



## CEO Report

by Doug Miller, CEO • dmiller@ilcrop.com

### Leadership

Every year has challenges and this year was no different. But without challenges there are rarely any rewards. I am extremely proud of the level of quality and service that our team delivers for the industry on a daily basis. Continual improvement, a basic tenet of modern quality management, relies on dedication, teamwork and a solid dose of individual leadership. Illinois Crop Improvement's team works together and fulfills leadership roles for the association and the industry as a whole.

2016-2017 presented us with an increase in acres inspected for Quality Assurance, Certification, phytosanitary and service work. The organization was successfully re-accredited under the National Seed Health System with an on-site audit. In addition to the NSHS audit, the certification handbook was updated and approved by the organization at the 2016 annual meeting. Updates were made after a full evaluation by the Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies and included corrections to certain standards and the removal of crops no longer certified in Illinois.

The Puerto Rico farm was off to another good start for customers in the Northern Hemisphere until the rains flooded plots and brought planting to a standstill for the month of November. But despite the early challenges with excess precipitation the Puerto Rico Winter Farm performed

admirably. Most services and projects were planted later than usual and as a result did not hit typical targets for some of our customers who read their own growouts and work their own nurseries. Our planting notification system and CPUs (Confidential Project Updates) kept everyone informed and assisted with travel plans during the 2016-2017 season. Both our Southern Hemisphere and Northern Hemisphere winter farm clients were provided with the data and seed they needed for the advancement of their programs. The financial condition of the farm was addressed this past year when it was decided to reduce the number of acres by 1/3. The 100 acres known as the Finca Potala (Potala property) that can be seen from Highway 1 will transition to a local crop. With projects totaling approximately 150 acres per season, the continuing changes in the seed industry and the local economy, a reduction in size was in order. Illinois Crop utilizes long term leases and when the need arises will seek more land to meet the needs of its customers. The farm started over 30 years ago with a quarter of an acre and has been sized to hit the needs of the industry ever since.

Laboratories began to hit their peak testing times after the 2016 harvest as grains and seed crops from across the country were submitted for quality checks. The Identity Preserved Grain Lab was again a provider of testing services to Centrec Consulting for the US Grains Council's corn harvest quality report. This information along

with a second report on exports is used to promote the quality of US corn in international markets. The Seed Laboratory continues to impress me with the number of customers and seed species it serves. As the lab continues to grow, investments in equipment are made and the possibilities of expansion are constantly under evaluation. The greenhouse program developed a new trait test this past year that will benefit our customers and the entire industry. Our investment in people, building capacity and expertise, is no minor matter for our organization. Recognitions continue to build including both the Registered Seed Technologist and Registered Genetic Technologist accreditations.

The support services of the tags and records department were also a big part of getting the work done by sending data, reports, tags, and certificates to our inspectors, customers and members. The department has a myriad of roles ranging from shipping seed to Puerto Rico to issuing OECD certificates. The department also supports the bookkeeping, insurance and various other financial and business obligations including this newsletter. In closing, I feel that Illinois Crop continues to lead and has served the membership and the broader industry over the past year. I would like to thank each and every person who contributes to the high level of service provided by Illinois Crop Improvement.

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# Seed Laboratory News

by Steve Beals, Seed Lab Director • [sbeals@ilcrop.com](mailto:sbeals@ilcrop.com)

## Dedication

Illinois Crop Improvement is proud to announce that as of January 27, 2017 it will be listed as an officially-recognized seed lab by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. I began working on this in April of 2016 at the Federal Seed Testing Lab in Gastonia, North Carolina where I tested in all of the categories that are available for Canadian accreditation. Illinois Crop is ISO 17025 but at the time I tested, ISO 17025 was not an approved Quality Management Program for the Approved US Canadian Grader. Later that year, the Canadian officials approved ISO 17025 as an equivalent program and we are now an Officially Recognized Seed Testing Laboratory for seed being sent into Canada.

