

Staying the Course for PPI in 2000

The strategic model of PPI has remained unchanged since the inception of the organization nearly 65 years ago. That model is to promote research relevant to the Institute's mission of advancing the worldwide use of phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) and to follow up with educational efforts to implement the results of the research. Major North American issues for PPI in 2000 involve both research and educational components of the program.

Research Issues:

- **Improvement of crop yield.** PPI has been carefully evaluating its research priorities for the next decade. We started the process fully anticipating that areas such as biotechnology, site-specific precision agriculture, nutrient management planning, or the influence of management on attributes important for specific end use of crops would receive the highest priority. Although important to the future of agriculture, we eventually realized that these were all secondary to a very fundamental research objective...the improvement of crop yield. We believe that successful accomplishment of this single objective is critical to reducing unit costs for growers and necessary for meeting future global food needs while enhancing environmental quality. At the same time, it holds excellent growth opportunity for agribusiness and rural communities.
- **Application of new technologies.** We plan to continue to address how new technologies, including biotech and the suite of site-specific technologies, can be utilized in yield improvement and risk management.
- **Crop quality and attributes for specific end use.** We hope to expand research addressing the impact of P and K management on crop attributes impor-

tant for specific end use such as nutraceutical levels in functional foods.

We feel such impacts will in the near future have economic value to producers and that the information generated will have the potential to improve the consumer's image of fertilizers.

Educational Issues:

- **Improvement of crop yield.** Resources will be developed that focus on the gap existing today between attainable yields and typical yields and key practices to exploit that gap.
- **Use of the internet.** The PPI-FAR web site will be completely restructured in 2000 with a much greater focus on the needs of our clientele groups. The restructuring will improve the effectiveness of this major information dissemination tool for PPI.
- **Nutrient management planning.** Training resources for nutrient management planning prepared for InfoAg99 will be refined. We will continue to work with organizations such as The Fertilizer Institute (TFI), Canadian Fertilizer Institute (CFI), state/provincial industry associations, and other groups to influence those defining the nutrient management planning process to assure that it enhances the farmer's ability to efficiently produce high yields.
- **Water quality.** We will continue to work with technical agencies and academic groups involved with hypoxia and surface water quality and support the development and use of sound scientific data in assessing and addressing these issues.
- **Information Management.** We plan to more fully develop database tools to facilitate our ability to manage, package, and deliver information more rapidly and in a more site-specific fashion. 