SHIFTING WINDS IN INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
What's Behind Africa's Turnaround?

Washington, DC—May 13, 2014, For Immediate Release – Economic research on demographic and impact trends for international agricultural development will be the focus of a National C-FAR research seminar on Monday, May 19. The seminar will occur twice—first at 10 AM ET in 337 Russell Senate Office Building, and again at 12 PM ET in 1300 Longworth House Office Building. The presenter is Dr. William A. Masters, Professor and Chair of the Department of Food and Nutrition Policy at the Friedman School of Nutrition, Tufts University.

"International agricultural development is driven by a multitude of factors. After decades of investment in development, we are now seeing big payoffs in terms of economic opportunity and gradual poverty reduction all across Africa," says Dr. Masters, Member of the Council on Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics’ Blue Ribbon Panel on Development. “Africa had been held back and is now being helped by some of the same trends that drove Asian development. We can anticipate those changes, and seize the moment through strategic investment in agriculture and nutrition.”

“These presentations provide excellent examples 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:** Over the past decade, many African countries have reversed their earlier economic decline and achieved some of the world’s fastest rates of economic growth and job creation. This turnaround is associated with slow-moving trends in rural demography and agricultural productivity that lifted economic prospects in Asia from the 1980s, leaving Africa as the world’s poorest continent since the 1990s. Those winds have now shifted, creating economic opportunities in African agriculture and the prospect of rapid improvement in food security, nutrition and health. Today’s seminar discusses recent evidence on the speed and timing of rural development in Africa and other regions, and what these trends mean for US foreign assistance and agricultural development policy.

The seminar is open to the public and the media.

*******

National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research (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 tenth 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.

The Council on Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics (C-FARE) is a non-profit organization based in Washington, DC. C-FARE promotes the work of applied economists and serves as a catalyst for incorporating economic thinking into the analysis of food, agricultural and resource decisions. We serve as a conduit between the academic research and extension community and Washington, DC policymakers and agency personnel, matching expertise to public needs.

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.