

THE AGRONOMY AGE

As a new year begins, I often find myself taking inventory of the “big ideas” of the last year. This year has been no different. One prominent idea exclaims that “This is the Agronomy Age!” because so many of the major challenges the world faces today and in the foreseeable future can only be met with the involvement of agronomic science and the technology and practices that stem from it. The plant nutrition industry plays a major role in that process. Some might view the Agronomy Age as an age of the past because agronomy is an old discipline. In fact, over the last couple decades in North America, in the interest of appearing more exciting and cutting edge to students and granting agencies, many of our universities eliminated “agronomy” from their department names.

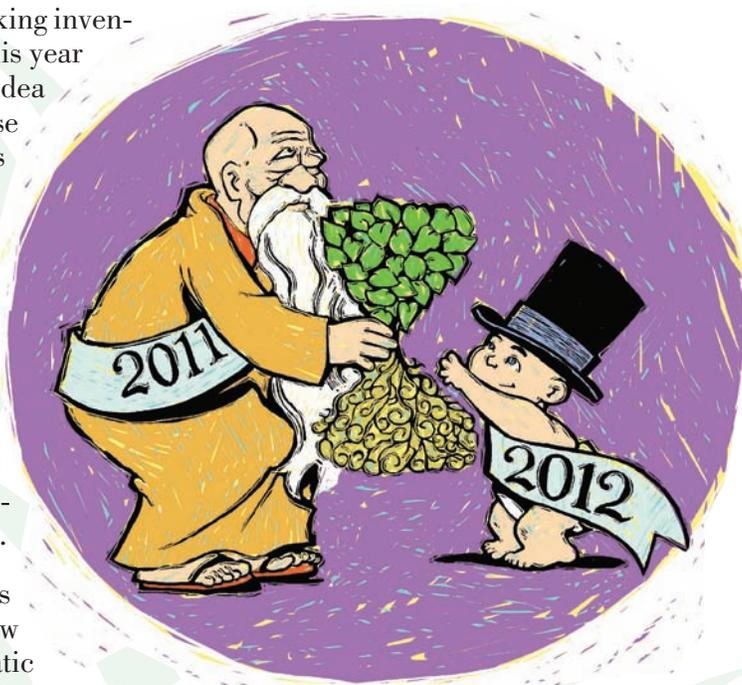
In reality, the discipline of agronomy remains only partially developed today, but the tools now exist to rapidly make progress in more systematic integration and application of the pieces of the science.

This publication features many of those tools and their development and promotion are major roles of IPNI programs.

The process of 4R Nutrient Stewardship has become a major IPNI program emphasis, a process that includes nutrient performance assessment. Science tells us that applied plant nutrients can meet stakeholder performance expectations only when they are used in systems where all the agronomic pieces have been properly assembled. The success of IPNI programs and the fertilizer industry is dependent on this age indeed being the Agronomy Age.

The opportunities in agronomy today are immense, but progress is often threatened by lack of a critical mass of financial and human resources. Much is to be gained through forging partnerships across disciplines, political boundaries, public and private sectors, and generations of scientists and practitioners.

So as we close one year and launch another, I am grateful to be partnered with a team of highly talented and dedicated staff focused on a critical mandate and for the members and other supporters that enable us to fully participate in this Agronomy Age.



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