






FROM THE GROUND UP

FALL 2021



IN THIS ISSUE

-  Meet Our New Directors
-  Measuring Soil Health Like Never Before with Trace Genomics
-  Bailey's Bit About Nutrition
-  From the Desk of Gary Zimmer
-  Honoring Mike Lovlien, consultant for 30+ years

Meet Our **NEW DIRECTORS**



BRIAN ANDERSON, Director of Sales

With his 35 years of experience in agricultural sales, he will lead the sales and marketing teams, champion company philosophies and products and provide guidance on product positioning.

Most recently, Anderson has served as the Midwest Region Manager for NutriAg where he recruited national distribution, developed territory plans and facilitated new product training for sales consultants. Prior to that, he was the US Ag Business Manager for Precision Laboratories leading \$50MM business in the United States and making product movement and pricing decisions. He has also held roles with Bio-Safe, Crop Production Services, Kraft Business Systems, Syngenta and Wilbur-Ellis.



CHRIS KNIFFEN, Director of Agronomy

Kniffen brings nearly 15 years of experience in agronomy and soil health. His priorities heading into the new role are to build new educational models and content funnels that can increase practice adoption and the advancement of biological agriculture.

“I am most excited for the opportunity to learn from the top minds and farmers in biological agriculture,” says Kniffen, “my goals are to identify and develop solutions as a team that overcome the problems preventing the scalability of biological agriculture.”

Prior to his appointment with Midwestern BioAg, Kniffen served as Director of Research, Development and Marketing at Soil Works LLC where he provided technical leadership on product development, produced agroecological training materials and advised farmers on the implementation.



JEFF KURSCHNER, Director of Operations

Jeff Kurschner was promoted to Director of Operations for Midwestern BioAg in August. In this role, Jeff has operational responsibility for our sites, and he will continue to work with site leaders in delivering exceptional service to our customers.

In 2001, Jeff Kurschner started as a seasonal Production Specialist with Midwestern BioAg. Since then, he has been promoted six times, most recently serving as Production Manager. Jeff shares our values and respect for farmers and farm communities. His work ethic and accountability have made him a trusted leader over the years. His agility, creative solutions and can-do approach will serve him well in helping us grow Midwestern BioAg for years to come.



15-year customer places BioAg at top for QUALITY FEED

After seeing the success of a neighboring farm using the Midwestern BioAg program, Minnesota-based farmer, Darrell Luhman, decided to try the BioAg Way.

Reluctant at first, he split-tested his hay – applying BioAg product on only half of his hay field. He baled the hay off and was soon visited by his BioAg consultant who requested an experiment. Together, Luhman and his consultant, threw down two bales of hay, one from each side of the field. The cows came to the manger, grabbing the bales of hay and throwing them up in the air. They all had mouths full of hay.

When they were ready for the next mouthful, the cows all went after the BioAg bale. His BioAg consultant said, “I rest my case. The reason they went after that bale is because it has more vitamins and minerals from our fertilizer. That gets into the plant, making it taste better and be more nutritious. Your cows just showed you which bale they like the best.” After that, Luhman has been a Midwestern BioAg customer for over 15 years.

Quality feed has made a big difference in his operation and bottom line. He sees this difference over time with reduced veterinary fees and higher pregnancy rates among his dairy herd. Luhman

says, “I’ll put BioAg at the top of the list for quality feed.”

Acknowledging that people, farmers especially, don’t like to spend money, he adds, “the BioAg bill is one bill that doesn’t bother me because I know what I am getting back.” As a dairy farmer, “it’s not about how much milk is in the tank. It’s about how much milk in that tank is yours.”

Over the years, Luhman has used a mix of Midwestern BioAg products from dry fertilizer and nitrogen to soil amendments like Bio-Cal®. He says, “I always rely on my consultant to me what to do. It makes it a lot nicer to work with people who know what they are talking about.”

Luhman has had a lifelong love for farming. He recalls, “all the way through school the only thing I cared about was farming.” Today, the love is still going strong. “Things have been good with farming. I’m very happy.”

“I believe in what BioAg is doing.” With that full belief, he pays it forward – always sharing his success stories with his neighbors, so they too can be happy.”

