

News & Information for Animal Agriculture

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NIAA Annual Conference Will Zero in on Meeting Growing Consumer Demands with Integrity

If estimates are correct, nearly twice as much food will need to be produced to feed the world's growing population by 2050.

"With limited resources, it will be even more important that animal agriculture continues to produce food, milk and fiber in responsible and sustainable ways that meet consumers' expectations," states Dr. Nevil Speer, University of Western Kentucky and chair of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture's annual conference planning committee.

"As such, the 2011 Annual Conference of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture will explore the growing necessity of involving consumers as stakeholders in food production.

"As stakeholders, consumers need to have accurate and complete information on the many issues surrounding meat, dairy and fiber production in order to understand the importance of evolving production practices. Areas to be explored at the Annual Conference will include the elements of a stable food supply, food security, food safety, animal agriculture's importance in the ecosystem and effective ways to communicate with stakeholders.

NIAA's Annual Conference will kick off with a general session titled "Elements of a Stable Food Supply," with this session serving as the foundation for the remaining four sessions.

Dr. Speer explains that the first general session will frame the Annual Conference program, establishing and illustrating the need for food and demands on producers. The case will also be made why it is important for consumers to have a stake in how food is produced. (Annual Conference agenda with presentations and speakers is provided on Pages 3 & 4)

Session V, the last session of the Annual Conference, will be devoted to "Building Consensus and Developing Solutions."

"This session will build upon discussions from the first general session as well as presentations and discussions in the Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning species committee and issue council sessions," Dr. Speer adds. "With the challenges defined in the first general session, the final session will allow for more specific topic presentations and input from committees and councils in all areas of food production—from food production capabilities to legal challenges and ramifications to food production to perspectives of food animal producers and retailers."

NIAA's 2011 Annual Conference is set for April 11-14 in San Antonio, Texas, at the Omni San Antonio at the Colonnade. The conference is open to members and non-members of NIAA.

"We're going to cover food animal production from many angles, with an emphasis on integrity, responsibility and sustainability while meeting consumer expectations." Dr. Speer states. "If you care about food animal production, this is a 'shouldn't miss' conference."

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The official newsletter of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture. The National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA) is a non-profit, membership-driven organization that unites and advances animal agriculture—the beef, dairy, equine, goat, poultry, sheep and swine industries. NIAA is dedicated to programs that work towards the eradication of diseases that pose risk to the health of animals, wildlife and humans; promotes a safe and wholesome food supply for our nation and abroad; and promotes best practices in environmental stewardship, animal health and well-being. NIAA members include farmers, ranchers, veterinarians, scientists, state and federal officials and business leaders.

The Time is Now

Wow, how fast time flies. Winter is here, snow is the norm and temperatures are cold just about everywhere. Seems only yesterday I pulled fresh tomatoes out of the garden. Now that the winter is upon us and, crops are gone, the meeting season is starting again.

February, March and April will be filled with producer and industry meetings. There certainly is not a lack of topics to discuss this year.

Producers are being bombarded right now with topics that in the "olden days" were not on the agenda. Twenty years ago how many farmers would have predicted we would have topics like animal welfare, livestock marketing issues, consumer perception, food safety and waste management legislation all on the same agenda? Unfortunately the days where a livestock producer could focus solely on the production aspect of the farm are gone. One has to look at all micro and macro influences on your business.

NIAA has had a long-standing tradition of providing dialog and education on many topics involving animal agriculture. We recognize that

there are other organizations focusing their efforts on particular topics such as for example animal well-being or livestock marketing issues. The role of NIAA is not to be duplicative. Thus, I am really excited about the upcoming annual meeting and the topic of the conference.

Many of us look at how we will be producing food maybe tomorrow, next month and even five years from now and meet the various demands and remain profitable. At this conference, however, we are setting our sights further out.

We need to look 40 years ahead and formulate how animal agriculture needs to evolve in order to feed a growing world population with less resources available to them. We will not be doing this is any longer in a vacuum. Consumer expectations of how we produce their food need to be part of this.

Solving this challenge will take the combined expertise of all involved, and the work needs to start now. All aspects of food production need to be laid out on the table. We need to look at livestock housing and husbandry, genetics, feeding systems, etc.



