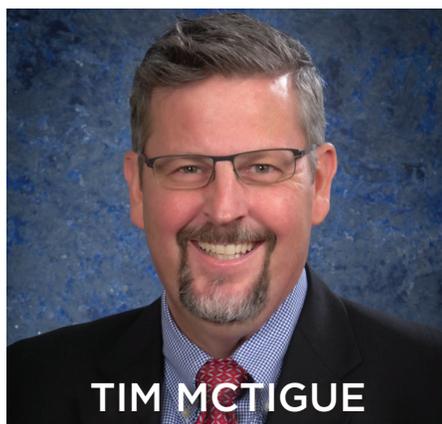


Ag Banking SOLUTIONS



Tips & information for the ag industry from Investors Community Bank / Volume 3, Issue 3, 2017

LET'S GET PERSONAL



Many of you know our ag banking team on a professional level, but how much do you know about them personally? Each issue we spotlight a different team member and share some fun facts!

Name: Tim McTigue

Title: Senior Vice President -
Ag Banking

Education: Indiana University

- **Years ag banking experience:** 7
- **What was your favorite food when you were a child?** Spaghetti and meatballs made by my Italian grandmother, Noni
- **What's the most played song on your iPod?** "Heart Man" by Luka Bloom
- **When you have 30 minutes of free time, how do you spend it?** Working in the yard
- **What is your favorite quote?** "It's amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit." - Harry S. Truman
- **If you could learn anything, what would it be?** To play guitar

Initiating Constructive GMO Conversations

Technology abounds in the world around us, from the smartphones we carry to the motorized equipment used in the field. Embracing and talking about the advantages of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) shouldn't be any different.

Agricultural producers have long looked to technology to become more productive and efficient. We all know the science, technology and painstaking regulatory process that GMOs go through before they can help our industry grow more food, more affordably. It is admittedly a challenge to counter the movement by many in the food industry – be it Nestle, Danon, Panera Bread or Chipotle – that is capitalizing on people's fear of what they don't know: that somehow, GMOs are inherently bad.

You know differently. I know differently. But somehow, for the regular consumer, science isn't what's prevailing in their minds.

This is where you come in. You are a credible source who works on the front lines of agriculture every day. People want to know if their values align with the farmers who originate their food and milk. They want to feel connected to farmers and hear from them – firsthand – about how they're caring for the land and their animals and have embraced GMOs in the farming process. We need you to step up and vocalize the benefits of GMOs especially as the food industry pulls out its megaphones.

Here are a few tips for having respectful and productive conversations:

- **Conversations can occur anywhere, so be prepared.** People may bring up the topic or approach you at the feed mill, grocery store or gas station. Or it's perfectly OK to initiate a conversation if you see an opportunity.

It's also important to ask about opportunities to present in environments such as local classrooms, elected officials' offices, and service clubs such as the Kiwanis and Optimists.

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Initiating Constructive GMO Conversations (cont.)

- **Listen with sincerity, and summarize what you hear.** One of the foundations of listening – instead of listening to simply respond – is to take what someone has voiced, summarize it and “replay” it as a way of ensuring the person feels heard. The wording for that may begin with, “So, what I hear you saying is, xxxxxxxx [ENCAPSULATE ANSWER]. Is that correct?” Be respectful of others’ comments and questions.
- **Know your facts.** While no one expects you to be the expert, it pays to have a few key points in your back pocket about GMOs and why they’re important to the agricultural industry and to consumers at the store. A few resources you can consider:
 - o <https://gmoanswers.com/>
 - o <https://geneticliteracyproject.org/>
 - o <https://www.biofortified.org/>
- **Share examples.** Most people ask questions because they seek understanding. Don’t be afraid to answer them and to give specific examples of how GMOs are part of your own operation. The crucial thing here is to share the info in everyday language – remember, these are typically not people who live and breathe agriculture.
- **Ask people to consider the science behind the information you share.** Many food companies have latched onto emotion as a means of setting themselves apart. They aren’t coming from a scientific perspective but an advertising one. The number one rule of marketing, particularly if you’re selling a commodity, is to find a way to differentiate yourself. The unfortunate reality is that apparently this “place of differentiation” doesn’t necessarily require a lot of substance behind it.



Yes, your education will occur one conversation at a time, but it can be even more powerful that way. By exchanging reputable information, you can be part of the movement toward educating consumers so they act out of a place of knowledge that’s rooted in science and facts presented by a trusted source, rather than an environment of opinion that doesn’t have depth.



*By Dave Coggins,
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Chief Banking Officer,
Investors Community Bank*

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