I am currently a member of the Illinois Seed Trade Liaison Committee which consists of six members. There are three individuals from company laboratories, one individual from an independent lab, one individual from the Illinois State Seed Laboratory, and I am the representative from Illinois Crop Improvement. The committee typically puts together a fall workshop for seed analysts around the area, but is available for anyone to attend. This year our committee chair, Angie Croft, hosted the workshop on August 18, 2016 at GROWMARK Inc. in Bloomington, Illinois. The agenda included a presentation on seed treatments and their affects, a "hands on" exercise for germination rounding, a short preview of new traits that are in the works from Monsanto, and presentations of the seed tests that are performed along with a brief description. There was also a presentation on soybean

hilum colors and the different characteristics between the colors, followed by a hands on hilum color separation demonstration. The workshop concluded with evaluations of soybean and wheat germinations planted on rolled towel.

We congratulated Gary Cook for 40 years of dedicated service this year. Gary completed his education at Western Illinois University, Macomb, Illinois and joined Illinois Crop Improvement on December 1, 1976. He has held several different positions in the Seed Laboratory over the last forty years and is currently our Chief Analyst. Gary has also helped with field inspection duties and seed sampling for more than 20 years earlier in his career. Thank you Gary for your continued service here at Illinois Crop.

Also in December, the Seed Laboratory had two employees that attended a two day Illinois Pesticide training and testing session for General Standards and Seed Treatment Applicator. At this training, Jeff Morse and Dawn Gerling attained their Seed Treatment Applicator license. The Seed Laboratory now has four employees that have their Seed Treatment Applicator License.

Brittany Stoll and I attended and exhibited at the ASTA Vegetable and Flower Seed Convention held in Orlando, Florida late January. We were able to gain several new customers from this conference and were also able to meet with current customers in attendance to make sure that we were providing good service and timely results. While at the Conference, Brittany and I attended

the Home Garden Seed Association Annual Meeting and Reception to help make our presence more known in the Vegetable and Flower Seed Industry.

Between our busy testing schedule and conference attendance, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to make several customer visits throughout the year allowing me to see their facilities and get a better understanding of their operations. This understanding will help us provide better seed testing services to them and all our customers.

As a result of those visits, we purchased additional boxes for small seed germinations to make sure we were able to handle the increase in testing volume and also purchased a used Hoffman Manufacturing single station vacuum planter to help us be more efficient when planting germinations.

In closing, I would like to welcome Carma Deck as a full time Seed Lab employee. Carma had worked part time in the seed lab for the past 6½ years before being hired on full time in February. We look forward to expanding her knowledge into other functions of the lab.





## Service

The Field Services department provides two main services for the agricultural community; field inspections and trait testing. Field inspections are either an assessment to verify the purity of the seed field via phenotypical characteristics or a phytosanitary inspection confirming pathogens that are present in the field to meet international requirements. Trait testing is performed in the lab and greenhouse located at Illinois Crop's main location in Champaign. The testing covers a wide range of methods and is used to assess the purity of seed lots or GMO levels in conventional products.

In the 2016 growing season, Illinois Crop employed over 40 inspectors, to walk the more than 107,400 acres of seed fields in Illinois that required some type of inspection. Due to the productive soils and favorable environment, inspections cover the majority of Illinois. This year inspections were done in over 70 of the 102 counties ranging from McHenry County in the North, Pulaski County in the South, Adams County in the West and Vermillion County in the East.

In addition to traditional inspections, Illinois Crop also conducts Insect Resistance Management (IRM) Assessments through AOSCA. Approximately 58 IRM assessments were done in Illinois for a major corn trait provider in 2016. Field inspections and IRM assessments are both conducted during the same time of the crop growing season. IRM assessments involve setting up appointments and meeting with growers to record the grower's farm management practices of refuge acres involving insect resistant corn. The data is collected from the grower,

recorded electronically, then submitted online for the trait provider to review. This was the 11th year in a row that Illinois Crop has cooperated with AOSCA on the IRM project. Due to the longevity of the project, all of Illinois Crop's assessors were returning veteran staff which contributed to finishing the assessments ahead of schedule. As integrated refuge products become the standard industrywide, the need for IRM assessments will decline.

This last year saw the retirement of Ron Crosby at the end of the 2016 field season. Ron was one of Illinois Crop's more experienced inspectors starting in 1985 and continuing for 31 years straight. He was our sunflower inspector and also did corn and soybeans. Ron will be greatly missed and we wish him well during his retirement.