*Dr. Robert Fourdraine,
NIAA Chairman &
COO of Wisconsin
Livestock
Identification
Consortium*

We have to do all this while being responsible producers and still be economically viable.

NIAA's upcoming annual conference will serve as a start to these discussions. Just so you know, we are not the first to do so. Other countries have already started the dialog. We live in a world economy now, and we will potentially be competing with them 30-40 years from now. The time is now, and we need to bring all stakeholders in animal agriculture together to solve this challenge. I look forward to seeing you in San Antonio, April 11-14.

2011 Annual Conference Platinum Sponsor



NIAA Welcomes These New Members

Alabama Cattlemen's Association
Darling International
Farm Pilot Project Coordination
Koberstein Farms
KSU/Dept of Animal Sciences/Industry
National Farmers Union
National Livestock Credit Corp.
North Carolina State University
Texas Cattle Feeders Association
University of Tennessee



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2011 NIAA Annual Conference
“Meeting Growing Consumer Demands with Integrity”
April 11-14, San Antonio, Texas



Monday, April 11

- 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. NIAA Board of Directors Meeting
- 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. NIAA Committee Leaders Briefing
- 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. NIAA New Director Orientation

Tuesday Morning, April 12

- 6:45 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. **Session I — General Session — “Elements of a Stable Food Supply”**
 - “Food Security and the Implications of World Economic Conditions and the Role of Animal Agriculture”
Dr. Terry Barr, Senior Director of Industry Research, CoBank, Washington, D.C.
 - “The Overarching Demand for Food and Implications for Resource Use and Ecosystems”
Dr. Frank Mitloehner, Associate Professor and Air Quality Extension Specialist, University of California-Davis, Davis, Calif.
 - “Consumers’ Perceptions and Role in Understanding Current and Future Production Practices”
Mr. Charlie Arnot, Center for Food Integrity, Kansas City, Mo.
- 10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Break
- 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. **Session II — Species Committee Meetings**

Bovine Committee	Equine Committee	Poultry Committee
Small Ruminant Committee	Swine Committee	

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**NIAA Annual Conference
 Registration Fee Information**

Full registration for NIAA member:
 Registering before March 1: \$325
 Registering after March 1: \$375

Full registration for non-NIAA member:
 Registering before March 1: \$400
 Registering after March 1: \$375

One-day registration: \$275

Student registration: \$50/day

Guest attending only Tuesday evening’s NIAA Awards Reception: \$25

Registration forms are online at www.animalagriculture.org

You have a choice of registering directly online or you can obtain a registration form, fill it out and fax it to NIAA. NIAA will refund registration fees, less a \$75 administration charge, prior to March 28. No refunds will be honored after that time. Substitutions are welcome.



2011 NIAA Annual Conference
“Meeting Growing Consumer Demands with Integrity”
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Tuesday Afternoon, April 12

- 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Lunch Break & NIAA Annual Membership Business Meeting
- 1:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. **Session III — Issues Council Meetings**
Animal Care Council
Animal Health Emergency Management Council
Global Animal Health, Food Security & Trade Council
- 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. NIAA Networking and Awards Reception

Wednesday, April 13

- 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. USAHA District-at-Large Meeting
- 7:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 8:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. **Session IV — Issues Council Meetings**
Animal Agriculture Advocacy Council Emerging Diseases Council
Animal Identification & Information Systems Council
- 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Lunch Break (on your own)
- 1:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. **Session V — General Session — Building Consensus and Developing Solutions**
“Producer Perspectives and Initiatives on Increasing Food Production with Integrity”
Mr. Clint Hickman, Hickman Family Farms, Buckeye, Ariz.
“Legal Challenges and Ramifications of Food Production Systems and Food Safety”
Mr. Mark Anstoetter, Shook, Hardy & Bacon, Kansas City, Mo.
“Producers Ability to Remain Profitable in the Midst of Increasing Production and Demand--Risks and Rewards”
Farm Credit Services
“Addressing Consumer Concerns with Modern Food Production: Bringing Producers, Academia and Health Professionals Together”
Mr. David Schmidt, President & CEO, International Food Information Council, Washington, D.C.
“International Perspective on Initiatives to Increase Food Production Capabilities in Responsible Systems”
Dr. Peter Groot Koerkamp, Professor in Biosystems Engineering/Agrotechnology & Interim Professor in Animal Production Systems, Wageningen University, Netherlands
- 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. NIAA Board of Directors & Committee Leadership Meeting

