THE NATIONAL COALITION FOR FOOD & AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

THE LATEST INNOVATION IN PLANT BREEDING:

GENOME EDITING

September 19, 2016
PROGRAM

Welcome and Introduction

DR. BERNICE SLUTSKY
NATIONAL C-FAR REPRESENTATIVE

Distinguished Speaker

DR. ANN BLECHL
RESEARCH LEADER, CROP IMPROVEMENT AND GENETICS
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE, USDA
ARS WESTERN REGIONAL RESEARCH CENTER, ALBANY, CA

Open Forum

Closing

DR. BERNICE SLUTSKY

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; or contact Tom Van Arsdall, Executive Director, at tom@vanarsdall.com.
ABSTRACT
Plant breeding has evolved over thousands of years since our ancestors first domesticated plants. Although plant breeders still select the best plants for their desired goals - such as higher yields, disease resistance, food with longer shelf lives and better nutrition - the tools and information that they use have become increasingly sophisticated. Plant breeders can now take advantage of increased understanding of plant science, genetics and genome sequences to more precisely make improvements in plant varieties. Learn how genome editing works and its potential to more economically and efficiently sustain the diverse, nutritious and high quality food we enjoy today.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY
Ann Blechl, Ph.D., received her Ph.D. in Genetics from the University of Wisconsin – Madison, where she was part of the team that first isolated human hemoglobin genes. She completed two postdoctoral terms, one in plant molecular biology at the ARCO Plant Cell Research Institute in Dublin, CA, and one in yeast genetics at the University of California - Berkeley. In 1986, she joined the USDA’s Agricultural Research Service as a Research Geneticist stationed at the Western Regional Research Center in Albany, California. In November of 2014, she became Research Leader of the Crop Improvement & Genetics Unit and currently supervises 10 scientists and their staffs. Dr. Blechl’s research utilizes molecular biology and genetic transformation in wheat to study genes and proteins that underlie bread dough handling and baking properties, and resistances to fungal pathogens. One goal of her research is to refine genetic engineering technologies to make them more useful for crop improvement and more acceptable to the general public. She was a member of the organizing committee that launched the Biotechnology Division of the American Association of Cereal Chemists International and chaired that division in 1998.
SEMINAR SERIES DESCRIPTION

National C-FAR’s Seminar Series regularly presents leading-edge researchers to address pressing issues confronting the public and Congress. National C-FAR and the Seminar Series serve as a resource to policymakers and staff.

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