Once the growing season ends, trait testing becomes the predominate service offered. Illinois Crop is fortunate to have a greenhouse to utilize for our trait testing program. This enables us to offer multiple types of trait tests and the flexibility to conduct specialized testing that we otherwise could not perform. The dominate test conducted in the greenhouse is trait confirmation tests for herbicide tolerance. As new traits are being released Illinois Crop works on developing new testing methods to meet future testing requirements. Dicamba tolerant trait testing was added to our services offered in 2016 with the introduction of Dicamba tolerant soybeans into the commercial market. Our trait testing approvals are current and as new opportunities arise from trait providers we seek to add more services. One of our specialized

tests is a grow-out for the identification of the weed Palmer Amaranth. Identifying Palmer Amaranth from other Amaranthus species by seed characteristics is extremely difficult and unreliable. In the greenhouse we can grow out unknown amaranth seeds to produce a plant tissue sample for DNA testing to confirm if it is Palmer or not.

I have been a Certified Genetic Technologist since 2009, but underwent the process to move to the higher Registered Genetic Technologist (RGT) membership status in late 2016. In order to become a RGT I had to pass a written exam and a hands-on exam in electrophoresis seed purity testing. The AgReliant Genetics QA Lab was kind enough to assist me with the completion of the hands on portion of the exam. I successfully passed all exams and became a RGT member in SCST in early 2017. I also serve on the Board of Examiners (BOE) as a technical expert in herbicide bioassay. I review candidates for application into the society, administer the herbicide bioassay tests, and assist in grading exams.





## Unique

The Identity Preserved Grain Lab had another busy year working with merchandisers, breeders and industry stakeholders assessing the composition and processing characteristics of a wide range of oilseeds and grains. The lab is unique among seed certification agencies and carries the concept of identity and quality from seed through the farm to the end user. The big picture, ranging from grain sales to national quality reports, relies on the details generated by the Identity Preserved Grain Lab. As you may expect the work in the lab is seasonal and as such a second pycnometer, used to measure density, was purchased to help alleviate a bottleneck that can occur in the battery of tests performed for the corn quality projects. A new oven was also purchased for the lab updating an older model that could not be repaired due to lack of parts for the controller. The oven is primarily used for moisture tests where samples are weighed before and after moisture has been removed by applying heat.

As in previous years the Identity Preserved Grain Lab provided testing services for the US Grains Council's Harvest Quality Report managed by Centrec Consulting. The corn samples were received from the grain elevators across the corn belt. The samples were dried, if needed, to prevent deterioration. The samples were then split using a Boerner divider. The subsamples were analyzed in our grain lab for chemical and physical attributes and at the Champaign-Danville Grain Inspection (CDGI) for grade factors. CDGI is the official grain inspection service provider for east-central Illinois as designated by USDA's

Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS). Corn Grading Factors at CDGI included Test Weight, Broken Corn and Foreign Material (BCFM), Total Damage/Heat Damage.

Our lab handled the chemical composition and other physical factors. The chemical composition (protein, oil and starch concentration) was measured using Near-infrared transmission spectroscopy (NIRT). Results were reported on a dry basis percentage (percent of non-water material). Physical Factors included the 100-Kernel Weight, Kernel Volume and Kernel True Density. Stress cracks were also evaluated by using a backlit viewing board to accentuate the cracks. Corn kernels were rated for horneous endosperm. Soft endosperm is opaque and will block light, while horneous endosperm is translucent. The rating is made from standard guidelines based on the degree to which the soft endosperm at the crown of the kernel extends down toward the germ.

The factors that are measured and published in the US Grains Council's Harvest Quality Report naturally vary with the environment and genetics of corn at the hybrid to species level. It is important to keep in mind the classic Genotype X Environment interactions that corn breeders focus on to improve corn as a species while at the same time trying to understand how to analyze the quality of US corn production as a whole. We must strive to meet and exceed the expectations of our customers here and around the world by understanding the crop at all levels.

