



## NAFA - Year in Review

# National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance 2014-2015 Annual Report

### Congressman Peterson Earns NAFA's Outstanding Service Award

For his efforts in securing language in the 2008 Farm Bill which authorized the Alfalfa Seed and Forage Systems Research Program (AFRP), and for maintaining that language again in the 2014 Farm Bill, Congressman Collin Peterson (D-MN), ranking member of the House Agriculture Committee, was awarded NAFA's Outstanding Service Award which recognizes and rewards significant contributions to the industry.

The AFRP had two successful components, the authorizing language and the subsequent funding. The insertion of the AFRP authorizing language in the 2008 Farm Bill, and maintaining that language in the 2014 Farm Bill, was the foundation upon which NAFA built its efforts to work with lawmakers to fund the program in both FY'14 and '15. Without the support and dedication of Congressman Collin Peterson and his staff in this effort, the AFRP would not exist today.

Congressman Peterson was presented with the award during his visit as the featured guest at NAFA's D.C. Fly-In at which he discussed the implementation of the 2014 Farm Bill and continued commitment to the nation's alfalfa producers.



Congressman Collin Peterson



NAFA Director and Michigan alfalfa producer Mike Lauwers with Michigan Congressman John Moolenaar.

### NAFA Holds 5th Annual D.C. Fly-In

NAFA members traveled to Washington, D.C., in late February to participate in NAFA's 5th Annual D.C. Fly-In, meeting with lawmakers to stress the need for funding for the Alfalfa Seed and Forage Systems Research Program (AFRP) and the importance of developing an alfalfa crop insurance program which protects producers from losses in quality and revenue.

NAFA met with members and staff of House and Senate Ag Committees, House and Senate Ag Appropriations Committees; EPA; USDA's Risk Management Agency; National Institute for Food and Agriculture; and Agricultural Research Service.

In total, NAFA representatives attended more than 100 meetings scheduled over the course of the 4-day event to promote NAFA objectives, educate Congressional members on the issues important to the alfalfa industry, and continue to build awareness and recognition of the nation's 3rd most value crop. The absence of a legitimate safety net, research funding for the AFRP, and ARS research were the primary points of focus for NAFA members.

In meetings with staff of House and Senate Ag Committee members, the focus was on the lack of an adequate safety net for alfalfa producers and why it is so important for USDA's Risk Management Agency to continue with its effort to develop an adequate crop insurance program which protects producers from losses in quality and/or revenue, not just yield.

Since alfalfa is not considered a program crop, its producers do not have access to the new Farm Bill programs (Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage) – a situation which holds the potential to shift acres away from alfalfa due to inadequate risk management options. In order to ensure continued progress in the formation of a new crop insurance product which offers real protection for alfalfa producers, NAFA believes it is critical to maintain communication with lawmakers as the process moves forward.

NAFA members also met with staff of both the House and Senate Ag Appropriations Committees addressing the need for continued funding for the AFRP, as well as for parity with other major crops through public research conducted by both Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and land grant universities through National Institute of Food & Agriculture (NIFA). The AFRP received \$1.35 million in funding in each of the two past fiscal years.

In addition to Congressional meetings, NAFA met with: 1) EPA to maintain communication about crop protection tools for the alfalfa seed industry; 2) USDA's Risk Management Agency to discuss the progress in the development of a new crop insurance product for alfalfa producers which would protect against losses in quality and/or revenue; and 3) USDA's Agricultural Research Service to discuss the need to enhance its commitment to alfalfa and forages.

"This is the 5th consecutive year NAFA has held its D.C. Fly-In and its clear we're making headway," said NAFA President Beth Nelson. "While we still have issues to address, there is no question that our efforts in bringing much-needed attention to the importance and significance of alfalfa in the cropping system are paying off."

### NAFA Summer Board Meeting Held in Indianapolis, IN

The National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance board of directors met in Indianapolis, IN. In conjunction with the June 30-July 1 meeting, board members were also treated to a guided tour of the facilities of Dow AgroSciences, parent company of NAFA member Alforex Seeds.

