MORE THAN JUST THE MALL: TURFGRASS IS A MODERN CROP

Washington, DC – October 3, 2019, for Immediate Release –

The importance of research exploring weed management in turfgrass will be the subject of a National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research (NCFAR) seminar on Friday, October 7 at a 10:00 am seminar in 328A Russell Senate Office Building, and again at a noon luncheon in 1334 Longworth House Office Building. The presenter is James Brosnan, Ph.D., University of Tennessee (UT). Brosnan is a Professor in the Plant Sciences Department at UT and Director of the UT Weed Diagnostics Center.

“Turfgrass improves our climate, public health, and economy,” says Brosnan. “Research supporting integrated approaches for controlling turfgrass weeds is vital to protecting these benefits.”

“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 Andy LaVigne, President of NCFAR.

Highlights: Turfgrass is now the predominant crop that Americans interact with daily. Found in lawns, parks, and all areas of urban green-space, turfgrass improves our climate, public health, and economy. Whether improving atmospheric conditions, filtering pollutants from ground water, or reducing graffiti and overall violence in urban settings, the benefits of turfgrass are abundant. Weeds of turfgrass threaten these benefits and must be controlled. Research supporting integrated approaches for controlling turfgrass weeds has been limited when compared to traditional crops such as corn and soybean, resulting in an over-reliance on herbicides to control weeds. Recently, the United States Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA) supported research on integrated approaches for controlling a single weed species of turfgrass, annual bluegrass (Poa annua). Our project will provide solutions for controlling this one species with fewer chemicals. However, other species also pose problems and resources will be needed to inform citizens how to best control them in turfgrass, a crop Americans in every Congressional district interact with daily.

The seminar is open to the public and the media. ******

The National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research (NCFAR) 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. NCFAR’s Hill Seminar Series, now in its fourteenth 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 NCFAR President Andy LaVigne 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.