Crop Adviser Institute is online

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Abstract
The Crop Adviser Institute (CAI), a new distance education institute at Iowa State University, is now online and delivering continuing education courses to ag professionals in Iowa and throughout North America. Ag professionals are interested in advanced and continuing education, whether it is to fulfill a requirement for certification or solely as a supplemental educational opportunity. Agricultural continuing education has traditionally been delivered on-site, but temporal, geographical, and other constraints often prevent individuals from attending these courses.

Keywords
Agronomy

Disciplines
Agricultural Education | Agricultural Science | Agriculture | Agronomy and Crop Sciences

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The Crop Adviser Institute (CAI), a new distance education institute at Iowa State University, is now online and delivering continuing education courses to ag professionals in Iowa and throughout North America.

Ag professionals are interested in advanced and continuing education, whether it is to fulfill a requirement for certification or solely as a supplemental educational opportunity. Agricultural continuing education has traditionally been delivered on-site, but temporal, geographical, and other constraints often prevent individuals from attending these courses. The CAI has been established to provide an alternative method of delivering continuing education by focusing on creation of high-quality, interactive learning modules designed to be delivered at a distance via computer.

Computer delivery of continuing education units (CEUs) is not meant to replace face-to-face courses such as those provided by the Iowa State University Agribusiness Education Program, but rather to supplement traditional CEU offerings. Users that access course modules such as those developed by the CAI have a broad range of course topics to choose from and may choose when and where to complete courses. Courses have been developed in four areas: nutrient management, crop management, soil and water management, and integrated pest management. The CAI and contributing faculty were recently awarded three Educational Excellence awards by the American Society of Agronomy for these new course modules.

CAI courses are delivered to the user via CD-ROM and consist of text, photos, graphics, interactive activities, and sample questions. Once a user completes the course, he or she has the option of taking a short on-line exam to receive CEUs from the American Society of Agronomy Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) or American Registry of Certified Professionals in Agronomy, Crops and Soils (ARCPACS) programs. CEUs are also available from other organizations such as the National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants and the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers. CAI course modules average 2 to 3 CEUs each, which equates to approximately 2 to 3 hours of time required for completion of the course, including the exam.
A full list of courses is available on the CAI Web site at http://www.cai.iastate.edu [2]. Courses are available for purchase online 24 hours a day by using a secure credit card entry, or by check. For more information, please call the Crop Adviser Institute at (515) 294-7546 or e-mail cai@iastate.edu [3].

The CAI is a partnership developed between Iowa State University, departments within the Iowa State University College of Agriculture, and Iowa State University Extension. Faculty and staff throughout the Iowa State University community are the primary content providers for course modules developed by the CAI. If you are interested in collaborating with the CAI on course development please contact me at (515) 294-7546 or e-mail: cai@iastate.edu [4].

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[3] http://www.ipm.iastate.edu/ipm/icm/mailto:cai@iastate.edu