The objective of the US Grains Council's Harvest Quality Report assessment of mycotoxins is only to

report the frequency of occurrences of the mycotoxin in the current crop at harvest. The fungi producing the mycotoxins do not grow uniformly in a field or across a geographic area and can be impacted by storage conditions. As a result, the detection of any mycotoxin in corn, if present, is highly dependent upon the concentration and distribution of the mycotoxin among kernels in a lot of corn, whether a truck load, a storage bin or a rail car. The FGIS sampling process used by the industry for export shipments is designed to minimize underestimating or overestimating the true mycotoxin concentration, since accurate results are imperative for end users. For the report, the Identity Preserved Grain Lab performed the mycotoxin testing using FGIS protocol and approved test kits on samples received from elevators.

### ICIA Calendar of Events

#### July 17-19

AASCO Annual Meeting  
Charlotte, NC

#### August 17

University of Illinois Agronomy Day  
Urbana, IL

#### August 22

Illinois Wheat Association Forum  
Okawville, IL

#### August 29

ISTA Fall Workshop  
Lafayette, Indiana

#### September 4

CLOSED - Labor Day

#### September 11-15

World Soybean Research Conference  
Savannah, GA



## Improvements

This year, the Illinois Crop Improvement winter farm planted corn, dry beans, peanuts, sorghum, soybeans, sunflowers, popcorn, peanuts, wheat and barley. A small oat trial was also planted but it only produced a few seeds and the client decided not to harvest it.

We received good feedback from our customers this year. Our returning customers were pleased with their nurseries and two new clients working with corn and sorghum will be back with bigger nurseries next year. One negative feedback that I received was from our international customers stating that seed shipments were taking too long to process. We have since taken measures to improve our part of the shipping process.

Nets that were purchased last summer to protect sorghum increase fields from bird feeding did a fantastic job. This summer we will be using the nets again and using them on soybean plantings at the germination stage to avoid damage on cotyledons due to dove feeding. Another type of net was ordered this summer to be used as a screen house for sunflowers. The goal is be able to perform sunflower increases without using distance isolation for hybrid sunflower seed using honey bees as pollinators. This net can also be used on sorghum fields and soybean fields to protect fields from birds.

Last April we bought a used ear corn sheller that was in good condition. We were able to use it on one of our corn nurseries to shell ears in bulk. With this purchase, we are now able

to offer our customer more corn shelling options like single ear, bulk row and increase plots. We received a request to thresh a sorguhn nursery by single head and we were able to do that by using our belt threshers. Our client was very pleased with the amount of seed and cleanliness of the samples. Other crops that we can now offer different threshing options on are dry beans, soybeans and sunflowers.

The replacement of granular insecticide applicators with new units resulted in better placement of the product and a reduction in the loss of product. We are still looking for a forklift and have a rotary tiller on our wish list. With the weather challenges (drought or rainy periods) over the last few years, conditions for land preparation have not been ideal. A rotary tiller would help to get a good seed bed when weather conditions are not ideal.

Currently the entire island is under normal weather conditions with predictions for the upcoming hurricane season, beginning June 1st, to be a bit more active compared to the 2016 season.

PRABIA (Puerto Rico Agricultural Biotechnology Industry Association) and IRAC-US (Insecticide Resistance Action Committee) are working on a proposal for the development and implementation of an area wide insect resistance management strategy for fall armyworm and soybean looper in Puerto Rico. The main objective is to preserve efficacy of available Fall armyworm and soybean looper

insecticides. It should be ready for implementation by summer of 2018.

The financial condition of the farm was addressed this past year when it was decided to reduce the number of acres by 1/3. The 100 acres known as the Finca Potala (Potala property) that can be seen from Highway 1 will transition to a local crop. With projects totaling approximately 150 acres per season and the continuing changes in the seed industry, and the local economy, a reduction in size was in order. Illinois Crop utilizes long term leases and when the need arises will seek more land to meet the needs of its customers. The farm started over 30 years ago with a quarter of an acre and has been sized to meet the needs of the industry ever since.





## Support

A quick internet search of the ‘top seed company news articles from the past 12 months’ will confirm that proposed mergers and acquisitions in the seed, chemical, fertilizer, and equipment industries have been at the forefront of our newsfeeds over the past year. While it may be several years before we know the full effects of these proposed consolidations, the planning and strategy for a change has already begun. The new businesses formed would alter the face of the seed industry yet again, but with those changes may come new opportunities. Large companies will likely be required to divest certain assets in order to complete these deals. This would provide immediate access to products and technology for companies who may not have had the resources to develop similar products themselves.

