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**THE NATIONAL COALITION FOR
FOOD & AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH**

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R. Thomas Van Arsdall, Executive Director

Phone: (703) 509-4746

E-mail: tom@vanarsdall.com

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**THE NATIONAL COALITION FOR
FOOD & AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH**

Program:

**FROM SPECIALIZED FARMING
TO YOUR FORK**

*Implications for Competition and the
Changing Structure of Agriculture*

May 24, 2010

PROGRAM

Welcome

DR. TAMARA WAGESTER-SUBRICK
NATIONAL C-FAR REPRESENTATIVE

Introduction of Speaker

DR. JAMES MACDONALD, BRANCH CHIEF
AGRICULTURAL STRUCTURE AND PRODUCTIVITY
USDA, ERS

Distinguished Speaker

DR. BRIAN BUHR
HEAD OF APPLIED ECONOMICS
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Open Forum

Closing

DR. TAMARA WAGESTER-SUBRICK

NATIONAL C-FAR IS a nonprofit, nonpartisan, consensus-based and customer-led coalition that brings food, agriculture, nutrition, conservation and natural resource stakeholders together with the food and agriculture research and extension community, serving as a forum and a unified voice in support of sustaining and increasing public investment at the national level in food and agricultural research, extension and education. For additional information, go to www.ncfar.org; or contact Tom Van Arsdall, Executive Director at tom@vanarsdall.com.

ABSTRACT

The agricultural food supply chain is represented by a complex array of transactions between input suppliers, farmers, processors, manufacturers and retailers to the final consumer. Historically, food products were viewed as commodities – apples were apples and pork chops were pork chops with little differentiation. The supply chain aggregated, distributed and transformed raw commodity inputs into food products and because of this commodity products were easily priced and transferred from stage to stage. Over the past few decades, however, there have been increasing demands by consumers for an increasing array of attributes – these include production attributes such as cage free eggs, organic milk, locally raised foods and even demands for improved safety. The commonality of these attributes is that they are not observable at the time of purchase and so they require that the supply chain maintain the integrity of product identification throughout the chain. This has implications for ownership and structure of the agricultural and food supply chain, ultimately affecting competition. This presentation will describe how traceability not only has implications for tracking products themselves (the direct physical benefit of traceability) but also how traceability can lead to innovation in market formation improving competition and impacting the structure of agricultural markets.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY

Brian Buhr, Ph.D., is Professor, E. Fred Koller Chair and Head of Applied Economics at the University of Minnesota. Professor Buhr joined the faculty of the University of Minnesota in 1992. Dr. Buhr has spoken at over 100 national and international conferences and symposia in the past five years, has published extensively in professional journal articles, extension manuscripts, book chapters and trade manuscripts and each year enjoys interacting with 80 – 100 students in his three courses related to commodity marketing and risk management with futures and options. Dr. Buhr has received the Outstanding Policy Contribution Award from the American Agricultural Economics Association and recently received the University of Minnesota College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences' Distinguished Teaching Award. His research areas include policy and price analysis, risk management and the economics of information systems and traceability. On July 1, 2008 professor Buhr was appointed as Department Head of Applied Economics.