state were making up their own rules and none of it looked familiar

to us here in Michigan. It'd be chaos worse than Washington DC!! Gasp.

Bringing this a little closer to home, there are 4 annual regional AOSCA meetings and one national meeting every year. Jim and Chris both recently attended the northern regional meeting in April held in Fayette, Indiana. We can be assured that our Michigan voices/concerns/inputs/directions are being heard in this arena with experienced representation like this.

So, if any of you have a question why it is the way it is, we have highly qualified people at the state level that can field your questions and an equally qualified staff at the national level that can get answers for you.

As we all shift our attention to the upcoming wheat harvest, please remember that MCIA is our association there to help and serve us. And at the same time, we all have a responsibility to make sure we're meeting the standards set forth by AOSCA and making Michigan certified seed the preferred choice for all of the growers in the Great Lakes region. Be safe out there and enjoy the brief but excellent Michigan summer.



Thomas Siler Joins MCIA Staff

On May 16, 2022 Thomas Siler joined the MCIA Staff in the newly created position of Seed Production Quality Manager. Thomas will be managing field inspections for all crops but specializing in seed corn. Thomas earned his bachelor's degree from Michigan State University in



Thomas Siler

Merrill, Michigan where he developed a passion for agriculture by helping

Crop and Soil Science and recently received his master's degree, also, in Crop and Soil Science. Thomas grew up on a small farm in

his father and grandfather on their farms. His experience in agriculture and understanding of current trends in the industry has prepared him well for his new role. Thomas currently resides in St. Johns, Michigan with his wife Renae and is planning to start a family. We are excited to have Thomas join the MCIA team! If you are in the area stop by the office and say "Hi" to Thomas.

Manager's Minute

BY C. JAMES PALMER, MCIA MANAGER



After two years without having an in person MCIA Annual Meeting, we finally got back to “normal” on March 8th with the 2021/2022 MCIA Annual Membership Meeting being held in Bath, Michigan. It was refreshing to be back to an in-person setting with live interaction and non-“virtual presentations”.

Also, earlier this year, Chris and I attended the regional AOSCA meeting held in Fayette, Indiana. This was the first time the yearly meeting had been held in person since Michigan hosted it in 2019. Again, it was

great to see some of the people in the industry in person and discuss the “hot topics” in agriculture.

These types of activities are essential to building key relationships which are the bedrock of a successful organization. The meeting felt “normal”. Much of the discussion at the AOSCA meeting surrounded labor shortages, supply concerns, inflation and even the war in the Ukraine. Just when we thought life was returning to “normal” we are reminded that returning to “normal” may not be achievable. We all know the world changes fast and whether perceived as good or bad, what was once considered “normal” we find quickly changes to something else. I have completely adjusted my view and now believe “normal” is akin to a unicorn, something often sought after but actually just mythical.

As we make our way through the new mine fields which have surfaced over the past months, it would be easy to get distracted by all the turmoil, but at MCIA, we have chosen to focus on things we can control which help us provide the best quality products and services to all our customers. Continually reviewing and streamlining our policies and procedures in the lab, updating equipment to stay on top of technological advancements in the seed plant and adding new team members to improve the timeliness and service of our field inspection staff are a few of the areas we continue to make a priority. So, while we may never return to “normal”, we will be keeping our eye on the things we can do to help your business function as close to “normal” as possible.

New Directors Join MCIA Board, Officers Elected

At the 2021/2022 MCIA Annual Membership Meeting, Matt Lutz was elected as the representative for the Thumb Region. Chris Schmidt was re-elected to the Northern Region. Jeff Martus, from Star of the West Milling, was appointed to the Industry Representative position vacated by Paul Varner. New officers were also elected at the meeting. Chris Schmidt will retain the President position, Jeff Dreher was elected as the Vice President and Toby Brown will remain the Secretary/Treasurer. Congratulations goes out to the elected officers and newly elected/appointed board members.

Paul Varner Steps Down from Industry Representative Position

After a long and prosperous career in the seed Industry, Paul Varner finally decided to retire so he can travel and spend more time with his wife and family. This also means Paul has stepped down from the MCIA Board as the “Industry Repre-

sentative” a position which he held for over 17 years. Paul has been an excellent Board Member, a reliable resource, and a great friend of the Certified Seed Industry. Paul always provided sound guidance and will be greatly missed by our Association. On behalf of the Michigan Crop Improvement Staff, Membership and Directors, best wishes on a long and happy retirement!

Fun Fact

Corn Flakes were invented by the Kellogg brothers in Battle Creek, MI in the year 1898. The flakes were created somewhat by accident. According to company history, it was one night in 1898 when a batch of wheat-based cereal dough was accidentally left out for an extended time, causing it to ferment. When rolled out into thin sheets, the slightly moldy dough produced perfect large, thin flakes that became crispy and tasty in the oven. Over the next several years, William Kellogg kept experimenting with the recipe, and figured out that corn, rather than wheat, produced even crunchier, crispier flakes.





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Calendar of Events

May 30 Memorial Day	<i>Office Closed</i>
June 1 Small Grains Application Due	<i>MCIA Office</i>
June 5-9 AOSA/SCST Annual Meeting	<i>Chicago, IL</i>
June 19-22 AOSCA Annual Meeting	<i>Wenatchee, WA</i>
July 4 Independence Day	<i>Office Closed</i>
August 15 Soybean and Dry Bean Applications Due Final Orders for Wheat Seed Stock Due	<i>MCIA Office</i>