And regardless of how these mergers play out, technology and innovation in our industry must continue to thrive in order to overcome ever-changing challenges in environment, labor, regulations, politics, and consumer acceptance in agriculture. This is where the Illinois Seed Trade Association has and will continue to support the industry. ISTA provides a unified voice on legislative, regulatory, technology, communication, and education issues that affect Illinois Seed Companies. Below is a list of some recent actions taken by ISTA:

- Introduced and passed Cool Season Grass legislation allowing 5 months on the label
- Signed a support letter for Senator Robert’s GMO Labeling Bill
- Signed a support letter to 6 Representatives on the HR 1599 House GMO Labeling Bill
- Signed a support letter to the Foreign Relations Committee urging hearings on TPP ratification
- Signed a support letter to retain the Peoria Agricultural Lab
- Signed a support letter for Jon Scholl as Head of the White House Council on Environmental Quality
- Signed in support of the ASTA Immigration Reform Letter
- Signed a comments letter concerning proposed revisions to the USDA Ag Biotech Regulations

ISTA also remains active in many state and national committees to ensure that our members are being represented in all pertinent legislative activities and discussions. ISTA has recently participated in the following meetings and committees:

- Served on the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) Board of Directors from 2009-2011
- 1st State and Regional Seed Representative on the ASTA Board
- Chair of the State Affairs Working Group
- Member of the Legislative and Legal Concerns Committee
- Member of the Seed Conditioning Workshop Planning Committee
- Member of the Illinois Farm Bureau Round Table
- Member of Senator Kirk’s Agricultural Advisory Committee
- Member of the Illinois Farm Bureau Agribusiness Round Table

- Co-Sponsor of the Legislative Breakfast with IFCA and Grain & Feed

At our 84th Annual Meeting held on June 29th, we were able to reflect on many of these successful actions, but must always look ahead to new challenges on the horizon. We are currently watching several bills in Springfield, including the “Saving IL Pollinators Act”, the “Industrial Hemp Act”, the “Genetically Engineered Food Act”, and “Designating Corn as the State Grain”. Our lobbyist, Mike McCreery, Executive Director Richard Denhart, and Board members will continue to keep a watchful eye on these and other activity that affects our industry.

In order to sustain these efforts in Springfield, we need continued support from the industry, both financial and through involvement. We are always looking for new members to support our mission, and greatly appreciate legislative contributions that any of our members are able to provide.

We also made an effort to increase participation in our Annual Golf Outing that supports our Burlison Fellow Award. We held our outing at Stone Creek Golf Course in Urbana, IL for the first time on June 28th. The event was a success! We had over double the number of participants in recent years. It was a great day of golf on a beautiful course and an excellent opportunity to enjoy fellowship with other seed industry members. We hope that you will consider joining us next year as we look forward to doubling participation once again!

Our Annual Meeting was filled with excellent information and presentations from Doug Miller, CEO, Illinois Crop Improvement; Chuck Cawley, Division

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# Illinois Seed Trade Assn News Continued...

Manager, Illinois Department of Ag.; Mike McCreery, ISTA Lobbyist; Dr. Germán Bollero, Department Head, University of Illinois Crop Sciences; and David Pearl, Central VP, ASTA. The meeting also signaled the end of my term as ISTA President. I have enjoyed my time working with the Illinois Seed Trade Association Board to support an industry that I feel is very important to our state, country, and the world. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to



serve in the role. As we welcome in Pat Foley of Syngenta SeedCare as the new ISTA President, and Josh Wilken of ProHarvest Seeds as a new Director on the Board, I look forward to continuing support of the Illinois Seed Trade Association and the seed industry for years to come.