Honoring Mike Lovlien, BioAg Consultant for 30+ years

If you've heard Mike speak, you'll know his slogan is, "don't guess, soil test." He advises against assuming that you know what is going on with your soil - wisdom he has collected from his career.

Starting from the beginning, Mike always had a passion for agriculture since being raised on a dairy farm. He went on to school at Winona Tech in 1975 where Gary Zimmer was one of his instructors. At that time, Gary was giving lots of presentations about natural farming practices and soon founded Midwestern BioAg. In 1989, Mike was hired as a consultant, working part-time doing both farming and consulting. He had a dairy nutrition service route in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

In November of 1992, Mike left his family's dairy farm and started his own consulting business, Lovland BioAg. He recalls, "the business then was not the business we have today." Then, he was doing everything: consulting and spreading product. As his business grew, he hired help. Thinking back to this time, he sees how selling today is easier because, with the shared workload, he had more time for consulting.

In December of 2008, Midwestern BioAg bought Mike's LovLand BioAg business.

Reflecting on his career, Mike noted a highlight of being involved with studies published in three of Gary Zimmer's books as well as building 20+ year relationships with customers and seeing their success grow over time.

His advice: pay attention to the small things - weights, measurements (especially with nutrients) and never forget the big three (chemical, physical and biological) elements of the soil. Always remember: it's not about today's sales, it's about future plans and long-term success.

After 30+ years with Midwestern BioAg, Mike will officially retire this fall. His retirement plans are to winter in Arizona, garden and travel as well as volunteer his time with church programs. Mike thanks his wife of 41 years, Cheryl, for being with him through it all and how great of a resource she was when his business was on his own. He is a proud father of 2 and grandfather of 4.



Thank you, Mike, for your dedicated service to Midwestern BioAg. We wish you all the best on your next adventure!



FROM THE DESK OF GARY ZIMMER

Dear farmers and agriculturalists,

It sure seems strange that the corn and bean price can remain so high. If you drive the country, it's all you see. Does anyone believe the price will stay high forever? The livestock producers and energy makers sure don't like it. The sad part is the cost of production has gone way up and doesn't always drop back to where it was when grain prices are reduced.

So, what are you going to do? My suggestion is to become less dependent and more resilient; less dependent on nitrogen, invest in side dress equipment, get set up to add carbon products to your nitrogen (BOOST works great), and do your calcium (it really improves soil structure and resilience). Bio-Cal fits many soils, but get your soils tested. Your BioAg consultant can help. Do the soil correctives as needed this fall; it can cut down on taxes paid and improve your future success. It's a great time to look at cover crops for improved soil health. Start with the knowledge and the right equipment. You may need a vertical tillage machine, an in-line ripper, all things that help take you to the next level.

I'm a big believer in strip tillage. I went to their conference in Omaha in August. Many of them have been no-till for years and are ecstatic about the change. As they say, it's like putting a flowerpot under every plant. It also allows you to concentrate your nutrients in the row, but you will need a better source of nutrients (Midwestern BioAg's) as salts may make things worse. This should save you money while driving yields and success, if done correctly. At our farm, we added chopping heads on the combines saving a stalk shredding trip. This, followed by a vertical tillage pass and rye planting, is setting us up for next year! We also spread compost/manure mineral mix.

Again, driving through the countryside you used to pick out organic farms because of weeds, well that's not possible anymore. Weeds are everywhere for almost everyone. Improved soil structure, cover crops, different rotation, calcium all help. You are going to need to do something besides add more, and harsher, chemicals. Weed seeds for the most part are little and need tight poor structured soils to do well in. We have studied a strip-till organic system that does a living mulch. Then, when the crop is up knee-high or so, mow the mulch and blow it in the row to not only provide nutrients but also cover weeds. But that's organic. I see many conventional farmers are looking at our methods. I just did a podcast with the Strip-Till Farmer outlining our system. Look at the economics and see if there are right to make some of these changes and set your future in place. You will need to get cleaner, more efficient and build carbon if your future is farming. Growing more roots, saving carbon (number one step), you have to not only grow more but reduce nitrogen by putting on when and where you need it. Yes, you can burn carbon with excessive tillage, but you also don't build soil carbon with residues laying on top. Shallow incorporation, deep ripping when needed, as you will also be responsible for what leaves your farm. Surface erosion on many farms is not acceptable (vertical tillage and ripping get water and nutrients in the soil).

