BATTLING THE WICKED PROBLEM OF HERBICIDE RESISTANCE

THE HUMAN DIMENSIONS OF HERBICIDE RESISTANCE EVOLUTION

Washington, DC—December 1, 2015, for Immediate Release – Research on the human dimensions of herbicide resistance will be the subject of National C-FAR’s research seminar on Friday, December 4, at noon in 1300 Longworth House Office Building. The presenter is Dr. David Shaw, Mississippi State University.

"An interdisciplinary research and outreach effort will be required to overcome the barriers to adoption of diverse production practices required to manage herbicide resistance and ensure sustainable crop production into the future," says Shaw.

“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).

Highlights: Despite decades of work to raise awareness and promote better management practices, the list of herbicide resistant weeds continues to grow and their grip on farmers’ fields continues to spread. While a series of best management practices has been developed for herbicide resistance management, growers are not adopting diverse practices due to a complex interaction of social, economic, and regulatory barriers. Sociologists refer to this as a "wicked problem", one that has multiple and complex causes that defy simple solutions. Albert Einstein has been widely quoted in defining insanity as “doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result.” This concept is no better portrayed than with the current situation we are in with herbicide resistance. Continuing to take the same approaches, doing “more of the same” surely will have a predictable outcome. Therefore, an interdisciplinary research and outreach effort will be required to overcome the barriers to adoption of diverse production practices required to ensure sustainable crop production into the future. A combination of community-based approaches, regulations and incentives, educational programs, new management technologies, and an overall integrated approach to weed management will be essential if we are to begin to effectively address managing the threat of herbicide resistance. It will require partnerships with growers, NGOs, the science community, commodity groups, landowners, lenders – everyone involved in the decision-making process – if we are to be successful.

The seminar is open to the public and the media.

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The 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.

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.