Special guest Rod Snyder, President of Field to Market: The Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture, joined the NAFA board to discuss the continued implementation of adding alfalfa to the Fieldprint Calculator. The Fieldprint Calculator is a confidential tool developed to allow producers to better understand and communicate how management choices affect overall sustainability performance and operational efficiency.

NAFA sponsor Alforex Seeds generously offered the use of its facilities and served as host for NAFA's 2015 summer board meeting.

## NAFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Chair

**Ron Cornish** - Class 2  
Alforex Seed

### 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair

**Leland Tiegs** - Class 1  
ID Alfalfa & Clover Seed Comm

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair

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WA State Hay Growers Assoc

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**Barb Kinnan** - Class 3  
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**Mike Lauwers** - Class 3  
MI Forage Council

**Robin Newell** - Class 2  
S&W Seed Co

**Gary Nowaczyk** - Class 4  
CROPLAN

**Mark Pavcik** - Class 5  
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**Chris Pratt** - Class 3  
ID Hay and Forage Assoc

**Chad Staudinger** - Class 3  
Midwest Forage Assoc

**Tod Stutzman** - Class 1  
WY Alfalfa Seed Council

**Bill Talley** - Class 5  
Summit Seed Coatings

**Mark Wagoner** - Class 1  
WA Alfalfa Seed Comm

**Dan Wiersma** - Class 4  
DuPont Pioneer

**Mark Boggess** - Ex Officio  
U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center

**Dan Putnam** - Ex Officio  
University of California

**Ray Smith** - Ex Officio  
University of Kentucky

**Dan Undersander** - Ex Officio  
University of Wisconsin

**Doug Walsh** - Ex Officio  
Washington State University

## MISSION STATEMENT

*To ensure the ability of all segments of the alfalfa and forage industry to compete effectively while maintaining access to global markets and meeting the requirements of those markets. The objective of NAFA is to be a forum for consensus building among the various stakeholders and to be an effective advocate on behalf of the alfalfa and forage industry.*

## EDUCATION

### 2015 Variety Leaflet

NAFA's 2015 "Alfalfa Variety Ratings Winter Survival, Fall Dormancy & Pest Resistance Ratings for Alfalfa Varieties" was published in the November issue of Hay & Forage Grower magazine. Referred to as the Variety Leaflet, it gives marketers the opportunity to list alfalfa varieties approved by the National Alfalfa Variety Review Board. The leaflet is a valuable resource for producers looking for information on the varieties which may perform well in their region. The 2015 leaflet contained information on 193 alfalfa varieties from 22 companies. The leaflet is available for purchase or download on the NAFA website at [www.alfalfa.org](http://www.alfalfa.org).

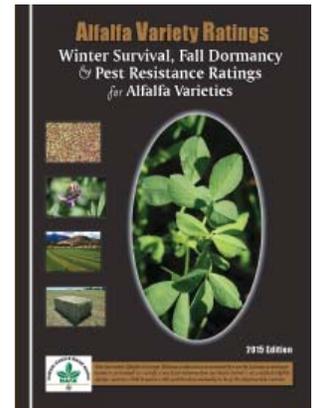
### NAFA Debuts Searchable Online Alfalfa Variety Ratings Database

In conjunction with the release of its 2015 Alfalfa Variety Ratings publication, NAFA debuted its new searchable online Alfalfa Variety Ratings Database, a handy new tool to make the tedious process of narrowing alfalfa varietal choices even easier.

NAFA's new searchable database allows producers to search for varieties using up to 23 different parameters including variety name, marketer, fall dormancy, winter survival, and disease resistance just to name a few. Through this new tool, NAFA has made finding the perfect variety as effortless as possible. To use the new Alfalfa Variety Ratings Database go to <http://alfalfa.org/varietyratings.php>.