Thursday, April 14

- 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. Public Update Session in USDA/APHIS/VS 2015 Working Group Progress

**Special Room Rates
Available at Conference
Headquarters:
Omni San Antonio
at the Colonnade**

The 2011 NIAA Annual Conference will be conducted at the Omni San Antonio at the Colonnade, San Antonio, Texas.

A block of rooms is reserved until March 25 at a special nightly rate of \$117 for single or double occupancy.

Reservations can be made online at <http://www.omnihotels.com/FindAHotel/SanAntonio/MeetingFacilities/2011NIAAAnnualConference4.aspx> or by calling 1-800-THE-OMNI (1-800-849-6664). When making reservations, we suggest that you advise the reservations agent that you are with the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA) Annual Conference and verify the rate.

AGSIGHT

by Nevil C. Speer, PhD, MBA, Western Kentucky University

Food prices have sparked a media feeding frenzy of late (pun intended). The interest stemming from the U.N.'s food price index report: December marked the sixth consecutive month of higher prices and 2010 ended by establishing a new index record. Daniel Gustafson, UN FAO Director, noted, "Things could become explosive again in 2011, and that's what people are concerned about." And thus we've witnessed a flurry of coverage and commentary.

Much of the reaction has been relatively gloomy. Foremost being Lester Brown's (President, Earth Policy Institute) recent publication, "The Great Food Crisis of 2011." The paper highlights several key indicators of impending global adversity:

- Population growth: "...we are still adding 80 million people each year."
- Economic growth: "...some 3 billion people moving up the food chain, eating great quantities of grain-intensive livestock and poultry products."
- Ethanol: "...U.S. investment in ethanol distilleries sets the stage for direct competition between cars and people for the world grain harvest."
- Soil erosion: "...one-third of the world's cropland is losing topsoil faster than new soil is forming through natural processes..."
- Water: "...aquifer depletion is fast shrinking the amount of irrigated area in many parts of the world..."
- Agricultural productivity: "...shrinking backlog of untapped technologies..."
- Global warming: "...making it more difficult to expand the world grain harvest fast enough to keep up with the record pace of demand."
- Mountain glaciers: "...ice melt from

glaciers helps sustain not only the major rivers of Asia during the dry season...but also the irrigation systems dependent on these rivers. Without this ice melt, the grain harvest would drop precipitously and prices would rise accordingly."

- Ice sheets: "...melting ice sheets in Greenland and West Antarctica, combined with thermal expansion of the oceans, threaten to raise the sea level by up to six feet.

Brown's conclusion being, "The current surge in world grain prices and soybean prices, and in food prices more broadly, is not a temporary phenomenon. We can no longer expect that things will soon return to normal, because in a world with a rapidly changing climate system there is no norm to return to," and hence governments must act quickly to "redefine security and shift expenditures." Hunger is inevitable.

But is humanity really on the cusp of disaster? Perhaps....but let's back up and view this from the broader perspective. Claims of catastrophe and doom are NOT a new phenomenon. Mark Ridley explains in his recent book, *The Rational Optimist* (c. 2010):

"The fashionable reason for pessimism changed, but the pessimism was constant. In the 1960s the population explosion and global famine were top of the charts, in the 1970s the exhaustion of resources, in the 1980s acid rain, in the 1990s pandemics, in the 2000s global warming. One by one these scares came and (all but the last) went. Were we just lucky?...Or was it the pessimism that was unrealistic?"

"Let me make a square concession at the start: the pessimists are right when they say that, if the world continues as it is, it will end in disaster for all humanity.

If all transport depends on oil, and oil runs out, then transport will cease. If agriculture continues to depend on irrigation and aquifers are depleted, then starvation will ensue. But notice the conditional: if.

"The world will not continue as it is. That is the whole point of human progress, the whole message of cultural evolution, the whole import of dynamic change - the whole thrust of this book. The real danger comes from slowing down change.

