

## The New Crop Newsletter- June 2016

### **Planting The Seed (101)**

Precision Agriculture: Agricultural industry keeping up with a technological world.

Precision agriculture is important in today's industry because leading innovations in agriculture allow farmers to collect a variety of real-time data on weather, soil and air quality, crop maturity and even equipment and labor costs and availability. Predictive analytics can be used to make smarter buying decisions. Control centers collect and process data in real time to help farmers make the best decisions with regard to planting, fertilizing and harvesting crops. Sensors placed throughout the fields are used to measure temperature and humidity of the soil and surrounding air. In addition, pictures of fields are taken using satellite imagery and robotic drones. The images over time show crop maturity and when coupled with predictive weather modeling it can show conditions 48 hours in advance.

### **Just Getting into the top soil**

#### **How a Bill Becomes a Law**

A bill starts with an idea from any Citizen or Representative. The idea can then be written into a bill. After the bill is written the Representative must find a sponsor. Once it is sponsored the bill is read to the House members and is sent to a standing committee. The committee members then review and research the bill to revise it before it is sent back to the House floor to be debated. After the debate changes can be recommended and made. Then the bill is ready to be voted on. If the majority says yes, the bill then moves to the U.S. Senate. The bill then goes through the same steps in the Senate as it did the House. If it passes in the Senate the bill then goes to the President. The President has three choices to make when a bill is presented to him; sign and pass the bill, veto, do nothing. If the President does nothing the bill becomes a law after 10 days. If the President vetoed the bill it will then go back to the House and the Senate, if they believe it should still become a law they can hold another vote. They must have two-thirds majority to override the President's veto. The bill then becomes a law enforced by the government.

## **Breaking Ground:**

### **Atrazine Debate**

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the EPA released its ecological risk assessment on the pesticide atrazine which raises concern for farmers who rely upon atrazine in their operations all across the country.

#### What is Atrazine?

- Atrazine is a safe and effective crop management tool for farmers.
- It is among the most reliable herbicides available.
- Plays a critical role in combating the spread of resistant weeds.
- It reduces soil erosion, increases crop yields, and improves wildlife habits.
- Over the last 50 years, atrazine has passed some of the most rigorous safety testing in the world.
- More than 7,000 scientific studies have found atrazine to be safe.

#### Why does this upset farmers and agricultural organizations?

- The EPA's atrazine report is flawed and has not taken science into account, it has ignored decades of reliable research that has proved the safety of its usage.
- It is potentially setting farmers up for significant economic hardship, a 2012 study by the University of Chicago estimated the loss of atrazine would cost farmers \$59 per acre.
- Agricultural organizations are challenging this latest proposal and insisting that the EPA makes their determinations based on credible scientific evidence.