AG SUSTAINABILITY—FIELD TO MARKET

The Role of Sustainable Agriculture Initiatives in Global Economic Competitiveness

July 15, 2013
PROGRAM

Welcome and Introduction

CHRISTY BIRDSONG
NATIONAL C-FAR REPRESENTATIVE

Distinguished Speaker

DR. MARTY MATLOCK
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PROGRAM DIRECTOR
CENTER FOR AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL SUSTAINABILITY

Open Forum

Closing

CHRISTY BIRDSONG

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ABSTRACT
According to the USDA’s FY 2013 Outlook for US Agricultural Trade (USDA Release 0110.13, May 31, 2013), ag exports from the US will be almost $140 billion. This record export value reflects a 44.5 percent increase over the 2009 value of $96.3 billion. The value of these exports is far greater than just the economic support to US producers; they support over a million jobs, increase food security around the globe, and mitigate food price shocks that affect the well-being of over 2 billion people. The emergence of ag sustainability certification programs, especially in Europe, represents a challenge for maintaining this growth in US producer exports. Programs such as the Round Table on Responsible Soy and the Better Cotton Initiative have been developed to improve Key Performance Indicators across agricultural production sectors. Unless US producers can demonstrate compliance with their metrics, these programs will affect US producer’s access to markets. Ag producers in the US are among the most sustainable in the world by almost every Key Performance Indicator. Sustainable ag initiatives in the US include Field to Market: The Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture, focused on row crops; Stewardship Index for Specialty Crops, focused on specialty crops: and the National Initiative for Sustainable Agriculture, focused on animal agriculture. We have established strong methods for benchmarking and monitoring key performance indicators across these initiatives. This seminar will provide a review of the challenge of developing and reconciling global metrics for sustainable agriculture, outline the common criteria for metrics, and provide an overview of the Field to Market Key Performance Indicators for US corn, soybeans, cotton and wheat. The role of research from Land Grant Universities and innovations from Agricultural Biotechnology Companies will be discussed.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY
Marty Matlock, Ph.D., is Executive Director of the UA Office for Sustainability and Program Director in the Center for Agricultural and Rural Sustainability. He is a Professor in the Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department at the University of Arkansas. Dr. Matlock received his Ph.D. in Biosystems Engineering from Oklahoma State University in 1996. The focus of Dr. Matlock’s research is development of metrics that inform practices in sustainable design and management, to increase the resilience and effectiveness of human-dominated ecosystems including urban, agricultural, and rural systems. As Executive Director for Sustainability Dr. Matlock coordinates academic, research, outreach, and facilities efforts in sustainable systems across the UA campus. He serves on the US Secretary of Agriculture’s 21st Century Agriculture Committee, as Chair of the Cherokee Nation Environmental Protection Commission, and as science advisor for sustainability for 12 food and ag product companies.
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