

Name: A.J. Bussan

Hometown: Cuba City, WI

Current Job Title: Potato and Vegetable Crop Production Systems Specialist

Location: Horticulture Department, University of Wisconsin

Job Responsibility and Areas of Interest 70% Extension and 30% Research
Still defining specific areas of interest

Education Background B.S. Soil and Crop Science, UW-Platteville
M.S. Agronomy (Weed Science), University of MN
Ph.D. Agronomy (Weed Science), UW-Madison

SETTING DIRECTION FOR VEGETABLE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Alvin J. Bussan¹

I was recently hired as the Potato and Vegetable Crop Production Systems Specialist at the University of Wisconsin. Up until November of 2001, I was the Crop Weed Specialist at Montana State University where I had developed a collaborative research and extension program with the agricultural industry and the producers of Montana. I am a native of Wisconsin and am excited to be with the University of Wisconsin and I look forward to meeting and working with you in the future.

At this point, I have not clearly defined the direction of my research or extension program. I would like to introduce how I plan on developing my research and extension programs and the major thrust I developed within my program at MSU. First, I would like to point out that I consider my research and extension programs intricately linked. The results of my research program and the research programs of my colleagues will feed directly into the materials produced in my extension program. Likewise the information, feedback, and questions generated with my extension program will be used to prioritize and develop the experiments and trials conducted in my research program.

My extension program will focus on developing educational materials and projects relating to production systems for potatoes and vegetables. The primary clientele groups are individuals working with or producing commercial and fresh market potatoes and vegetables. Methods for implementing my extension program will likely include publication of extension bulletins, presentations at workshops and conferences, mass media releases, and dissemination of information through electronic medias (i.e. e-mail list-serves, internet, etc.).

My approach to developing a research program is divided into short and long-term projects. Short-term research projects aim at finding solutions to immediate management problems. For example, what management practices are contributing to potato spoilage problems that began occurring in storage over the past 3 to 4 years or how can the production system be changed to reduce the impact of the virus being transmitted by the soybean aphid in snap beans. Long-term research projects are developed to lead to fundamental changes in how crops are being produced. In my previous research program at Montana State my long-term research program was focused on evaluating/developing precision farming management methods and developing no-tillage and diverse cropping systems. I have not yet identified the focus of my research program at the UW, but welcome any comments or bits of information that you would like to discuss.

In closing, I would like to re-iterate how excited I am to be back at the University of Wisconsin and how much I look forward to working with you in the future.

¹ Assistant Professor, Department of Horticulture, University of Wisconsin-Madison