### NAFA's 2014 Alfalfa Intensive Training Seminar (AITS) – Minneapolis, MN

One of the most successful programs available for training producers and industry representatives about alfalfa growth and management was held in Minneapolis, MN, November 18-20, 2014. Sponsored by NAFA, the Alfalfa Intensive Training Seminar (AITS) featured the latest information with regard to genetics, varieties, seed production, growth and development, soils, fertility, management, and a host of other topics intended to give participants the knowledge they need to make the most of their alfalfa investment. The 2014 seminar featured nationally recognized speakers: Dr. Garry Lacefield, University of Kentucky; Dr. Dan Undersander, University of Wisconsin; Dr. Randy Shaver, University of Wisconsin; Dr. Marvin Hall, Penn State University; and Dr. Neal Martin, former director of the U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center, Madison, Wisconsin.



## POLICY INITIATIVES

### CROP INSURANCE

#### NAFA Organizes Alfalfa Crop Insurance Listening Sessions

As the first step in the process following the selection by USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) of Agralytica as the contractor charged with the responsibility of beginning work on an improved and/or new crop insurance product for the forage industry, NAFA helped organize a series of listening sessions to gather input from producers across the country. These listening sessions offered producers the opportunity to provide meaningful and constructive input needed to ensure the development of a new alfalfa crop insurance product that offers the same degree of coverage available for other major crops. A total of four listening sessions were held in strategic parts of the country with the intent of gathering input from producers who grow alfalfa in different environments with diverse agronomic practices. Listening sessions were held in: 1) Kiel, WI; 2) Woodland, CA; 3) Larned, KS; and 4) Elizabethtown, KY.

### CROP PROTECTION TOOLS

#### EPA

NAFA continues to foster its relationship with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officials. NAFA, in an effort to enhance its oversight efforts, established two internal committees, hay and seed, to monitor product re-registration and phase-out activities at EPA. Both seed producers and forage producers are encouraged to contact NAFA with a list of crop protection tools important to their operation; NAFA will add those products to its list of products to be monitored and supported.

### BIOTECHNOLOGY

#### NAFA Adds to List of Grower Opportunity Zones

During the 2014-'15 fiscal year, NAFA continued to add to its list of approved Grower Opportunity Zones (GOZ). NAFA received and approved requests by alfalfa seed growers to designate Phillips and Blaine Counties in Montana as an Adventitious Presence Sensitive (APS) GOZ; and to designate part of Big Horn

County in Wyoming; parts of Ada and Owyhee Counties in Idaho; and parts of Umatilla and Morrow Counties in Oregon as Genetically Enhanced (GE) GOZs.

Since the start of NAFA's Grower Opportunity Zone program, NAFA has approved the formation of 22 GOZs, 19 Genetically Enhanced (GE) GOZs, and three Adventitious Presence Sensitive (APS) GOZs. Visit NAFA's GOZ webpage for a complete list of GOZs and their corresponding maps.

### NAFA Joins Coalition for Safe Affordable Food

During its annual summer board meeting, the National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance voted to join the Coalition for Safe Affordable Food to support the continued safe and effective use of agricultural biotechnology to increase the food supply.

The Coalition for Safe Affordable Food is an organization dedicated to providing policy makers, media, consumers, and stakeholders with facts about products grown through GM technology. It is also an advocate for common sense policy solutions that will further enhance the safety of GM crops and protect the vital role they play in today's modern global food supply chain.

The coalition is comprised of American farmers and representatives from a diverse group of industry and non-governmental organizations. The Coalition was created to promote federal legislation which establishes standards for the voluntary labeling of food and beverage products made with biotech or non-biotech ingredients. It would also require U.S. Food and Drug Administration consultations on the safety of all biotech traits. Finally, it would preempt any state-based biotech labeling laws in order to prevent a patchwork of inconsistent state laws that would be confusing and unworkable.

## RESEARCH

### Eight Alfalfa Projects Receive Innagural AFRP Funding

After years of effort on the part of NAFA to convince lawmakers of the critical need for research funding for the alfalfa industry, it has finally come to fruition with eight alfalfa research projects receiving funding through the Alfalfa and Forage Research Program (AFRP).

Efforts to procure research funding began with the 2008 Farm Bill in which NAFA was successful in securing language authorizing the AFRP. NAFA worked to maintain the AFRP language in the 2014 Farm Bill to ensure continued authorizing language for the research program. In 2014, thanks to the dedicated efforts of Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS) and others, \$1.35 million was appropriated for the AFRP. NAFA's persistence paid off again in 2015, when AFRP was appropriated another \$1.35 million in research funding.

