

2006 Norman E. Borlaug/World Food Prize International Symposium
The Green Revolution Redux:
Can We Replicate the Single Greatest Period of Food Production in All Human History?
October 19-20, 2006 - Des Moines, Iowa

OPENING CEREMONY

October 19, 2006 - 8:00 - 8:15 a.m.

Ambassador Kenneth Quinn; Ellen Bergfeld

Ambassador Kenneth Quinn

President - World Food Prize Foundation

I want to now invite Dr. Ellen Bergfeld, the Executive Vice President of the American Society of Agronomy of Crop Science and Soil Science, who has some remarks to make. She and I have a connection, though, with Brazil, as we met in Philadelphia at the World Congress of Soil Scientists, they were watching Brazil play in the World Cup on TV. So we were there talking and she was explaining to me about what she has in mind, and I jump up, as there's some exciting play, and then sit down again. Ellen Bergfeld.

Dr. Ellen Bergfeld

Executive Vice President

American Society of Agronomy, Crop and Soil Science Societies

Thank you, Ambassador Quinn, for your very kind invitation. Welcome, distinguished guests, World Food Prize Laureates, both past in the audience and present here on stage. It's a true honor for me to be here with you this morning to help celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the World Food Prize. Those 20 years really belie a much richer connection and history between the recipients and the many organizations that they support.

As a leader of three such organizations, as Ambassador Quinn has mentioned, Agronomy, Crop and Soil Science Societies, we're truly grateful for the longstanding connection that we've had with Dr. Norman Borlaug, the founder of the World Food Prize, as well as many past recipients. Those include M.S. Swaminathan, Ed Knippling, Hank Beachell, who just turned 100 last month and had a really nice birthday party, Pedro Sanchez, and of course Dr. Colin McClung, one of the three that is here on the stage with us this morning.

As we honor the past, we also look forward to the future and some of the great opportunities to collaborate. And as Ambassador Quinn has mentioned, while we talked in Philadelphia in July this past summer, we looked at all the opportunities and the historic connections that our organizations have together as well as those that we're looking at the future.

One of those is the Smithsonian soil exhibit that we are planning to open in 2008. This is going to be greater than 5,000 square feet at the Natural History Museum on the mall in DC, to educate more than six million people who come through that particular museum per year, about the story and the importance of soil science in the world today.

Another great program that is really predicated on the Youth Institute here with the World Food Prize is our Golden Opportunity Scholars Institute that we're kicking off this year. And we've got one of the prior youth interns, Addie Hall, who will be one of our scholars at the institute. And this is really in collaboration with the World Food Prize. We're working to inspire the next generation of individuals to come through and to work in the agricultural, food science, and natural resources areas. And we're very excited about that. We've got more information; if you'd like to stop by, we've got a booth here if you'd like to learn a little bit more about what we're doing.

I'd like to take a moment this morning and also recognize the contributions of John Ruan and the Ruan family in regard to the World Food Prize and the generosity that the family has shared with all of us here to keep this going. I would be remiss if I didn't also mention Al Clausi and bringing this to the Ruan family, as I was reminded of this morning, as we had the opportunity to talk.

Mr. Ruan has had both the vision for the World Food Prize as well as for this downtown area of Des Moines and protecting the agricultural lands that surround Des Moines in his revitalization projects. As an example, one of the great projects – we're sitting and standing in the cornerstone of the legacy that he built, starting back in 1980, six years before the World Food Prize was endowed, was begun. And that's the Marriott Hotel as a cornerstone of his revitalization project here.

Also, this legacy continues. Again, as we look at the past and look at the future, Mr. John Ruan III has succeeded his father as the chairman of the World Food Prize and will continue that historic legacy. I say to the past 20 years, to the next 20 years and beyond, congratulations and thank you.

Ambassador Kenneth Quinn

Thank you, Ellen. That concludes our opening ceremony, so I want to invite all of our participants, you can leave the stage now and to your seats. And then we'll get on to the heavy meat and potatoes.