

# A View Towards the Future

By Allan Romander, Ca CCA Board Chair

A recent meeting of the California Certified Crop Advisers Board was convened to, among other issues, elect new officers for two-year terms beginning January 1, 2008. The results of the election can be viewed on our website at [www.cacca.org](http://www.cacca.org). As the honored recipient of elevation to the position of Board Chair, I am assuming the responsibility for preparing this article.

I have seen what successes have been achieved, previous to now, so it is time now to build upon those successes. As I look forward, I can see the goals that will continue to build on them. So, let's take a look at those goals and the actions that I think will achieve those goals.

The one constant I heard continuously over the past two years, while presenting the CCA Program, was a lack of real or perceived **VALUE**. In developing our promotional program for 2007, I focused on how that issue could be addressed. As I have traveled about and listened to current and future CCAs, I have come to realize that without **VALUE**, the program will perish. With this in mind, goal number **one** will continue to be establishing **VALUE** for the practicing CCA.

There are, I believe, five areas where **VALUE** can be leveraged. Some of these areas are already in practice.

- 1.) Outreach to field consultants:** Since commencing our promotional campaign eighteen months ago to reach as many field consultants as possible, convincing them why they should be a CCA, 155 applicants have submitted applications to begin the process. To continue building the Ca CCA Program, an additional 150 applicants have to be reached in the next eighteen months. Is this possible? I believe it is, particularly in light of the recent State action requiring CCAs prepare and monitor Nutrient Management Plans for dairy farmers.
- 2.) Outreach to agricultural producers:** This aspect of creating **VALUE** has been more difficult than originally thought. While the Ca CCA Board has taken our exhibit booth to numerous forums, actually talking to growers has been difficult. Without a doubt, each practicing CCA needs to be a forum unto themselves, promoting the professional value they bring to the agricultural community. As a Board, we have begun talking to the agriculture media, encouraging them to produce articles about the **VALUE** they bring to their readership. Keep reading those magazines and newspapers and see for yourselves.
- 3.) Media publicity campaign:** Last Fall, the International Certified Crop Adviser Board elected to engage in a promotional campaign with advertising aimed at growers, emphasizing the **VALUE** they bring to market. This campaign centers

on The Meredith Publishing Co., publishers of “*Successful Farming*”. However, “*Successful Farming*” is not widely circulated throughout California’s farmers, so permission to place advertising in other, more widely circulated agricultural publications in California has been requested. We are focusing those ads on California’s dairy farmers and working on getting ads in “*Agribusiness Dairyman*” and “*California Dairy*”. The ad copy was developed in-house by ICCA and is available for use by our local Board. Do you see an opportunity? Please call our office.

**4.) Expand our educational opportunities:** One of the most often heard complaints in the field and one of the most often used excuses for failing to renew certification has been the difficulty in acquiring the necessary CEUs. We have diligently tried to describe all the available opportunities to acquire CEUs. The Ca CCA Board sponsored a Breakout Session at the last CAPCA Annual Meeting, to aid in acquiring CEUs in the more difficult categories to fill. These educational opportunities are quite expensive to arrange. Until sufficient membership and sponsors are acquired, additional educational opportunities cannot be expanded. That’s why this is a goal!!!

**5.) Stabilize the Ca CCA Board’s financial position:** Thanks to FREP, the Fertilizer Research and Education Program arm of CDFA, the financial health of the Ca CCA Board would be dire, at best. Each time a grower purchases a ton of fertilizer, a portion of the purchase price, called a mill assessment, is collected to provide funds for FREP. The Ca CCA Board receives a grant from FREP, which goes a long way towards keeping it financially sound. Likewise, our Board receives a portion of the annual dues paid by each California CCA. As part of our obligation to FREP, we must work towards self-sustaining status. To mitigate this situation, we will continue to work on building membership and look into methods of developing sponsorships.

None of the above is “Rocket science...” We have been working on these goals for a long time, at least as long as I have been associated with the CCA Program. Finding a successful path to attainment is the challenge. Finding the proper people to accomplish this has been a challenge. Your current Board has such people, and finding the path to success should be “a cake walk...”