BALANCING NUTRIENTS: A GROWING NEED

“Food, Fuel and Plant Nutrient Use in the Future”

Washington, DC – March 12, For Immediate Release – The challenges of researching, planning, and implementing the proper use of nutrients will be discussed at National C-FAR’s hill research seminar on Monday, March 18—twice: at 10 am in 337 Russell Senate Office Building, and at the noon ‘Lunch~N~Learn’ seminar in 1300 Longworth House Office Building. The presentation is being held in conjunction with National Ag Week. The featured speakers are Dr. David Zilberman, professor in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at UC-Berkeley, and Dr. Bruce Dale, professor of chemical engineering at Michigan State.

“Societal food and fuel needs are growing, and in order to increase current scale of production under decreasing amounts of land, a reliable supply of plant nutrients . . . is essential,” says Zilberman.

Dale adds, “To meet global food demand, the use of genetics to improve crop productivity, promote soil conservation and management, and use nutrients efficiently is necessary.”

Zilberman (Chair) and Dale are members of the Task Force that authored CAST Issue Paper #51, which addresses these critical issues.

“This presentation provides an excellent example of the value of federally funded food and agricultural research, extension and education in producing the scientific outcomes and outreach needed to meet 21st century challenges and opportunities,” says Chuck Conner, President of the National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research (National C-FAR).

Abstract: Future food, fiber, and fuel demands will not be met by expanding cropland area; continued advances in nutrient use efficiency will moderate increased nutrient demand. With a growing population, dwindling arable land, and an increased demand for biofuels, the world cannot count on an expansion of harvested area to fill the demands of the world’s growing population. The use of genetics to improve crop productivity, promote soil conservation and management, and use nutrients efficiently is necessary. The key lies in supporting research and development in these areas. This CAST Issue Paper (#51) looks at the background leading to the current situation and addresses the resulting requirements as world food production develops during the next 40 years. The authors use data to analyze factors influencing crop production now and indications of what is to come, and they show how research regarding nutrient use, recovery, and recycling is crucial.

Seminar presentations are available at http://www.ncfar.org/Hill_Seminar_Series.asp. The seminar is open to the public and the media.

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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 in its sixth year, regularly presents leading-edge researchers working to provide answers to pressing issues confronting the public and Congress. The Hill Seminar Series helps demonstrate the value of public investment in food and agricultural research—investment that returns 45 percent per year on average, and $20 in economic benefit from every $1 investment in food and ag research.

Go to 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; or contact Tom Van Arsdall, Executive Director, at tom@vanarsdall.com or (703) 509-4746.

CAST is an international consortium of scientific and professional societies, companies, and nonprofit organizations. It assembles, interprets, and communicates credible science-based information regionally, nationally, and internationally to legislators, regulators, policymakers, the media, the private sector, and the public. CAST Issue Paper #51 will be available at www.cast-science.org as of March 18.