**Pictured Left**  
**Incoming President Pat Foley (L)**  
**Presents Aaron Collins (R) with**  
**ISTA President Plaque**

## ISTA Would Like to Recognize and Thank the Following

### ISTA Membership

Abbott & Cobb	Hughes Seed Farms
AgReliant Genetics	Illinois Crop Improvement Assn.
AgVenture	Illinois Foundation Seeds
Amvac Chemical Corporation	Independent Professional Seed Assn.
Baird Seed Company	Kelly Seed & Hardware Company
Bayer CropScience	Kitchen Seed Company
Beck's Hybrids	Lebanon Seaboard Corporation
Behm & Hagemann	Lewis Seed Farms
Bratney Companies	MayerSeedLine
Brown Seed Enterprises	MBS Genetics
Burrus Brothers & Associated Growers	Michael McCreery
Central Bag Company	Merritt Hall Insurance Agency
Central Illinois Production	MIDCO Global
Champaign County Seed Co.	Monier Seed & Service
Chebanse Ag Service	Monsanto Company
(The) Cisco Companies	Munson Hybrids
Crop Production Service	MWS Seeds
Cultura Seed Solutions	O'Mara Ag Services
Dow AgroSciences	Peterson Genetics
DuPont Pioneer	Premium Seed
El Dorado Packaging	Professional Seed Research
Freeman Seed Company	Remington Seeds
Gayland Ward Seed Company	Rovey Seed Company
Gentech Seed Services	Seed Today
Gordon Farms Seed Company	Steyer Seed
Great Heart Seed	Syngenta Seedcare
GROWMARK	Tech Services
Hamel Seed & Farm Supply	W.A. Rice Seed Company
Hoffman Seed House	Wehmeyer Seed Company
Hubner Industries	Whisnand Hybrids
	Wyffels Hybrids

### Legislative Contributions

AgReliant Genetics	Illinois Foundation Seeds
Burrus Brothers & Associated Growers	Kitchen Seed Company
Central Illinois Production	Lewis Seed Farms
Champaign County Seed Company	Merritt Hall Ins. Agency
Freeman Seed Company	Monier Seed & Service
GROWMARK	MWS Seeds
Hoffman Seed House	Remington Seeds
Hubner Industries	W.A. Rice Seed Company
Hughes Seed Farms	Wyffels Hybrids

### Golf Outing - Burlison Fellow Award

Amvac Chemical Corporation	Illinois Standard Parts
Central Illinois Production	Illinois Foundation Seeds
(The) Cisco Companies	Kitchen Seed Company
Cultura Seed Solutions	Litchfield Farms
Dairy King Mgmt of IL	MBS Genetics
Dale Cochran	MIDCO Global
Dean's Graphics	Michael McCreery
Dow AgroSciences	Monsanto Company
El Dorado Packaging	Peterson Genetics
Frerichs & Stillwell Insurance	Remington Seeds
Gentech Seed Services	Summit Seed Coatings
GROWMARK	Sun Prairie Seeds
Hubner Industries	Syngenta Seedcare
IL Fertilizer & Chemical Company	Van Horn

**Contact Richard Denhart at [rdenhart\\_ista@ilcrop.com](mailto:rdenhart_ista@ilcrop.com) to hear how you can support the Illinois Seed Trade Association**



**Illinois Crop Improvement Association, Inc.**

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**Illinois Crop Improvement Association, Inc.**





# Illinois Crop & ISTA Annual Meeting Highlights

## Illinois Crop Honorary Member Recipient

**D**on Bergfield was chosen as this year's recipient of the Illinois Crop Improvement Association's Honorary Member Award. Don was raised on a farm near Arcola, Illinois and attended Parkland College after High School. He graduated from Parkland College in '79 with an Associate's degree and later the University of Illinois with both a Bachelor's degree in '81 and a Masters degree in '85 in Agriculture Education. Don began his professional career at Paris High School as an AgTeacher, then served as an Agriculture Adviser in Edgar County Extension for 4 years and McLean County for 3 years. He managed the Bellflower, IL FS plant for 8 years before becoming an Agriculture Instructor at Parkland College. Don recently retired from Parkland after 17 years of service and is currently living in Costa Rica with his wife Ana Polanco.

As a student at Parkland, Don attended a tour of the Illinois Crop Improvement Association's facilities in Urbana as a part of Crop Science class

(Kyle Wittler, Instructor). Over the years as he worked in Extension and FS, Illinois Crop was a resource used with farmers he served. At Parkland, Don incorporated a tour of Illinois Crop as a lab each semester. Illinois Crop served as an excellent reference point for students to understand core themes of basic agriculture from its beginnings as a non-bias, third party entity to certify/verify seed to its research into crop use for foodstuffs. Students could tour/touch/see/smell/hear the diverse agriculture at Illinois Crop. The tours enhanced the classroom lectures as Don could draw from what the students experienced at Illinois Crop as examples. Gary and Steve were always willing to provide germination test plants to be used in the germination lab at Parkland. The hands-on of having a newly germinated corn plant and soybean plant helped students get a 'feel' for what germination is and how crucial the functions.

