



## Inside This Issue

Executive Director's Report	Pages 1, 2 & 4
Capitol Update	Pages 1, & 2
News Notes	Pages 3, & 4
Craig's View	Page 3
Reguletter	Insert
MyPSM + RMP Webinar Info	Insert



## Minnesota Crop Production Retailers

# INPUTS

## Executive Director's Report

### Hello MCPR Members,

Once again the CPM Short Course and MCPR Trade Show attracted more attendees and more exhibitors than the year before setting new records...nearly 1600 attendees! Thank you to all who made this year the biggest and best ever. Like one of the exhibitors told a Board member, "You have a really great event here...I'm coming back next year with a larger exhibit!" If you have not been to the Short Course and Trade Show in recent years, plan to join us in Minneapolis December 6-8, 2016.

A new Board member, Kyle Kraska, was elected at the annual meeting held on the trade show floor for the Plant Food Industry vacancy. He replaces Brad Englund, ADM, who stepped down at the end of his term. Brad served many years of distinguished leadership including serving as Board Chair. Thank you, Brad, for your dedicated service and also to all the candidates who ran for election to the Board of Directors!



Kyle is the Technical Sales Manager for The Mosaic Company. When asked what

*(continued on page 2)*

## Capitol Update

The Minnesota legislature convenes 12:00 noon on Tuesday, March 8, and must adjourn according to the Minnesota Constitution no later than the first Monday after the third Saturday in May of the even-numbered year which in 2016 is Monday, May 23. However, wouldn't you know it, Dayton and some of his legislative supporters want a special session prior to the March 8 convening date to address unemployment benefits for steelworkers, compliance with the federal Real ID law and racial economic disparities. Legislators are raising questions and accuse Dayton of not providing any specific ideas. The special session idea is not likely to be held.

Committee legislative deadlines for bills to pass out of the legislative committee of origin is April 1...that's just a couple days over three weeks from convening. Another major impediment to work at the Capitol building this year is the substantial repair and remodeling construction which makes doing the peoples' business very difficult. In fact, serious consideration to not holding a legislative session in 2016 was pondered last year.

The biggest political issue related to the work going at the Capitol is the new \$90 million Senate office building placed in the spending budget when Democrats controlled the House, Senate, and



Governor's office. Republicans ran against the building in the fall campaigns and gained control of the House and added numbers to the Senate. As Democrat Senators are moving into the building, it remains to be seen if and when Republicans will move over to the controversial space.

One major factor which will motivate every politician of every political stripe this coming legislative session is the \$1.2 billion projected budget surplus. What to spend the money on will be the major debate of this legislative session.

Agriculture has some interesting challenges in the public policy arena in 2016. One is the buffer strips law and implementation program Governor Mark Dayton is administering through his DNR. The law generally advanced current buffer requirements of a 16.5 foot buffer along some, but not all, drainage ditches, and the Shore land Rule which requires counties to establish a county ordinance

*(continued on page 2)*



## Capitol Update (continued from page 1)

to protect shore land areas, generally calling for a 50 foot buffer along rivers, streams, lakes and some drainage ditches, but providing flexibility to allow counties to require wider or narrower buffers if local conditions make 50 foot buffers impractical. Counties remain responsible for enforcing buffer rules and still have the legislative authority under the legislation to administer both the ditch buffer law and the shore land rule. Some counties have chosen not to enforce the 50 foot shore land buffer ordinances, while others report high compliance. MCPR supports the common sense local county authority and opposes legislation which will remove the local county authority and discretion as county governments appropriate government entities with zoning administrators and a capability of determining local conditions. MCPR members must pay attention to efforts to remove county authority and flexibility. We have noticed some soil and water conservation staff efforts to end run the county flexibility policy, which we have monitored and countered as we learn of these efforts.

Another very interesting development is the Governor's plans to convene a summit in February to address water quality challenges across the state. One can only imagine what the outcome of this venture will be, but in the January MCPR Board meeting when we considered the Dayton Water Summit, I pondered whether agriculture was being invited to join the Governor for lunch because we "are" the lunch. Stay tuned on this one.

