

## Originality

Someone once said that originality is nothing more than undetected plagiarism. I suspect that many 'original' ideas, concepts and thoughts **were** borrowed from others. At the same time, originality has driven research and development that provide us the technology we enjoy today. The information age is overloaded with new ideas and concepts.

More than 30 years ago, Dr. R.E. Wagner, Institute agronomist (and, later PPI President), introduced the concept, **maximum economic yield** (MEY) ...a production system of best management practices that economically maximizes yield and profit per acre. Was the MEY concept original with Dr. Wagner? Perhaps the name, but many of its parts are older than the Institute itself.

The following appeared in *Southern Cultivator* in 1870: "Use more and better machinery, plant the best seeds...cultivate effectively, and apply the kind and amount of commercial fertilizers that will produce the highest yields to reduce costs per unit." That 130 year-old quote sounds a lot like MEY.

Sometimes it doesn't matter whether an idea, concept or thought is original. The issue is, will it make a difference? Can it be used to make something better? As we incorporate space age technology into our crop production practices, we need to remember those basic agronomic, economic, and environmental truths that have brought us this far. Maybe a little 'originality' will help.



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