

A CCA 's ATTEMPT AT DECIPHERING THE CODE OF ETHICS

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Working ethically is not a frequent conversation around lunch tables or even in board meetings. However, *how* we work is often times more important than *what* we work. How we work permeates our activities and can have a lasting affect on our customers, coworkers, employers, and stockholders. On the negative side, this can be easily seen in such highly publicized examples as Enron or WorldCom. But, is also demonstrate in our everyday activities in how we deal with customer complaints, promote our products, or interact with our coworkers.

It might be said that farmers, on the whole, are a skeptical lot, with a little bit of "Missourian" in all of them. Whether weighing the advantages of new ideas or products, farmers usually have to prove it to themselves, or be proven to, before adopting change. As for myself growing up on a farm, my parents' words of "tried and true", will forever ring in my subconscious!

However, as change has become more rapid and more complex, the ability to utilize resources to prove every change has become impractical. Instead, farmers in part, have relied on trusted advisors, who have experience with new production practices, products, and technologies to serve as their filter to separate the good ones from the bad. These advisors, which may take the form of input suppliers, lenders, or paid consultants, earn trust through the competency of their recommendations, and demonstrating they keep the best interest of the farmer in mind. Also, once trust is established, significant decision-making often gets transferred from the farmer to their advisors. This is where working ethically is critical. When this occurs significant synergies between the farmer and their advisors can occur. However, if this trust is violated, not only may this cause harmful effects on individuals or companies, it may also deteriorate the reputation of the profession of which the advisor is affiliated.

Certified Crop Advisor Code of Ethics

It is the combination of high standards for technical competency and ethics that make Certified Crop Advisor a valuable accreditation. For many CCA, including myself, much of the focus of the CCA program has been on the technical side – passing tests, attaining needed CEU, etc. But, technical knowledge alone, not accompanied with sound ethics, can lead to various disputes, mistrust, damage to the environment, and loss of earnings to both farmers and suppliers. The CCA Code of Ethics protects the interests of farmers and employers by recommending only products and services that are in the best interest of the farmer and the public. Being a member of CCA organization requires that the Code of Ethics be followed. By doing so, long-term success for its members and the cliental it serves is ensured.

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