Finally, last year the House and Senate failed to achieve a compromise on the tax policy and spending bill so that a tax bill provision which was contained in the Senate Tax Bill did not get passed into law. The result for Senator Skoe's bill to repeal the law providing for an property tax exemption for agricultural chemical containment facilities (M.S. 272.02, subd. 23) which simply states: "Containment tanks, cache basins, and that portion of the structure needed for the containment facility used to confine

agricultural chemicals as defined in section 18D.01, subdivision 3, as required by the commissioner of agriculture under chapter 18B or 18C, are exempt." MCPR has had contacts from members who are concerned that for the large, newer chemical buildings they have built or are planning, the loss of this property tax exemption would cost them between \$50,000 to \$100,000 a year in additional property tax obligation. However, if the legislature does not eliminate the property tax exemption local government would have to increase property taxes and home owners could see property taxes go up by 15-20% the next taxable year. Also, some MCPR members have told local units of government if the MCPR member does not get the property tax exemption, they will sue for back taxes the local units of government owes them for incorrectly collecting property taxes on their property since 1992. This issue is a big mess and solutions will be hard to find. Stay tuned. You better believe when some towns talk about huge property tax increases, the legislature will listen and respond.

MCPR 2016 policy positions reviewed and passed at the annual meeting during the CPM Short Course and MCPR Trade Show are posted on MCPR web page. If you don't know who represents you the legislative tab on the MCPR web page ([www.mcpr-cca.org](http://www.mcpr-cca.org)) will provide this information to you when you enter your address.

Given the information above, you can be assured boredom is not a problem for Jessi and me as we lobby on your behalf this year. ✨



**Minnesota Crop  
Production Retailers**

## Executive Director's Report (continued from page 1)

he believes are the most important issues facing our industry, Kyle said, "... helping the grower stay profitable while increasing yields on the farm gate. I continue to talk about the nutrient cliff. I believe we have been over producing and under fertilizing the major crops. In the next five years we will see yields fall if things don't change." Kyle in part wants to serve MCPR members as a Board member to continue providing the fertilizer industry's perspective on the agricultural business and to help MCPR members with the issues they are facing. An additional benefit is the opportunity to help his company to better understand retailers. Kyle's hobbies include being an avid hunter and fisherman. He hunts whitetail deer, ducks, elk, pheasant, and alligators. Kyle also plays amateur baseball for the Elko Express in the summer...in fact; any time Kyle can spend time outside he is happy.

MCPR members, we all owe a debt of gratitude to the members that offer to serve through leadership and service on our Board and committees. They give untold hours of dedicated service for the benefit of us all.

*(continued on page 4)*





## News Notes

### GMO Labeling

The Campbell Soup Company says it will start labeling its products for the presence of biotech ingredients. While making it clear that they support the use of genetic engineering in agriculture and that national labeling standards are needed, this action is a major break from the rest of the conventional food industry. "Campbell is optimistic a federal solution can be established in a reasonable amount of time if all the interested stakeholders cooperate. However, if that is not the case, Campbell is prepared to label all of its U.S. products for the presence of ingredients that were derived from GMOs, not just those required by pending legislation in Vermont," the company said in a news release. Campbell noted that it already discloses its use of GMOs through a web site, [www.whatsinmyfood.com](http://www.whatsinmyfood.com).

"With 92 % of Americans supporting the labeling of GMO foods, Campbell believes now is the time for the federal government to act quickly to implement a federal solution." WHAT'S NEXT? With Campbell taking the plunge to label GMO containing foods, many believe that other food companies will follow suit. A national solution and definition of what labeling is required and accepted is still necessary. Many observers have maintained for some time that corporate decisions, primarily

designed around marketing efforts, will drive this issue faster than a government decree.

