2025 ILCCA Newsletter

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Illinois CCA Adviser

1402 Ann St., Pontiac, IL 61764 (815) 674-6644
www.illinoiscca.org lisa@illinoiscca.org

Why did YOU become a CCA?

Have you ever looked back and thought about it? For money, fame and fortune? (You might have the wrong reasons if you did - Ha). Because everyone else did? Also wrong, because over the years it has been evident that CCAs are definitely an elite group. Whether it was easy or hard for you, know that everyone cannot pass those exams and if you have, it is absolutely something to be proud of accomplishing. Hopefully professionalism and possible career advancement, were reasons. They are popular ones with CCAs internationally.

According to the survey sent to CCAs last summer (in which Illinois, California and Canada had the most participants), 75 percent of respondents are proud to be a CCA. For those of us who attend meetings on your behalf, sometimes even in treacherous conditions (like when hurricane Helene was headed straight for our International Board meeting location last September), it is nice to know you value your certification and the time we spend working to promote it.

Some other numbers we found interesting from the survey, included the fact that most CCAs do value their Code of Ethics, 71% are willing to pay more for employees who have their CCA and 54% cannot find enough CCAs to hire. These are great numbers to consider when recruiting new CCAs into the agronomic profession.

A new recruiting tool is our partnership with FFA, where students are exposed to the CCA program and have opportunities to start studying for the exams early. Volunteering to work with your local FFA Chapter to help their Agronomy CDE teams provides you with a great opportunity to share your knowledge and recruit more employees into the agribusiness industry. Finding good employees was the biggest challenge noted by CCAs who filled out the survey, followed by balancing economics and sustainability (that is a topic at the IL CCA Conference this year), and government regulations (also on the agenda).

A surprising 70 percent of CCAs agreed they would like to see CCA as some kind of a license. That may be happening whether we like it or not and your CCA board and staff work hard to develop relationships that put CCA in position to be recognized if any government organization decides that is necessary. Having CCA certification is required to write Nutrient Management Plans in California and Illinois has a track record of mirroring California when it comes to regulations.

It is likely a fact that we are never going to be less regulated than we are now, and we need to be prepared as an organization to fulfill that expertise when it is needed. To do that we need your help to continue to encourage others to become certified and support them in their quest to become more knowledgeable and professional.
Our agriculture future depends on all of us. *Lisa*

CCA Study Sessions are helping agronomists pass the exam and show their professionalism

Illinois was one of the leaders in the nation in individuals taking and passing the CCA exam in 2024. We are happy to continue offering and promoting different study session options for individuals interested in becoming certified. We will be offering an in person CCA Exam Study Session this winter. The link to register will be on the illinoiscca.org website. Online classes are also available and can be accessed on the ICCA test registration site.

Four testing windows will again be available in 2025 which give examinees the option to take the International Exam and Tri-State Exam on different days at a time they are most comfortable with testing.

CCA Candidates can take the exam in one sitting or for those who struggle with specific performance areas, a new option is available to take each performance objective area separately.

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