Media Advisory

AGRICULTURE—SCIENCE FOR ALL AMERICANS

Promoting Ag Science Through the Food and Agriculture Research Experience for Teachers (RET) Program

Washington, DC, October 18 – For Immediate Release – The Food and Agriculture Research Experience for Teachers (RET) program is the subject of National C-FAR’s “Lunch~N~Learn” Hill Seminar on Monday, October 24. The seminar will be presented at noon in 1302 Longworth House Office Building. The featured presenters are Professors Jon Pedersen and Tiffany Heng-Moss, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

“Teachers gain significant knowledge about the nature of science and soybeans and how to use soybeans as a relevant model organism for the teaching science and take practical lessons to use with students back to their classrooms,” said Pedersen.

“Using cross-disciplinary systems thinking and inquiry, teachers can help their students appreciate the role of science and agriculture in their lives and the world around them,” said Heng-Moss.

“This presentation provides an excellent example of the value of federally funded food and agricultural research 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 & Agricultural Research (National C-FAR).

The goal of the Food and Agriculture RET program—is to provide teachers the tools and knowledge necessary to communicate and educate the youth of Nebraska on the role of science and agriculture (using soybeans) in their lives, the lives of their families and the impact of science and agriculture on the state, region and nation. Key messages: systems-thinking and inquiry is a model for improving science and food/agriculture literacy; science and agriculture, in general, and soy production specifically are critical to the economy of Nebraska and the U.S.; a strong science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) foundation is essential for continuing America’s competitiveness in a global economy; scientific research is key to increasingly profitable soybean production and to increased demand for soybeans—and it is important for teachers and children (K-12) to understand this perspective; there are many opportunities for careers in scientific and agricultural research; soy production is environmentally sustainable, a nutritious source of protein for animals, and a sustainable feedstock for bio-based products; and food and agriculture can be used as a vehicle for understanding many concepts in science. Teachers gain significant knowledge about the nature of science and soybeans and how to use soybeans as a relevant model organism for the teaching science and take practical lessons to use with students back to their classrooms.

The seminar is open to the public and the media.

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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 sixth 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, contact Tom Van Arsdall, Executive Director, at tom@vanarsdall.com or (703) 509-4746.