



## NATIONAL COALITION FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

Media Advisory

### **FROM SPECIALIZED FARMING TO YOUR FORK**

*Implications for Competition and the Changing Structure of Agriculture*

**Washington, D.C.**, May 19—The sixth National C-FAR “Lunch~N~Learn” Hill Seminar of 2010 will be Monday, May 24, from 12:00-12:25 p.m. in 1302 Longworth House Office Building. The featured speaker is Dr. Brian Buhr, Head of Applied Economics, University of Minnesota.

“Traceability not only has implications for tracking products themselves, but also can lead to innovation in market formation,” says Dr. Buhr. “This can improve competition and impact the structure of agricultural markets.”

“We are pleased to feature Dr. Buhr and his presentation on the implications of traceability on the future competitiveness and structure of agricultural markets,” says Chuck Conner, President of the National Coalition for Food & Agricultural Research (National C-FAR). “This presentation is an excellent example of how federally funded food and agriculture research and extension can produce the scientific outcomes and outreach needed to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges and opportunities.”

Speaker: **Dr. Brian Buhr**, E. Fred Kohler Chair and Head of Applied Economics, University of Minnesota.

The seminar is open to the public and the media.

**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.

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**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. National C-FAR's Hill Seminar Series, now entering its fifth year, regularly presents leading-edge researchers working to provide answers to pressing issues confronting the public and Congress. The Hill Seminar Series and Success Profiles help demonstrate the value of public investment in food and agricultural research—investment that returns 45 percent per year on average.

Go to [http://www.ncfar.org/Hill\\_Seminar\\_Series.asp](http://www.ncfar.org/Hill_Seminar_Series.asp) for more information about the seminar series and past topics. Interviews with National C-FAR President Chuck Conner are available by request. For additional information, go to [www.ncfar.org](http://www.ncfar.org); or contact Tom Van Arsdall, Executive Director, at [tom@vanarsdall.com](mailto:tom@vanarsdall.com) or (703) 509-4746.