



Illinois Fertilizer & Chemical Association
Supply • Service • Stewardship

Our Mission: *To assist and represent the Illinois crop production supply and service industry while promoting the sound stewardship and utilization of agricultural inputs.*

IFCA Chairman’s Report

by Carl Kessler, Syngenta



What else can you say, but WOW! 2019 shaped up to be one for the record books. To start, we had such a short Fall in 2018, leading to a compressed Spring and unprecedented rainfall in the corn belt. Also, we had the great task of getting all of the crop sprayed in a timely manner, including the complexity of managing multiple trait platforms in soybeans, which of course, includes the dicamba challenge.

All of that being said, this industry, especially in Illinois, found a way to get the work accomplished in a professional and respectable manor. I am very proud to be part of Illinois and American agriculture production. Our perseverance, dedication, knowledge, and overall aptitude to do this job enabled us to overcome the most adverse set of circumstances many of us have ever seen.

Through it all, IFCA remains committed to our objectives with stewardship and freedom of operation for our industry at the forefront. It will continue to take a lot of hard work and on-going collaboration with all stakeholders, including environmental groups, to allow our industry to progress forward in a manner that is consistent with our values. At this, we have been extremely successful and are the envy of many states.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the IFCA convention January 21-23, 2020. If you are interested in serving on the IFCA Board, which is a very rewarding experience, please see the “Call for Nominations” form in this newsletter. Board leadership is the key to IFCA’s on-going success.



4R Reminder: The “right time” means avoiding spreading nutrients on frozen or snow covered soils. In early March 2019, loss of P was documented in rivers after significant rain followed applications made on frozen soils. Fall is a great time to apply nutrients at the right time and the right rate.

Take Off Fertilizer Plates Jan 1, 2020

Thanks to legislation initiated by IFCA, on January 1, 2020 you can remove the license plates on ammonia trailers, fertilizer buggies and fertilizer spreaders (the FT or FS plates). These implements of husbandry no longer require registration. But please don’t send your plates to a landfill—any Secretary of State licensing office will accept and recycle the plates.



Enter the Contest! Before you recycle your plates, come up with a creative display of your removed plates and submit a photo to John Rebholz (john@ifca.com). We will award gift cards in the amount of \$250, \$100 and \$50 to 3 retailers who our staff feels created the most innovative display, sign, design etc. utilizing the old plates. **Submit your photos to John by January 17, we will announce the winners at the IFCA convention.**

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SPECIAL FEATURES.....

- 2020 Dicamba Changes
- Members Host Legislators
- Marijuana Webinar Dec 3
- STAR Program
- Special Insert: IFCA Board Nomination Form



REGULATORY ISSUES

WEIGHING IN ON SCALES

If you are planning on installing a new scale, or replacing or making modifications to an existing scale, make sure you or your scale company service provider contacts the folks at the IDA Bureau of Weights & Measures. Anything other than routine maintenance requires approval and there is a permit process for this. There is no permit fee, however.

The Department has some concerns about work beginning before approval is granted, sometimes resulting in a re-do which no one likes. Recently, IFCA and the Grain & Feed Association staff met with Weights & Measures to address some of the concerns. All parties agreed to look at the possibility of various types of educational outreach programs in order to improve understanding of the regulations and ensure more consistency for everyone involved. Also, be aware that if you are installing a new scale that will be used by a customer (such as a farmer delivering grain or picking up a nurse tank) you should include a digital scale read-out in your installation plans. The scale permit requires this. Questions? Contact IFCA.



Entry-Level CDL Driver Overview—Lots of Changes

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) established new minimum training standards for certain individuals applying for a Class A or Class B commercial driver's license (CDL) for the first time. The standards also apply to current CDL holders who want to upgrade their CDL (e.g., a Class B CDL holder seeking a Class A CDL), and to those who want to obtain a hazardous materials (H), passenger (P), or school bus (S) endorsement on their CDL for the first time. **The requirements do not apply to individuals holding a valid CDL or a P, S, or H endorsement issued prior to February 7, 2020.**

Beginning February 7, 2020 the changes are listed below:

- Prior to taking the skills test at a DMV, the applicant must complete a prescribed program of theory and behind the wheel instruction. There is, however, no specific requirement on the number of hours for each course;
- CDL training schools must now meet minimum federal standards;
- CDL training schools must be listed on a FMCSA registry;
- CDL training instructors must meet specific requirements;
- The responsibility of CDL testing is placed on the CDL schools instead of the DMV.
- The CDL school must upload an applicant's Certificate of Completion to the DMV for verification.
- Individuals upgrading a CDL will not be required to go through the full training program, there will be a more streamlined process that eliminates redundant course work.
- Training providers (CDL Schools) will begin registering their facilities with FMCSA in November 2020.

