



## Organization Helps Grow Careers

### *The National Agri-Marketing Association provides training and contacts for professional advancement*

Kyle Bauer, a lifelong central Kansas farmer, decided in 1996 to buy an AM radio station. He intended to make the programming a 24-hour agricultural format – something he thought midwestern farmers needed and could appreciate. Before he made the move, however, a good friend gave him some valuable advice. “Joe Berkely told me to join NAMA,” Bauer says, “and he told me to get involved with the organization.” Longtime friends and business associates, Bauer looked up to and greatly respected Berkely, a past president of the National Agri-Marketing Association’s Great Plains chapter. Naturally, Bauer took Berkely’s advice. And it has made all the difference.

Today, KFRM 500-AM radio is one of the nation’s only 24-hour ag-formatted stations, reaching 149 counties across three states. By joining NAMA – and becoming an active member – Bauer made the contacts he needed to help make his radio station a success.

“As a farmer sitting out here in Kansas,” Bauer says, “I didn’t know anybody. I didn’t know the marketing people from the



*Attendees at the annual Boot Camp learn industry basics.*

companies I wanted to target [as advertisers]. NAMA gave me the venue to get to know all those marketing managers and for them to get to know me.” Bauer’s radio station made a profit in its second year, and business continues to grow. Revenue jumped 17 percent last year. It all started with Berkely’s words of wisdom.

“It was great advice,” Bauer says. “Especially the part about being active. You really get out of it what you put into it.”

Bauer is one of about 3,000 professional and student agri-marketers nationwide who has reaped the rewards of a NAMA membership.

It’s the others in the industry who NAMA

President Tom Taylor currently is trying to reach.

“There is certainly great potential to increase NAMA ranks through current member companies,” says Taylor, a 27-year NAMA veteran. “Our key focus will be to grow membership among ag input/service companies. We think we have a good market.”

A good market – and great benefits. People join NAMA for all kinds of reasons, Taylor says. Topping the list, however, is career development.

NAMA’s membership is dispersed throughout 26 chapters in six national regions. Throughout the year, NAMA members attend seminars and regular chapter meetings, which focus on the latest ag marketing trends and topics. These meetings are designed to address critical issues in areas such as product/species management, Taylor says, as well as public relations, sales and marketing communications.

Chapter meetings are also a great venue for