

NEWS RELEASE



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Minnesota Agri-Growth Hosts Public Annual Meeting on Sustainability in the Food and Agriculture Industry on Nov. 3

Sustaining a strong future for the food and agriculture industry is the theme of the November 3 Minnesota Agri-Growth Council Annual Meeting at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

ST. PAUL, Minn. (October 1, 2009) — The 2009 Minnesota Agri-Growth Council (Agri-Growth) Annual Meeting, held on Nov. 3 at the Minneapolis Convention Center, will again focus on contemporary issues facing the food and agriculture industry. The theme centers on the issue of sustainability and corporate social responsibility — something that is becoming increasingly relevant to stakeholders in the food and agriculture industry. This year, speakers will address the trends in “sustainable” agriculture and food production. Food retail companies, food processors, agribusinesses, and farming operations alike have a stake in the “sustainability” of food production. This event is open to the public. Registration information is available here: http://www.agrigrrowth.org/Annual_meeting.html

The day will begin at 8:30 a.m. with the annual members meeting and elections (for members and prospective members only). A special presentation on the agriculture economy by **Michael Swanson, Ph.D.**, chief agriculture economist, **Wells Fargo**, will follow.

The luncheon banquet program begins at noon and features a welcome from **Joe Swedberg, Hormel Foods** and Agri-Growth Council board chair. Agri-Growth will name the annual Distinguished Service Award recipient and show a short video highlighting the recipient (see past recipient videos here: http://www.agrigrrowth.org/distinguished_service.html), **Gene Kahn**, Vice President of Sustainable Development at **General Mills** will deliver a keynote address.

Kicking off the afternoon presentations, **Governor Pawlenty** will deliver his annual *State of the State on Agriculture* address via video-link. Next, attendees will hear an innovative presentation on business trends in an economy going green from **Joel Makower**, Author, *Strategies for the Green Economy – Opportunities and Challenges in the New World of Business*, and Executive Editor, GreenBiz.com. **Kerri Miller**, host of *Midmorning* on Minnesota Public Radio will moderate the afternoon panel discussion on Sustainability Trends Facing the Food and Agriculture Industry. The panel will feature high ranking panelists from the food and agriculture industry commenting on the retail, academic, farm production, and certification and accountability perspectives. Concluding the afternoon sessions will be **U.S. Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, Kathleen Merrigan**. The day will conclude with an evening reception featuring complimentary hors d'oeuvres and cash bar.

To register for the annual meeting, visit http://www.agrigrrowth.org/Annual_meeting.html. Interested individuals can also call 651-905-8900 or email info@agrigrrowth.org. Registration costs are: \$120 for an individual member/affiliate, \$140 for an individual nonmember, \$75 for a student and \$900 for a table of eight. **Special rates are available for members of the media.** Sponsorship and exhibit opportunities are also available. For more information contact Tony Mondry at 651-905-8900 or tony.mondry@agrigrrowth.org.

This event is made possible through the platinum sponsor Faegre & Benson. In addition, the current premium sponsors include Hormel Foods and CHS, Inc. Special thanks also goes to the speaker sponsor, Gislason & Hunter.

The Minnesota Agri-Growth Council (www.agrigrrowth.org) is an advocate for the state's food and agriculture industry. Founded in 1968, the Council is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that represents the shared interests of its 200-plus members, which include food and agriculture businesses, organizations and producers, as well as the service industries that support them.

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