FMCSA Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse: The FMCSA announced that registration is open for the Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse which goes into effect on **January 6, 2020**. The Clearinghouse will provide FMCSA and employers the necessary tools to identify drivers who are prohibited from operating a CMV based on DOT drug and alcohol program violations, and ensure that such drivers receive the required evaluation and treatment before operating a CMV on public roads. Employers will be required to query the Clearinghouse for current and prospective employees' drug and alcohol violations before permitting those employees to operate a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) on public roads. Employers will also be required to annually query the Clearinghouse for each driver they currently employ. Drivers will need to provide electronic consent in the Clearinghouse if a prospective or current employer needs to conduct a full query of the driver's record.

REGULATORY UPDATE

Pesticide Licensing Procedures

If your pesticide license is up for renewal this winter, please be sure to bring your IDA renewal notice with you to the testing clinic. Your notice of renewal letter lists your applicator # as well as your employer ID# and the IDA staff at the testing locations can access your records using those codes on your letter. Otherwise, you will have to provide them your social security number at the testing location, and everyone wants to get away from using social security numbers for identification purposes. The training and testing dates and locations are available at <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/psep/>

And if you have the Field Crop Certification in order to apply dicamba to soybean, please remember that in order to take the Field Crop exam, you must first have a current general standards license. You cannot take the test for any specialty category unless you have first passed and are current in the general standards category. It is also advisable to “link” the field crop certification with your general standards, in order to avoid taking the tests more than just once every three years. If you have questions, please contact IFCA.

Dicamba label training will also again be required in 2020. The “Training” menu on the IFCA website will provide more information on both classroom and on-line training options for the winter of 2020.

Paraquat: Certified Applicator and Training Requirements

Herbicides containing the active ingredient paraquat will receive new labels for product manufactured and distributed after November 14, 2019. The new labels REQUIRE the following:

1. **Paraquat products can only be applied by certified applicators.** In Illinois, that means you must have passed both the general standards AND field crop category, similar to the requirement to apply dicamba to soybean.
2. **Training.** Before applying paraquat products that have the new labels, you must obtain a paraquat-specific training certificate in your name, obtained via online training. For more details and to access the training go to this website: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-worker-safety/paraquat-dichloride-training-certified-applicators>

Simply stated, if you apply paraquat in 2020, you will need to have this training plus the certified applicator designation. Any paraquat used in burn-down this fall will most likely still bear the current (old) label, not the new label that triggers these additional requirements for applicators. We have more information on this subject posted on our homepage at www.ifca.com, or contact us if you have questions.

Legalized Marijuana in Illinois—What Employers Should Know

On December 3, 2019 from 1–2 pm, the Grain & Feed Association and IFCA are hosting a free webinar for our members entitled “Up in Smoke.” With recreational marijuana use becoming legal in Illinois on January 1, 2020, employers have a lot of questions regarding how this is going to impact the workplace.

In addition, because most IFCA members also have drug & alcohol policies in place, you need to know how to evaluate your current policies to reflect the changes in the marijuana use laws in Illinois. This webinar is designed to highlight ways to reduce your legal risks and protect your workforce. Darren Grady and Heather Bailey from SmithAmundsen law firm will lead the webinar.

To register for the webinar please go to: <https://bit.ly/2MXF5NK> or contact IFCA for assistance.