The request for 2014 applications was distributed in early June and while the timeframe for the request for applications was shorter than desirable, there were still 23 proposals submitted requesting a total of \$3,773,606. The review committee then had the difficult task of determining which projects would be the first ever to receive AFRP funding.

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) announced the following eight award recipients in October:

2014 AFRP Project Title	Principal Investigator	Award
The Effect of Hay Rake Type on Ash Content of Alfalfa Hay	Dan Undersander, Univ. of Wisconsin	\$155,884
Developing an Alfalfa Hay Export Market in the Humid Eastern United States	Chris Teutsch, Virginia Tech	\$156,140
Root Traits to Enhance Nutrient and Water Use in Alfalfa	Deborah Samac, USDA-ARS	\$156,230
Subsurface Drip Irrigation, Deficit Irrigation Strategies, and Improved Varieties to Improve Alfalfa Water Use Efficiency Under Drought Conditions	Dan Putnam, Univ. of California	\$156,254
Using a New In Vitro Method and Fiber Model (TTNDFD) to Improve Estimates of Digestibility of Alfalfa for Dairy Cattle	Dave Combs, Univ. of Wisconsin	\$156,280
Nutritive Value and Forage Accumulation of Alfalfa and Alfalfa-Mixtures as Influenced by Forage Management	Renata La Guardia Nave, Univ. of Tennessee	\$156,287
Yield Improvement and Fall Dormancy Characterization in Alfalfa	Charlie Brummer, Univ. of California	\$156,287
Implementing Lygus Management Strategies in Alfalfa Seed Production	Doug Walsh, Washington State Univ.	\$156,675

## 2014-2015 MEMBERS/SPONSORS

### DIAMOND

Alforex Seeds  
DuPont Pioneer  
Forage Genetics International  
Monsanto  
S & W Seed Co.

### PLATINUM

America's Alfalfa  
CA Alfalfa Seed Prod. Research Board  
CROPLAN  
DEKALB  
Hay & Forage Grower  
NEXGROW  
WA Alfalfa Seed Commission  
W-L Research

### GOLD

ID Alfalfa & Clover Seed Commission  
John Deere  
Summit Seed Coatings  
Western AG Enterprises

### SILVER

CA Alfalfa & Forage Association  
ID Hay & Forage Association  
J.R. Simplot  
MacDon Industries Ltd.  
Midwest Forage Association  
MT Alfalfa Seed Committee  
NE Alfalfa Marketing Association  
NV Alfalfa Seed Commission  
WA State Hay Growers Association  
WY Alfalfa Seed Council

### ASSOCIATE

American Seed Trade Association  
Anderson Hay & Grain Co.  
Calibrate® Technologies  
FMC  
Harvest Tec  
Hay Day Farms, Inc.  
MI Forage Council  
Monsanto BioAg  
Nelson Irrigation Corporation  
OR Hay & Forage Association  
San Joaquin Valley Hay Growers Association  
The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation  
Valley Irrigation

### NAFA STAFF

**Beth Nelson**  
*President*

**Shane Johnson\***  
*Executive Secretary*

**Madilynne Clark\***  
*Education Director*

**Jon Dockter**  
*Associate Director*

**Katie Hammitt**  
*Office Manager*

**Sherry Liu**  
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**Sheri Nolan\***  
*Publications Director*

**Chelsea Russell**  
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## Alfalfa Pollinator Research Initiative Awards Funding To Seven Projects

Now in its second year, the Alfalfa Pollinator Research Initiative (APRI), has awarded \$100,000 in funding to seven research projects focused on supporting the health of non-Apis alfalfa pollinators. APRI, a coordinated research effort managed by the USDA-ARS Pollinating Insects Research Unit in Logan, UT, focuses on: management for crop pollination; population sustainability; environmental safety; epidemiology and disease management; and genetics.

Bees play a vital role in alfalfa seed production. Funding for the APRI provides valuable resources necessary to ensure the availability of healthy non-Apis pollinator populations essential for alfalfa seed production.