"It is my proposition that the human race has become a collective problem-solving machine and it solves problems by changing its ways. It does so through invention driven often by the market: scarcity drives up price; that encourages the development of alternatives and of efficiencies. It has happened often in history...The pessimists' mistake is extrapolationism: assuming that the future is just a bigger version of the past."

Perhaps higher food prices and hunger aren't inevitable - there's hope out there.

Does that suggest we should take future solutions for granted? To the contrary; agriculture takes its mission of feeding the world seriously and is responding accordingly.

Case in point, the National Institute for Animal Agriculture 2011 Annual Conference. The meeting theme is defined by the following statement: "It is estimated that by 2050 nearly twice as much food will need to be produced to feed the world's growing population! With limited resources, it will be even more important that animal agriculture continue to produce food, milk and fiber in responsible and sustainable ways that meet consumers' expectations." And while some may fret that short-term price spikes portend certain disaster going forward, the perspective overlooks the ingenuity and innovation capacity of agriculture and dismisses historic advances that have been made in the previous 50-100 years.

Ridley is also on target when he
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Members in the News & Other Items

Pork Industry Honors Four

The Pork Checkoff, along with its co-sponsor *National Hog Farmer* magazine, has selected four pork production operations to be honored as the 2010 Pork Industry Environmental Stewards. The award, now in its 16th year, recognizes producers who demonstrate a firm commitment to safeguarding the environment and their local communities.

This year's award recipients are Pembroke Oaks Farm, Wheatfield, Ind.; Ranch Creek Farm, Carroll, Iowa; Pleasant Hill Farm, Barnett, Mo.; and L&M Daughtry Farm, Clinton, N.C.

Goat Q&A Booklet About Johne's Disease Available

The National Johne's Education Initiative partnered with the Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine to produce a new Q&A booklet specifically for goat producers that addresses Johne's disease. To receive a complimentary copy of the booklet, contact NIAA at niaa@animalagriculture.org

SES Plan Promotes Food Security, Animal Health

The final draft of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Secure Egg Supply Plan, a component of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Plan (FAD PRoP) is now available to the general public. The Secure Egg Supply Plan highlights the importance of food supply continuity planning prior to a foreign animal disease outbreak and is a science-based preparedness plan developed by The Egg Sector Working Group which includes representatives of the egg industry, USDA-APHIS, USDA-CEAH, the University of Minnesota and Iowa State University.

The goal of the SES Plan is to safely move eggs and egg products within, out of and into an HPAI Control Area without endangering the health of uninfected flocks. The plan also supports a continuous supply of eggs for the U.S. public, facilitates business continuity for the egg industry and their retail and food service customers and fosters a high level of government, industry and consumer confidence in foreign animal disease preparedness and response efforts.

The SES Plan can be read in full by visiting www.secureeggsupply.com or through the FAD PRoP web site at <https://fadprep.lmi.org>

AGSIGHT

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explains that "scarcity drives up price; that encourages the development of alternatives and of efficiencies." Over the long run, shortages won't be a function of supply. They will result from errant policies. As such, the worst response is to hamper the market because it inherently manages scarcity.

When allowed to work, higher prices discourage consumption on one side and encourage production on the other side. The recent Russian embargo on grain exports is a perfect example of what NOT to do. The policy disallowed producers to access the world market. Consequently, it sends exactly the wrong signal to producers - don't plant more wheat because there's no opportunity for reward on the other side. Policy exacerbates the problem - not production shortfalls.

In the end, the enduring concern shouldn't be about price spikes or lack of production. Rather, the focus needs to be upon agriculture's business framework. Commodities, food products and technology must flow freely throughout the globe to feed its people. However, excessive regulation, corrupt or errant government policy, and absence of open markets will almost certainly guarantee failure. Solutions are possible if we don't impede progress with needless stumbling blocks. After all, agriculture is THE success story of mankind, capable of responding to world needs when allowed to do so.

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NIAA provides specific information on Scrapie and Johnes Disease through two additional websites:

National Scrapie Educational Initiative
www.EradicateScrapie.org

Johnes Information Central at
www.JohnesDisease.org

These and many other materials are available for free. Visit www.AnimalAgriculture.org for more information and order forms.