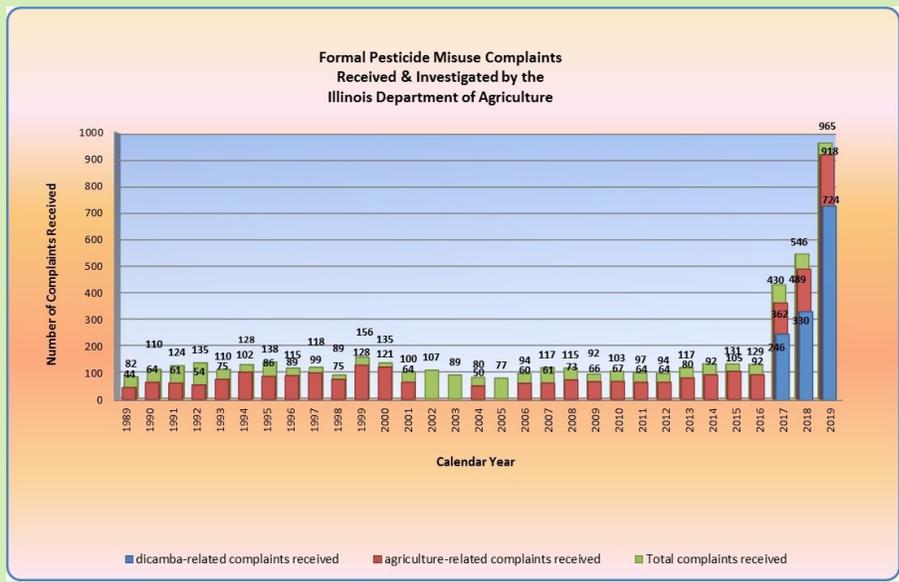
Dicamba on Soybean: 2020 Labels

At newsletter press time, the Illinois Department of Agriculture is submitting Special Local Needs Section 24(c) documentation to USEPA that will include additional label requirements for dicamba applied to soybean in Illinois in 2020. This is in response to 724 formal dicamba complaints in 2019; see the chart below.

The new label requirements are:

- DO NOT apply this product if the air temperature at the field at the time of application is over 85 degrees Fahrenheit **or** if the National Weather Service’s forecasted high temperature for the nearest available location for the day of application exceeds 85 degrees Fahrenheit. (Local National Weather Service forecast are available at <https://www.weather.gov>—just enter the zip code of the field to get the local forecast.)
This means that on the day of intended application, you must go to the weather website listed above and type in the zip code of fields you wish to treat. If the weather service forecast on this website calls for a high temp that day of 86 degrees or more in that field’s zip code, it is a DO NOT SPRAY day. If the forecast high is 85 degrees or less for the day, you can spray if you meet all other label conditions AND you check the temperature in the actual field of application at the time of application. If it registers above 85 degrees in the field of application, DO NOT SPRAY.
- DO NOT apply this product after June 20, 2020.
- DO NOT apply this product when the wind is blowing toward adjacent residential areas.
- Before making an application of this product, the applicator must consult the FieldWatch sensitive crop registry (<https://www.fieldwatch.com>) and comply with all associated record keeping label requirements.
- Maintain the label-specified downwind buffer between the last treated row and the nearest downfield edge of any Illinois Nature Preserves Commission site. (Note: IFCA has posted the DNR sensitive areas on our homepage at www.ifca.com but they will soon be added to Fieldwatch.)
- It is best to apply product when the wind is blowing away from sensitive areas, which include but are not limited to bodies of water and non-residential, un-cultivated areas that may harbor sensitive plant species.

Although USEPA recently stated they may evaluate the use of 24c by the states in the future, at press time USEPA has NOT indicated they will deny any state’s 24c requests for the 2020 season.



IFCA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Paul Cain

Territory Representative, Fertilizer Dealer Supply (FDS), Philo IL

Started in the Business: 1977

Areas Served: Ohio, Iowa, Indiana, Kentucky & Central Illinois



Paul & Diane

Paul Cain grew up in Philo, IL along with eight other siblings. Paul's parents farmed in the Philo area, and his love of agriculture started early. He attended Parkland College majoring in Ag Marketing. As a student at Parkland, he began working part-time for FDS, and after graduating he earned a full-time position with the company.

Paul's first assignment with FDS required him to move to the state of Ohio. He spent five years working in Ohio and then headed to Iowa to open a new store for FDS. After Iowa, Paul spent time working in Southern Indiana & Kentucky before finally making it back to Philo and Central Illinois. Since 1993, Paul has been the go-to-guy for ag retailers in central Illinois.

Paul & his wife Diane (who is a nurse) have had opportunities to travel to Bosnia & Lima Peru to see their oldest daughter, who works for the US State Department. Next on their agenda is Beijing, China. Paul has recently retired from FDS, although I'm sure you will still see Paul at various tradeshow like MAGIE or Convention and perhaps even a golf outing where he will complain about only getting two drink tickets. Paul is not going away quite yet, he's just enjoying life a little bit more. Congratulations Paul on an outstanding career and special thanks from the IFCA staff for all your support and help over the years.

