

Andy Klittich:

Improving His Skill Set Through Education and CAPCA Involvement

Joyce A Basan, CAPCA Programs/Communications Director

Andy Klittich graduated from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Agriculture and Environmental Plant Sciences. His studies concentrated on Plant Protection and he minored in Crop Science.

Andy not only holds a PCA license, which he obtained in 2013, but is also a QAL and a CCA. The major crops he consults on are vegetables and strawberries.

Active in the plant protection industry for two and a half years, he works for AG RX, spending his time inspecting fields, consulting with customers and working on special projects. "At AG RX I have been a part of putting together a display each year

for the Ventura and Santa Barbara County Fairs. It has been fun working on a project that helps the community see what we do."

One area he focuses on in his daily work is IPM: "IPM is using all the tools available to grow the crop in a sustainable and profitable way." As far as where he sees the role of IPM going in the future, Andy responds "I think IPM will always be changing with the new technologies that come out but the basic idea of IPM will always stay the same."

Andy sees the pest issues that are currently posing the most problems to clients are "all the new invasive pests and the increasing issues with mites in strawberries."

Andy feels an important facet of CAPCA's leadership role is to continue to update PCAs on regulatory issues and changes to regulation.

To continue improving his own professionalism, Andy is involved in his local chapter board and also serves on the CAPCA State Board of Directors.

"I am currently the Continuing Education Chair and State Representative for the Ventura Chapter and have learned that CE meetings take a lot of coordination. On the State Board, I have noticed that the Government Relations Committee does a lot of behind the scenes work with the Legislature that most of the membership is not aware of."



Andy Klittich

CAPCA Chapter:
Ventura

Education: *BS in Agricultural & Environmental Plant Sciences, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo*

Family: *wife, Pam & two yellow labs, Kase & Ranger*

Interests:
Working on his house, wine tasting, barbecuing

Some local activities Andy also finds beneficial, and believes other PCAs would find interesting, are the various field days that UC Extension holds. "I have gone to a few field days and meetings done by UC Extension and they have all presented great information. I have learned about new techniques being developed for use in strawberries and also about herbicide use on celery," says Andy.

When asked what he likes best about being a PCA, Andy replied "I like being able to spend most of my day in the field."

Although he is just at the beginning of his PCA career, he says the highlights so far have been the opportunity to continue to learn, as well as meeting growers and other PCAs.

The advice that Andy would pass on to students coming out of college and entering the PCA profession comes from his own experience and observations: "Internships are the best way to learn about the profession. Entomology and pest control classes can teach you all the fundamentals,

but going out and walking fields will show you exactly what you are in for. My advice is to study and work hard."

In his daily contact with his clients, Andy finds that their involvement in pest management decisions varies. "Certain clients are extremely involved and others trust me to keep their crop clean for harvest," he explains.

Communication with all his clients is very important to Andy. "I try to explain why I make certain decisions so that they can know more about their fields."

When needing additional expertise to address crop protection issues, Andy finds other PCAs and Farm Advisors as valuable resources. "I ask other PCAs around the office and also reach out to the UC Cooperative Extension when I need help."

In his spare time, Andy enjoys being involved in his community. He is a member of the Fillmore Rotary Club, is the Charter Organization Representative of Cub Scout Pack 3400, and is a member of the Fillmore FFA Ag Advisory Board. 🐛