### Neonicotinoids

The EPA said this week that a neonicotinoid insecticide poses a risk to honey bees in an analysis that drew instant criticism from the industry. The EPA says that imidacloprid "potentially poses risk to hives" when used on crops that attract pollinators. Citrus and cotton, in particular, appear to present a risk to honey bee hives and other pollinators, the agency said. "Other crops such as corn and leafy vegetables either do not produce nectar or have residues below the EPA identified level" at which adverse effects were observed, the agency said. The assessment is the first of four the EPA will conduct on neonicotinoids. The public will now have an opportunity to comment for 60 days on the report. Bayer CropScience, a major manufacturer and registrant of imidacloprid said, "We will review the EPA document, but at first glance it appears to overestimate the potential for harmful exposures in certain crops, such as citrus and cotton, while ignoring the important benefits these products provide and management practices to protect bees. We hope the final risk assessment is based on the best available science, as well as a proper understanding of modern pest management practices."

(continued on page 4)

## Craig's View

### Hello MCPR Members,

I wanted to thank those of you who were able to attend the 2015 CPM Short Course and MCPR Trade Show in December. There was an overwhelming response to the programming and attendance this year reminding me that this show is not one to be missed! If you weren't able to attend I encourage you to pen the 2016 dates into your calendar right away, so you don't miss out, December 6-8, 2016 at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

As we embrace the middle of winter and look ahead to spring, I encourage you to take a few minutes to review the MCPR webpage and pay close attention to the weekly Enews emails. Each of these contain important information regarding the industry and updates and information on what we can expect in the regulatory arena in the months ahead. I would encourage you to become familiar with PSM and what complying with the OSHA and EPA regulations means to your facility. The MCPR works hard to stay ahead and involved in these and other issues that affect your business and to make sure we get it into your hands. ✂

Stay safe out there,

*Craig Maurer*

Craig Maurer  
MCPR Chairman



### MCPR Board

Craig Maurer Board Chair

Jeff Arnold  
Doug Becher  
Matt Benda  
Kyle Kraska  
Perry Estabo  
Dale Johnson  
Sean Ness  
T.J. Phillips  
Arnie Sinclair  
Bryan Strickler  
Rick Walker  
Tristan Wilmes

### Staff

Bill Bond Executive Director  
Jessica Brunelle Vice President





**Minnesota Crop Production Retailers**

15490 101st Ave. N., Ste. 100

Maple Grove, MN 55369

Phone: 763.235.6466

Fax: 763.235.6461

[www.mcpr-cca.org](http://www.mcpr-cca.org)

## News Notes

*(continued from page 3)*

### Neonic Lawsuit

The Center for Food Safety filed a lawsuit this week challenging the EPA, claiming inadequate regulation of neonicotinoid insecticides. "EPA's actions surrounding neonicotinoid seed coatings have led to intensifying and destructive consequences. These include acute honey bee kills, as well as chronic effects to numerous species, nationwide water and soil contamination, and other environmental and economic harms," said Peter Jenkins, attorney with Center for Food Safety. (EPA/Center for Food Safety) ✂



## Executive Director's Report

*(continued from page 2)*

Speaking of Board meetings, the Board adjourned the January Board meeting just a couple of hours ago as I write this column. As usual, they faced and made decisions about a number of issues critical to MCPR members' economic vitality. Ranging from legislative proposed laws such as the elimination of the agricultural chemical containment facilities property tax exemption and regulations such as the OHSA Process Safety Management (PSM) developments.

There you are MCPR members. MCPR leaders early in January 2016 rolling up their sleeves to get to work for you. Well done, MCPR leaders!

Oh, by the way, I just got a call from a reporter from Twin Cities TV station that is doing a story on the law suit against the EPA filed by environmental activist organizations and even a bee keeper from Minnesota alleging that EPA failed

to properly regulate neonicotinoids used as seed coatings on corn and other crops. Their goal? They are trying to eliminate neonicotinoids from your arsenal of products for your customers. I convinced her to do a "side bar" story on how precision ag is addressing nutrient use efficiency and issues such pollinators. We will see how that turns out in a couple of days. Never a dull moment in agribusiness associations. ✂

Until next time,

*Bill Bond*

Bill Bond

