

**ANNOUNCEMENT: INNOVATE FOR IMPACT CHALLENGE**

Wednesday, October 30, 2024 – 1:45–2:00 PM

*Bill Hunt* – Executive Director, America’s Cultivation Corridor  
*Mashal Husain* – Chief Operating Officer, World Food Prize Foundation  
*Paul Schickler* – Chair, World Food Prize Foundation Council of Advisors

*Paul Schickler*

Good afternoon. How was lunch? In addition to it being good, I hope you networked with all your other partners, friends, associates during the opportunity for lunch. I hope that you did that.

As said, my name is Paul Schickler. I’m chairman of the World Food Prize Foundation. In addition to that, I spent 42 years with Pioneer, the last ten years as president. Now in my post-career years, focused upon working with the startup community, investors and NGOs.

As part of that I’ve had the pleasure over the last 15 years to work with the World Food Prize, both with the Foundation, with the Youth Institute and also with the Borlaug Dialogue. All of that, collectively with the World Food Prize, is focused upon extending Norman Borlaug’s legacy to ensure that through technology and innovation we advance food security for everyone in the world.

But what we’re going to do going forward as part of this announcement is we’re going to widen the funnel a little bit so that we can bring in additional people, technology, innovators, entrepreneurs, startups and founders to help continue to drive innovation in the agriculture and food space.

So as you heard from the video, we’re excited to announce this program, and it’s called Innovate for Impact Challenge. It’s an initiative to inspire and really bring forward the next breakthrough in technology that will expand our opportunities for a food-secure world. The Challenge is going to invite innovative thinkers to bring forward their ideas on how they’re going to transform the world, just like Norman Borlaug did. We’re looking for the next one.

I would invite you all to, if you have not, visit the Hall of Laureates building. It’s just south about three or four blocks; it’s within walking distance. Within that building are the laureate bowls, and there’s nine that each are identified. And I’m going to go down and list what each of the nine represent.

One is for animal science and aquaculture, another for soil science, water and conservation. A third, for nutrition and health, plant science and seed science, plant pathology, crop protection, food technology, food safety, policy, research and extension. The eighth is infrastructure, emergency relief, and the ninth is poverty alleviation. But there is a tenth bowl, and the tenth bowl is unidentified; it’s not marked. It’s left unmarked for a purpose, and that is to identify that next technology, that next innovation that hasn’t yet been brought forward that will shape the future of food and agriculture over the decade ahead.

So the Innovate for Impact Challenge was created to fill this bowl, to identify the next Norman Borlaug. So we’ll be looking beyond today’s technology, beyond today’s solution for the next

one. So check out the World Food Prize Foundation website over the next week or two because we will be announcing this program in more detail and offering the opportunity to participate.

So over the next year we'll be taking invitations, nominations so that by the Borlaug Dialogue next year, one year from now, we will bring three finalists forward for presentation in front of all of you so that you can see their pitch on why they ought to be considered for the award winner for the Innovate for Impact Challenge.

The World Food Prize Foundation is proud to partner with America's Cultivation Corridor on this exciting announcement. So please join me in welcoming to the stage the people behind this challenge, and that is the Executive Director of the Cultivation Corridor, Billy Hunt, and Foundation Chief Operating Officer, Mashal Husain.

*Please welcome Billy Hunt, Executive Director of America's Cultivation Corridor, Mashal Husain, Chief Operating Officer, World Food Prize Foundation. And as a special surprise, please welcome two of our distinguished judges, Han Chen and Lazarus Lynch.*

I'm really excited about the Challenge. It's really going to boost us into the next phase of continuing to advance the Norman Borlaug legacy, and, as I said a moment ago, to widen the funnel of innovation to address food security.

But we still have an afternoon ahead of us, and I'm also tremendously excited about that because it does do what I have just been describing, and that is really look at innovation, entrepreneurs, startup, private equity, venture capital and how all of those activities and people will continue to advance agriculture.

So what you'll be seeing in the next sessions this afternoon is individuals representing startups, private equity or venture capital organizations. We'll also have a complete representation of the supply chain all the way from on-the-ground activities, the supply activities that fund or provide inputs to farmers and users. And we're also including animal innovation and technology opportunities in the discussion as well. And then not leading up larger or mature companies, we're going to hear from them about what they look for in new technology and what they are doing to drive change in the agriculture and food space.

So enjoy the opportunity. Thanks for your participation.