Ask your consultant about how Midwestern BioAg can help. Think forward. Have a great fall and get ready for the future.

GFZ

MEASURING SOIL HEALTH LIKE NEVER BEFORE

Jon Trappe, PhD, Technical Agronomist

Midwestern BioAg recently partnered with Trace Genomics in order to adopt the most advanced commercially available soil testing in the industry. Trace Genomics is a soil testing company that provides a full chemical as well as 21 biology and pathology analyses. Midwestern BioAg will be implementing these analyses to improve our scouting and recommendations to our customers.

Midwestern BioAg has been promoting biological farming for nearly 40 years. We've known from our extensive time as crop and soil consultants that biology is equally as important as soil physical and chemical properties. However, until recently, measuring and demonstrating our effects on soil biology has been mostly recognizable through improved crop performance. Most changes to soil biology happen on a longer timeline and are sometimes not immediately apparent or have been historically difficult to detect. With improvements in soil analytics, we can better understand the impact that management practices have on soil biology. By partnering with Trace Genomics, we can now track numerous soil health metrics on our customers' farms such as changes

to soil bacterial populations, nitrogen and phosphorus cycling, active soil carbon, and total organic carbon among many other important parameters. Through measuring populations of Anthracnose, Rhizoctonia, and other significant soil-borne diseases, we can more accurately scout and predict disease pressure. Total organic carbon is an important component of soil health and will increasingly be used for verifying soil carbon accumulations, leading to other sources of revenue for our customers through carbon trading.

In summary, Midwestern BioAg can now quantify and characterize the positive changes to soil biology our customers have come to appreciate. This will equate to improved soil biology and health for our customers' fields, making their farms more resilient and profitable.

Speak with your BioAg representative about how to get your field sampled and analyzed using the power of Trace Genomics.



WHY FEED KELP TO YOUR HERD?

Bailey Farrell, Nutrition Specialist

Kelp is a natural feed supplement that is packed full of bioavailable minerals and vitamins. Kelp can be fed to cattle, sheep, goats, horses, pigs, and even chicken. Feeding kelp to livestock is an excellent source in filling in micronutrient deficiencies so the herd can improve digestion functions, reproductively, and their immune system. Healthier animals equal better productivity.

Here at Midwestern Bio-Ag we provide Thorvin Kelp. Thorvin Kelp contains a broad array of bioavailable minerals, amino acids, and vitamins for superior metabolic health. Thorvin is the leading organic feed supplement that is 100% all-natural with no additives. They dry their products slowly with geothermal energy to hold in all the natural minerals and vitamins without cooking and burning them out. Thorvin compared to other kelp has the highest selenium content where other kelp products can't even put selenium on their label for the content is so small. That is why Thorvin is the most nutrient-dense kelp-based ingredient on the market. Selenium is an essential trace element for livestock. Selenium is required for normal growth, fertility, and improve immune system function.

Thorvin delivers more nutrients per pound so it only takes small amounts to help fill micronutrient deficiencies. The benefits of feeding Thorvin to your herd include: improved reproduction health, improved calf development, improved immune and thyroid function, and prevents disease. Thorvin Kelp enhances cattle performance as

it contains selenium and zinc, which supports breed back and weight gain. Thorvin kelp also supports animal health, for It contains zinc and iodine, which prevents foot rot and also contains copper and selenium that prevents pink eye. Thorvin delivers more iodine and lower moisture per pound. Thorvin kelp can be blended into a ration or feed free choice - alone or with salt. Thorvin for animals contributes to lower vet bills and helping to keep livestock at their healthy best.

ABOUT BAILEY

I recently joined Midwestern BioAg as the Nutrition Specialist. I am from Barneveld, WI, and graduated from the University of Wisconsin - River Falls with a Bachelor's Degree in Animal Science. As a Nutrition Specialist, I consider the varied nutritional needs of different species and then formulate a balanced diet. I also formulate custom mineral blends by supplementing minerals that are deficient in the feedstuffs. Please reach out if you have any nutrition questions or if you need a formulated ration and/or a custom mineral blend for your herd. I will work with you to ensure your livestock feeding program is balanced and complete.

Contact Bailey at nutrition@midwesternbioag.com.



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