Rice steps down as executive editor

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Abstract
During the past 19 years, I have served as the executive editor of this newsletter, and at the end of this year, I will step down from that responsibility. When I first assumed this role in 1988, the newsletter was known as Crops, Soils and Pests Newsletter, and it was printed on yellow paper with no photographs. During that year, there were 1,464 paid subscribers.

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Rice steps down as executive editor

by Marlin E. Rice, Department of Entomology

During the past 19 years, I have served as the executive editor of this newsletter, and at the end of this year, I will step down from that responsibility. When I first assumed this role in 1988, the newsletter was known as Crops, Soils and Pests Newsletter, and it was printed on yellow paper with no photographs. During that year, there were 1,464 paid subscribers.

One of the biggest changes that occurred during this time was the development of a four-color newsletter. The first issue was printed December 18, 1992, and an article by Garren Benson, extension corn agronomist, on "Corn harvest proceeds slowly" was the front-page feature. The newsletter name also was changed to Integrated Crop Management to reflect broader and more inclusive information on crop production and protection. This newsletter was the first, and I believe still, the only four-color crops newsletter produced in hard copy by a land-grant university on a weekly basis during the growing season. Its production is truly unique among our peer institutions.

Subscriptions to the newsletter also jumped when we went to color, increasing to 3,344—an increase of 128 percent over the 1988 subscriptions. But the value of the newsletter was obvious in more than just numbers of subscriptions. A survey of Iowa agribusinesses published in 1999 by Wendy Wintersteen, currently the dean in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, found that the ICM newsletter was the resource most valued by the respondents. The newsletter truly was providing information in a timely manner that our agribusiness clientele needed so that they could satisfy the requests of Iowa growers.
In 1998, the newsletter took another major technology leap forward and in collaboration with and foresight from our Webmaster, John VanDyk, it was posted free on the World Wide Web. It was an immediate success, and in recent years, the newsletter Web site annually approached or exceeded one million page views. Of course, the primary reason for the success of the newsletter has been the collective effort of the many colleagues in the departments of Agronomy, Agricultural Engineering, Entomology, and Plant Pathology, and Extension Communications.

Overall, serving the readership of Integrated Crop Management has been rewarding. I have seen substantial changes to the newsletter that I believe have benefited Iowa agriculture and the people associated with the production and protection of some of the world’s most productive corn, soybean, and alfalfa acres. Hopefully, this educational newsletter that you have relied upon in the past will continue to be a valuable resource in the future.

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