It also provided an opportunity to discuss jobs that are available

in agriculture and more than once provided jobs to students with limited ag backgrounds. One of the best parts of the Agriculture Program at Parkland was its ability to prepare students for jobs. Illinois Crop hired their fair share of Parkland students for internships and beyond.



**Doug Miller (L) Presents Don Bergfield With the Honorary Member Award**

*Personal Note; It has been a great honor to work with friends at Illinois Crop through the years and a great benefit to the Parkland Ag Program. Thanks!*



## 2017-2018 Illinois Crop Improvement Association Board of Directors

**Left to Right: John Widick, Director; Nels Kasey, Director; Dale Wehmeyer, Treasurer; Mike Vanausdoll, President; Randy Wilken, Secretary; Ken Martin, Director; Doug Baird, Vice President; Phil Jordan, Director; and Doug Miller, CEO**  
**Absent: T.J. Hale, Director and Larry Lewis, Director**



# Illinois Crop & ISTA Annual Meeting Highlights

## ISTA Honorary Member Recipient

It is tradition that the Illinois Seed Trade outgoing President can select an Honorary Member. This year Aaron Collins selected Ron White, Precision Soya retiree, based on his professional and personal contributions to both Aaron and the industry.

Ron grew up in the seed industry working for his father, John White manager/partner in the Champaign County Seed Company, St. Joseph, IL. Upon graduation from the University of Illinois in 1976 with a B.S. in Agricultural Science and Marketing, he worked for Dekalb Ag Research in Illiopolis, IL, Grinnell, IA, and Monmouth, IL as plant management. He left the seed industry after 10 years to work in popcorn for 2 years for Vogel, Popcorn in Hamburg, IA. Returned to seed with Garst Seed Company in Muncie, IL for 9 more years. His final tenure was spent as managing partner with Precision Soya from 1989 to 2016 when the company was purchased by Dow Agro Sciences

and Remington Seeds. He has retired into farming around Mahomet and tends to twin grandsons from his oldest son Mike and daughter in law Jana in Peoria, IL. He utilizes his youngest son Andrew's dental skills at his practice in Champaign. He and his wife Margaret are looking forward to Andrew's wedding to Alyssa Shroyer this October then more grandkids, travel, and fishing.



Aaron Collins (L) Presents Ron White With the Honorary Member Award

## ISTA Burlison Fellow Award Winner

Congratulations goes to Alison Vogel, this years Burlison Fellow award recipient. Alison is a Research Assistant in the Department of Crop Sciences, at the University of Illinois. Alison is from Broadlands, IL at the southeast edge of Champaign County. She received her bachelor's degree in Crop and Soil Science from Illinois State University in 2013. She then received her Master's in 2015 from the University of Illinois in the Crop Physiology Laboratory working with Dr. Frederick Below and Dr. Laura Gentry with an emphasis on the value of crop rotation and agronomic management in the Midwest. Currently, she is pursuing her PhD focusing on crop residue management with varying methods to improve residue degradation rates and nutrient release. As plant density increases, row arrangements narrow, and yield levels advance, residue management will ensure maximized yield potential.

## Gevan Behnke -Alvin L Lang Scholarship Winner

Gevan works full time at the University of Illinois as a senior research specialist in Dr. Maria Villamil's sustainable cropping systems lab and is also a student working towards a PhD in Crop Sciences. His PhD dissertation title is "Understanding greenhouse gas emissions from Illinois agriculture systems" with a projected graduation date of May 2018. He obtained a masters from the natural resources and environmental sciences department in 2011 where he studied the effects of fertilization on Miscanthus x giganteus. Gevan is from Springfield, IL and attended Springfield HS. After

finishing his PhD, Gevan plans on continuing in academia as a professor or pursuing a career in industry. He enjoys fishing, golf and basketball in his spare time.



Left: Aaron Collins (L) with Gevan Behnke, Lang Scholarship Recipient  
Above: Richard Denhart with Burlison Fellow Recipient, Alison Vogel