A little bit more about Paul

Family/Hobbies?

Paul and Diane have four children: Melanie, Brenda, Shannon and Nate. Melanie works as a private contractor at Scott Air Force Base, Brenda works for the US State Dept., Shannon is a nurse & Scott is a Pharmacist. During his spare time, Paul and Diane enjoy traveling, camping, fishing, golfing and spending time with their 3 grandchildren. Paul & Diane have also participated in mission trips to Missouri and Minnesota. Paul and Diane are celebrating 40 years of marriage this year and are planning a family trip to Wisconsin.

What do you enjoy about the business?

Paul told us that ag retailers always treated him like an invited guest. He truly has enjoyed seeing their accomplishments as well as assisting them through their challenges.

Concerns?

Lack of acknowledgement for the value that ag retailers provide to their customers and the shortage of new employees entering the ag sector.

Why did you join IFCA? IFCA is like the number one fraternity that everyone wants to be a part of.



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IFCA Office: 14171 Carole Drive;
Bloomington, IL 61705
Ph (309) 827-2774; fax (309) 827-2779
www.ifca.com

ANHYDROUS AMMONIA

Spring 2020 Anhydrous Ammonia Safety Schools

Each spring and fall, IFCA partners with the IL Dept. of Ag to offer ammonia safety courses throughout the state. Those who attend the training program and pass the exam receive a 3 year certificate from IDA as a “Competent Attendant” to handle anhydrous ammonia.

We have set the dates for the Spring 2020 ammonia courses, you can register for any of these upcoming classes on our website at www.ifca.com.

January 22-IFCA Convention-Peoria (**Register through convention**)

February 25-The Pavilion-Marion

February 26-Effingham Event Center-Effingham

February 27-Unique Suites-Charleston

February 28-Asmark Agricenter-Bloomington

March 03-Mendota Civic Center-Mendota

March 04-Knox Agricenter-Galesburg

March 05-Holiday Inn-Quincy

March 06-Poes Catering-Springfield

March 27-Asmark Agricenter-Bloomington



Lessons Learned from the Beach Park NH₃ incident

On April 25th a grower’s hired hand was transporting two side by side ammonia nurse tanks behind an ammonia toolbar with his tractor at 4:30 in the morning when the transfer hose from the applicator disconnected at the bulk head. The valves on the tanks were open and the transfer hose was attached during transit. As a result of the incident 37 people were transported to the hospital along with environmental damage to nearby homes. At last report, several emergency responders suffered serious, life-altering injuries.

Beach Park, IL is roughly 50 miles north of Chicago in a heavily populated area. This incident could have easily been avoided had the operator closed the valves on the nurse tanks and disconnected the applicator transfer hose before venturing onto the public road. This is required by Illinois law. The number of injuries would also have been less had the tractor operator notified emergency response officials of the release of ammonia in a timely manner (also required by law). Police and fire departments who responded were told by citizens who called 911 that it looked like smoke, so they were unprepared for the cloud of ammonia they encountered. Laws are clearly in place, but does everyone who transports or applies ammonia fully understand the rules and why they must be followed?



This incident sparked state and national media attention; several state and federal agencies are now involved and will be for some time. The most common question IFCA fielded in the hours and days after this incident was this: “Are farmers required to be trained to transport and handle this chemical?” The answer is “not currently.” Whether or not additional regulations will result is unclear, but many view this incident as a defining moment, and the discussion over mandatory farmer training continues.

The majority of ammonia applied in Illinois typically occurs in lesser populated rural areas, but even in “downstate” we are seeing more urban sprawl. Is it really a good risk management decision to apply ammonia next to a subdivision, school or other public assembly? Wouldn’t another form of nitrogen be a better option? Anhydrous ammonia is a viable and efficient form of nitrogen, and we hope it’s around for years to come. However, educating our growers on ammonia application safety, reporting requirements and emergency response procedures is necessary in order to prevent another Beach Park incident from happening.

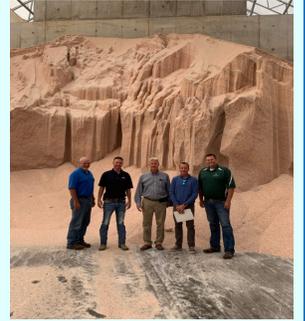
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

IFCA Members Host Legislators at Their Facilities

In our ongoing effort to educate legislators regarding the issues that face the ag input industry, IFCA and our members continue to host national and state legislators at IFCA member facilities. This summer IFCA hosted 8 state senators and representatives that serve on the ag or environmental committees.

