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THE NATIONAL COALITION FOR  
FOOD & AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

**Program:**

**THIRSTING FOR SOLUTIONS**

*Water, People, and the Future: Water Availability  
for Agriculture in the United States*

November 9, 2009

# **PROGRAM**

## ***Welcome and Introduction***

STEPHANIE SAULLO  
NATIONAL C-FAR REPRESENTATIVE

## ***Distinguished Speaker***

DR. SHARON MEGDAL  
Water Resources Research Center  
University of Arizona  
Tucson

## ***Open Forum***

## ***Closing***

STEPHANIE SAULLO

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](http://www.ncfar.org); or contact Tom Van Arsdall, Executive Director at [tom@vanarsdall.com](mailto:tom@vanarsdall.com).

## **ABSTRACT**

With a projected 25% and 50% increase in U.S. and world population, respectively, by the year 2050, substantial increases in freshwater use for food, fiber, and fuel production, as well as municipal and residential consumption, are inevitable. This increased water use will not come without consequences, and as one of the largest users of water in the United States, agriculture will be impacted significantly by changes in water availability and cost. To evaluate current trends, summarize key vulnerabilities, and identify possible solutions to current and future challenges, CAST has published a new Issue Paper—*Water, People, and the Future: Water Availability for Agriculture in the United States*—that discusses the demands for freshwater resources, using specific U.S. states as examples to illustrate the wide diversity in availability, distribution, consumption, and regulation of surface and groundwater resources. The authors indicate that the relationships among water quality, the quantity of water that can be put to alternative uses, and the interstate reach of many natural and constructed water supply systems call for federal involvement in the resolution of long-range water supply issues.

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## **SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY**

**Sharon Megdal**, Ph.D., is Director of The University of Arizona Water Resources Research Center (WRRC) and C.W. and Modene Neely Endowed Professor. She is Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics and the Department of Soil, Water, and Environmental Science. Dr. Megdal teaches the multi-disciplinary graduate course “Arizona Water Policy.” She also serves as Director of The University of Arizona Water Sustainability Program. Her work focuses on state and regional water resources management and policy. Dr. Megdal authors a water policy column for the WRRC’s bi-monthly newsletter. Her current projects include study of artificial recharge and municipal water planning and use in growing, arid regions. In 2008, she was elected to the Central Arizona Water Conservation District Board of Directors, which oversees the Central Arizona Project. Dr. Megdal has served on numerous state boards and commissions, including the Arizona Corporation Commission and the Arizona State Transportation Board. Dr. Megdal holds a Ph.D. in Economics from Princeton University.