Projects funded for 2015 include:

2014 APRI Project Title	Principal Investigator	Award
The Role of Lactobacillus Kunkeei in Alfalfa Leafcutter Bee Nutrition	Quinn McFrederick, University of California-Riverside	\$21,332
Effects of Pest Management Practices on Pests and Alfalfa Leafcutting Bees in Alfalfa Seed	Jim Barbour, Idaho State University	\$15,406
Enhancing and Protecting Populations of Alfalfa Seed Pollinators	Doug Walsh, Washington State University	\$15,010
Understanding the Effects of Nutrition and Juvenile Hormone on Reproductive Output in Alkali Bees ( <i>Nomia melanderi</i> )	Karen Kapheim, Utah State University	\$13,815
Interactions Among Alternative Forms of Developmental Mortality in Alfalfa Leafcutting Bees	Kevin O'Neill, Montana State University	\$8,000
Lethal and Sublethal Effects of a Systemic Pesticide on Alfalfa Leafcutter Bees	T'ai Roulston, University of Virginia	\$20,594
Validation and Development of Traps for Pests of Megachile rotundata	Theresa Pitts-Singer, USDA-ARS	\$5,843

## NAFA Adds Research Database to Website

In an effort to keep its members up to date on the alfalfa-related research programs for which it seeks funding, NAFA has added a research database to its website. By clicking the Research tab at [www.alfalfa.org](http://www.alfalfa.org) visitors will find comprehensive information regarding two of the alfalfa industry's most important research programs – the Alfalfa Pollinator Research Initiative (APRI) and the Alfalfa Seed and Forage Systems Research Program (AFRP).

As both programs are still in their infancy first year projects are still underway and final project reports are not yet available. However, other information with regard to these programs is available including individual project objectives, program priorities, and information regarding each program's request for applications.

Also available is a search tool which allows users to search for projects based on keywords, researcher, university/entity, year of project, category, or research program.

As these projects reach completion, results and conclusions will be posted to the site as they become available. Please take a moment to visit the site (<http://alfalfa.org/research.php>) for more information.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

### Hay & Forage Grower Magazine

NAFA renewed its agreement with Hay & Forage Grower magazine as its official publication which provided for a NAFA column to be featured four times a year with news relating to current NAFA initiatives and interviews with national policymakers. However, due to the sale of Hay & Forage Grower to W.D. Hoard & Sons Company, the following two 2014-2015 articles were featured:

- Senator Murray an Unlikely Advocate for Agriculture (Sen. Patty Murray, D-WA) (August)
- Alfalfa "Persistence" Comes in Many Forms (November)

NAFA reestablished its relationship with the new Hay & Forage Grower magazine which printed the Alfalfa Variety Ratings brochure in the November issue.



## NEW MEMBERS

### NAFA Welcomes Exporter Members

NAFA welcomed two new members with the addition of HayDay Farms and Anderson Hay & Grain Co. who joined NAFA as Associate members in the Class V Allied Industries category.

HayDay Farms focuses on producing quality feed for foreign and domestic dairy and beef cattle, as well as horse hay packages. Anderson Hay & Grain Co. is a leading exporter of hay and straw products specializing in Timothy hay, alfalfa hay, and grass straw products.

NAFA is pleased to add HayDay Farms and Anderson Hay & Grain Co. to its long list of distinguished members. If you are aware of any other organizations who are not currently a NAFA member but should be, please contact NAFA at [nafa@alfalfa.org](mailto:nafa@alfalfa.org).

### NAFA Welcomes Kansas Forage & Grassland Council

The National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance welcomed the Kansas Forage & Grassland Council to its list of members. The Kansas Forage & Grassland Council became a NAFA member at the Silver (\$1,500) level, giving it not only membership, but a board seat in NAFA's Class III sector - State/Regional Hay Associations. Darrin Unruh of Pretty Prairie, KS, is the Kansas Forage and Grassland Council's NAFA board representative.

This was welcome news as it not only provides NAFA with another important state affiliate and greater representation in Washington, D.C., but it marks the revival of a state forage council as well, indicating a growing interest in the production of alfalfa and forages in the nation's heartland.