Wisconsin Association of
Professional Agricultural Consultants

WAPAC is an association of consulting professionals who advise farmers in crop production, dairy nutrition, animal health, financial planning, engineering, regulatory compliance, education and overall farm management. We represent these many fields of professional expertise to provide technical recommendations and ideas to increase production, profitability and environmental stewardship in all facets of farming in Wisconsin. Please visit us at: www.wapac.info

Briefly:

1) We encourage the continued cooperative efforts between farmers, agency staff, and professional agricultural consultants to address soil conservation that improves water quality and maintains our soil resources.

2) We promote research based nutrient management as a tool for improving water quality. We advocate for WAPAC and FARMER input on any revisions to nutrient management regulations in Wisconsin.

3) We support efforts to expand fertilizer research in Wisconsin with emphasis on increasing both yields and profitability on the farm while protecting the environment.

4) We support and promote science based Integrated Pest Management research and implementation in Wisconsin.

5) We support the objectives of the Farmland Preservation Program within the Working Lands Initiative and Use Value Assessment to keep Wisconsin land in production agriculture.

6) We support Right to Farm legislation

7) We support any and all initiatives for broadband access in ALL areas of WI

In More Detail:

1) We encourage the continued cooperative efforts between farmers, agency staff, and professional agricultural consultants to address soil conservation that improves water quality and maintains our soil resources.

a) We support the existing cost sharing process within DATCP and DNR that encourages voluntary water quality projects on farms including, but not limited to, Producer Led Watershed Grants.

b) We support the Producer Led Watershed Grant program within DATCP

c) We support innovative solutions regarding water quality standards that benefit Wisconsin farmers and improves water quality especially as it relates to point/non-point trading and adaptive management.

d) We support State funding for implementing soil conservation and/or water quality improvement projects at the county level.

e) We support the utilization and development of RUSLE2 and other innovative models that improve the development and implementation of soil conservation plans.

2) We promote research based nutrient management as a tool for improving water quality. We advocate for WAPAC and FARMER input on any revisions to nutrient management regulations in Wisconsin.

a) Nutrient management is a system used by farmers and consultants to manage the right amount, right timing, right placement, and right form of nutrients whether it is manure, commercial fertilizers or another form of nutrients.

b) We support the intent of the NRCS 590 standard and would like uniform implementation of nutrient management among counties, NRCS, DATCP, and WI DNR.

c) Wisconsin should not limit itself to a single software tool for nutrient management plan development.

d) We oppose the practice of codifying University nutrient recommendations and NRCS Standards into regulatory statutes. We support sound agronomic research and professional judgement as a basis for implementing nutrient management programs.

e) We support continued funding of nutrient management plans written by certified crop professionals.

f) In an effort to improve nutrient management implementation, we would like at least 50% of each committee or workgroup to be either farmers or professional agricultural consultants.

3) We support efforts to expand fertilizer research in Wisconsin with emphasis on increasing both yields and profitability on the farm while protecting the environment.

a) The primary funding tool for fertilizer research in Wisconsin is the Wisconsin Fertilizer Research Program (WFRP) which is administered through DATCP.

b) The WFRP is currently funded at a rate of $0.17/ton of fertilizer sold to Wisconsin farmers which generated approximately $315,000 in 2017. For comparison, in Minnesota the fee collected for research has been $0.40/ton for several years and in 2017 they generated $1.1 million dollars. Illinois generated $2.3 million in 2017 with their $0.75/ton tonnage fee dedicated for research. We would advocate for an increase in WFRP funding to $.0.50/ton which would give Wisconsin a little over $900,000.00 to work with each year, and there will be no associated 'overhead' costs, they would remain the same as they are currently. In order to meet the current inflation rate since the inception of the tonnage fee in 1981, we should at least raise the research tonnage fee by 33 to 34 cents.

c) A typical fertilizer research project costs $30,000-40,000/year over a three year period for a total of $90,000-120,000/project.

d) We support a goal of funding the WFRP at a rate of least $0.50/ton of fertilizer sold which would generate approximately $900,000/year for fertilizer research within the UW System for the benefit of Wisconsin farmers.

e) Unbiased science based crop production research, such as that conducted within the UW System, is critically important to the Wisconsin farmer and the consulting industry.

4) We support and promote science based Integrated Pest Management research and implementation in Wisconsin.

a) Integrated Pest Management (IPM) blends the science of pest biology with control technology. The goal is to find the best solution to a pest problem (or combination of problems), taking into consideration both the economic and environmental impacts of control decisions.

b) We support State and Federal funding for local and regional University and agency IPM programing.

c) We support responsible use of seed traits, fungicides, and other chemical or organic practices that are used on farms in conjunction with sound field scouting and the use of pest threshold monitoring.

d) We support the continued use of atrazine in Wisconsin and recognize its important contribution to economical weed control in the state.

5) We support the objectives of the Farmland Preservation Program within the Working Lands Initiative and Use Value Assessment to keep land in production agriculture.

a) We support the preservation of farmland in Wisconsin for the production of food, fuel, and fiber.

b) We support Wisconsin's Use Value Assessment as a tool to encourage continued agricultural stewardship in our communities.

c) We support financial incentives to continue the Farmland Preservation Program within the Working Lands Initiative and also support established protocols to remove land for anything other than farming.

6) We support Right to Farm legislation

a) We support the intent of Wisconsin's Right to Farm Legislation in an effort to protect farmers from frivolous lawsuits.

7) We support any and all initiatives for broadband access in ALL areas of WI

a) High speed internet service is not only important for the transmittal and receipt of farm information, but also important as school age children complete homework via Google Classroom. Enterprising young professionals will not reside in an area that has poor internet service.