

## Farmers Approve Major NCGA, NCDF Organizational Changes



SAINT LOUIS, Mo. — In a move impacting corn growers nationwide, board members from the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) and the National Corn Development Foundation (NCDF) voted in favor of significant changes that combine both organizations to create a new national corn farmer organization.

The new association is designed to increase farmers' profitability and influence within the corn industry by enhancing farmer involvement and decision-making at the grassroots level.

Growers at the meeting said they believed that the organizations are moving in the right direction by creating a nimble, fast-acting organization.

"Today's vote gets the ball rolling in our transition to new national corn organization," said Wallie Hardie, president

of the NCGA.

This move follows recommendations from two special study groups comprised of growers appointed by the NCGA and NCDF boards of directors earlier this year. These groups explored ways to improve the structure and resources needed to enhance corn farmers' future profitability and productivity. The new organization will continue to be called the National Corn Growers Association because the name is nationally recognized, but the structure and work of the new organization will differ significantly from the former NCGA and NCDF.

"This vote affirms growers' willingness to look toward the future and take positive steps to achieve their goals," said Hardie, a corn farmer from Fairmount, N.D. "Accomplishing them requires a fast-acting, flexible organization that can

strategically plan and react to the many changes that are transforming agriculture."

Teamwork, representation, and participation increase for corn farmers under this unique new association. In order to prioritize, address and solve issues, the new National Corn Growers Association will involve farmers in three working bodies, the Corn Board, the Corn Congress, and Corn Action Teams. "For the first time, corn farmers can participate in, and direct, the work of these three bodies, whether farmers are involved in their state checkoff board or their state grower association," said NCDF Chairman Everett Nordine, who served as chairman of one study group.

"There's an abundance of talent among corn farmers, and our new organization will be able to tap into this talent base by allowing corn growers to se-

lect and lend expertise to issues that they feel are important to them without working through a burdensome organizational process. Participating farmers' valuable time can be targeted and used more productively," said Hardie, who chaired one of the two study groups that proposed the changes. "Farmers will work directly on issues that impact their bottom lines."

The three new organizational bodies will be phased in during the next year and will be up and running by Oct. 1, 1998. The former NCGA and NCDF boards will appoint a transition team to assist with the start up of the new organization. The transition team will report to the NCGA and NCDF Executive Committee in November and the boards of directors in

December. The team will clarify and define the processes needed to combine the two organizations. NCGA and NCDF board members will vote in December on recommendations from the transition team.

"The process that we've gone through is a very healthy exercise for both organizations, and exercise leads to increased strength and endurance. All businesses periodically go through the processes of organizational evaluation," said Hardie. "It's necessary to make sure that you're doing the right things to grow your businesses and the markets that you operate in. The members of the boards of the two organizations took an objective look at the recommendations of the study groups and voted for the future."

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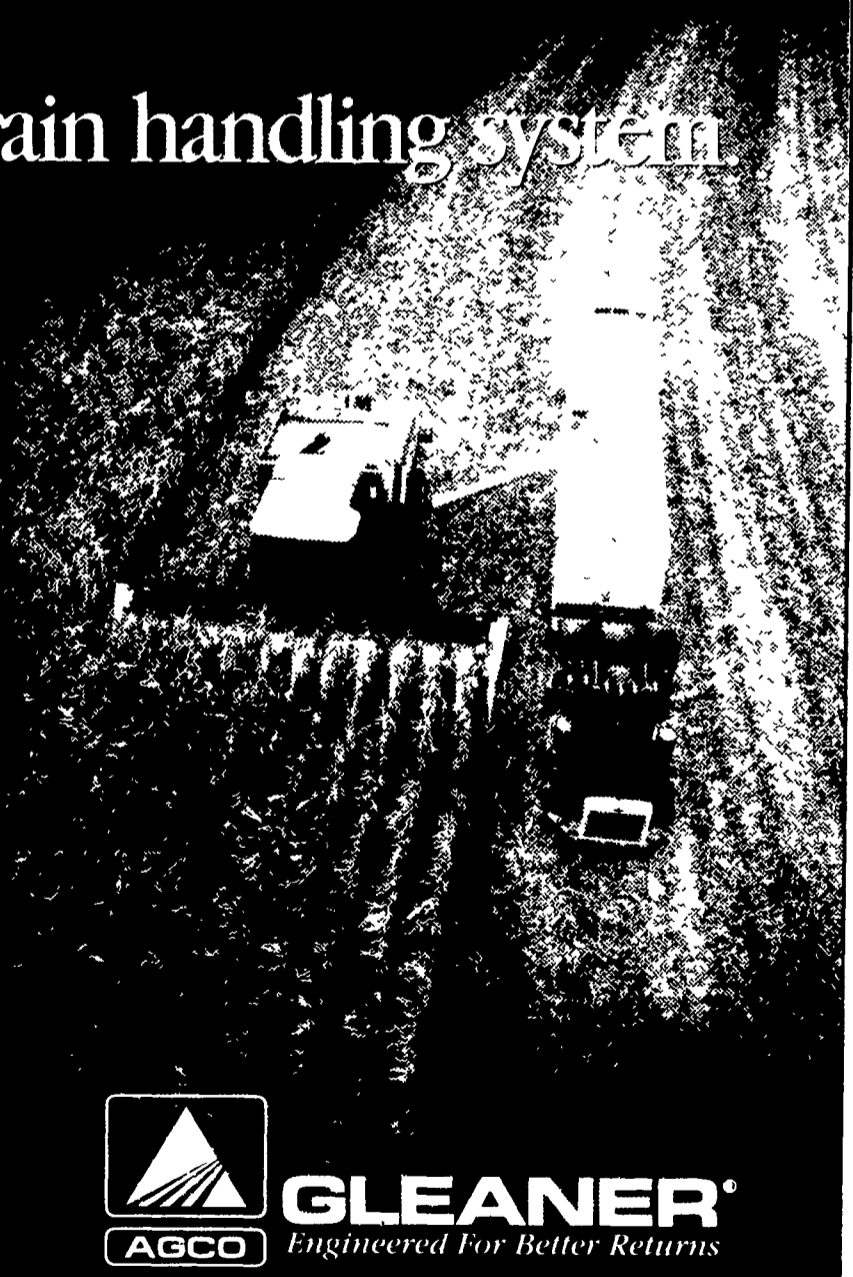
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