We encourage our members to invite their legislators to your retail operation to explain your business and the issues that impact our industry. It's a great chance to also discuss what you do to serve the farmers of Illinois, the value of your employees, your role in the community, and how a thriving ag industry can help the State of Illinois.

These visits make a big difference, because legislators can then better relate to how bills impact our industry and the local ag retail businesses. Contact KJ Johnson and we'll help you organize a visit!



Rep. Nathan Reitz visits Gateway FS in Red Bud.



IFCA Board Member John Musser talks to Rep. Andrew Chesney about Stephenson Service Company's new ammonia facility.



Rep. Jeff Keicher discuss the 4Rs with IFCA Board Member Dave Myers at the CHS facility in Sycamore.



Northern Partners in Peru hosted Rep. Lance Yednock at their new barge fertilizer/grain facility.



Conserv FS employees discuss with Senator Craig Wilcox the importance of seeds treatments to farmers and ag retailers.



House Ag Committee Chairman Sonya Harper makes a stop at Top Ag in Okawville to learn more about Illinois ag retailers.



Rep. Patrick Windhorst toured Tri-Country Fertilizer in Eldorado with IFCA board member Jeremy Maloney, discussing ag input transportation issues.

S.T.A.R. Program

The Stewardship Committee of the Champaign County Soil & Water Conservation District developed a FREE tool to assist farm operators and land owners in evaluating their nutrient and soil loss management practices on individual fields. The purpose of S.T.A.R. is to motivate those making cropping decisions to use the "best management practices" that will ultimately meet the goals of the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy. To meet those goals for the agriculture sector, farmers need to reduce the nitrogen and phosphorus losses by applying nitrogen when the plants need it and by preventing soil losses through reducing tillage and cover crops.

The S.T.A.R. (Saving Tomorrow's Agriculture Resources) evaluation system assigns points for each cropping, tillage, nutrient application and soil conservation activity used on individual fields. The practices selected and the point values assigned are determined by a group of scientists and researchers, including some farmers who are involved in research. The science committee bases their analysis of recommended practices on the potential contribution to the goals of the NLRs. The total points are used in a scale to determine a rating of 1 to 5 Stars for each individual field. For additional information on the program, please visit <http://www.cswcd.com/S.T.A.R./>



IFCA
14171 Carole Drive
Bloomington, IL 61705
Return Service Requested

From the President's Desk *by Jean Payne*

We usually think of the pressures on agriculture coming from external forces, such as environmental groups, regulatory agencies, the legislature, media or the general public. And yes, there are always external forces at work, aiming to shape how agriculture operates. But lately it seems like several of our most pressing challenges are coming from within. For example, we have federal and state approval to apply dicamba to soybean, but as an industry we haven't been able to reduce the number of issues related to this particular pesticide use. We've gone from a average of 100 total pesticide complaints per year to nearly 1,000 complaints in 2019. We all desire to have total support and collaboration among chemical companies, retailers, farmers, the universities and the Dept of Agriculture, and yet we can't seem to all come together to identify the cause(s) or develop a comprehensive plan to address it. We tweak the labels because that is the easiest thing to do but we don't really have a high level of confidence that this is the answer. And if we cannot keep this product use viable, then what? We will have DT traits in the seed and no legal product to use to capitalize on this technology. To me, that would be the ultimate crisis. What has occurred, so far, has not been because of environmental groups or public outcry—most of the dicamba dilemma resides within our own industry. But external forces may shut us down soon if we cannot bring down the number of complaints. When it comes to nutrient issues, we've proven with NREC research that fertilizer application is not the primary cause of nutrient loss; rather, the bulk of nutrient losses in the ag sector are a symptom of our current production system. When nutrient uptake is limited to the months of May through October, then there are six months out of the year when our soils continue to produce and cycle nutrients that can be lost in tile drainage and overland runoff when there is nothing growing to help capture those nutrients. That too isn't something any external group has forced upon us. So where am I going with this? I think there are incredible opportunities for our industry to directly and honestly take on these challenges and work collaboratively and creatively to address them. We can design and implement our own stewardship and management programs and practices to ensure they work as effectively as possible. I am confident that many of the external forces out there would be pleased and supportive of these efforts. Most of this really is up to us.

