

**The National Press Club
Washington, D.C.**

All times listed below are in Eastern.

8:00 AM WELCOME

- Sara Wyant, Founder and Editor, Agri-Pulse Communications, Inc.

8:15 AM SHOW ME THE MONEY: KEY LESSONS FROM RURAL ENTREPRENEURS

Moderator: Spencer Chase, Managing Editor, Agri-Pulse Communications, Inc.

- Kevin Johansen, Founder, AgButler
- John Wepking, Founder, Meadowlark Farm and Mill
- Kyle Mohler, PhD, Founder & CEO, Insignum AgTech
- Darin Riggs, Co-founder, Riggs Beer Company

9:00 AM BIOMANUFACTURING WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A BOOM FOR RURAL AMERICA. WHERE IS IT WORKING AND WHY?

Moderator: Philip Brasher, Executive Editor, Agri-Pulse Communications, Inc.

- Dr. Nacú Hernández, COO & Co-founder, SoyLei Innovations
- James Glueck, Executive Director, Plant Based Products Council
- Tom Dower, VP, Public Policy, LanzaTech
- Beth Conerty, Associate Director for Business Development, Integrated Bioprocessing Research Laboratory
- Betsy Dirksen Londrigan, Administrator, USDA Rural Business-Cooperative Service

9:45 AM BREAK

10:15 AM TURNING WASTE INTO RURAL REVENUES

Moderator: Spencer Chase

- Stanley Janicki, Chief Revenue Officer, Sedron Technologies
- Samuel Liebl, Director of Sustainability and Communications, Denali
- Scott Kalb, Co-founder, Chairman, Bright Feeds
- Kent Swisher, President & CEO, North American Renderers Association (NARA)

11:00 AM SUSTAINABLE AVIATION FUEL GRAND CHALLENGE MEETS BILLION TONS OF BIOMASS: HOW AGRICULTURE IS DIVERSIFYING TO SOLVE GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

Moderator: Philip Brasher

- Tim Obitts, CEO, Alder Renewables
- Alan Weber, Founding Partner, MARC-IV
- Alex Menotti, VP of Government Affairs, Policy, & Sustainability, LanzaJet

11:45 AM LUNCH

12:30 PM LUNCHEON KEYNOTE: A CONVERSATION WITH AGRICULTURE'S NEWEST AVIATION CUSTOMERS

Moderator: Kevin Welsh, VP of Environmental Affairs & Chief Sustainability Officer, Airlines for America

- Gene Gebolys, CEO, World Energy
- Amelia DeLuca, Chief Sustainability Officer, Delta Air Lines

- Dr. Patrick Gruber, CEO, Gevo

1:00 PM HOW THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SECTORS FEED THE U.S. ECONOMY

Moderator: Sara Wyant

- John Bode, President & CEO, Corn Refiners Association
- Alexandra Dunn, President & CEO, CropLife America

1:15 PM KEYS TO REBUILDING EXPORT MARKETS AND OVERSEAS DEMAND

Moderator: Jeff Nalley, Contributing Editor, Agri-Pulse Communications, Inc.

- Dana Brooks, CEO, Pet Food Institute
- Kam Quarles, CEO, National Potato Council
- Charles Jefferson, Vice President, Federal & International Public Policy, Wine Institute
- Dan Halstrom, President & CEO, U.S. Meat Export Federation

2:00 PM HOW LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS CAN GENERATE MORE ON-FARM REVENUE

Moderator: Sara Wyant

- Rick McNary, Founder, Shop Kansas Farms
- Shannon Schlecht, Executive Director, Agricultural Utilization Research Institute (AURI)
- Deeann Lufkin, Founder, CannonBelles Cheese
- Corwin Heatwole, Founding Farmer & Chairman of the Board, Farmer Focus

2:45 PM BREAK

3:15 PM THE INNOVATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES BEHIND “CLIMATE SMART”

Moderator: Sara Wyant

- Dr. Jackie Applegate, President, Bayer Crop Science
- Jeff Simmons, President & CEO, Elanco Animal Health
- Cathy Burns, President & CEO, International Fresh Produce Association
- Aaron Wetzel, Vice President, Production and Precision Ag, John Deere
- Dr. Lars Dyrud, CEO, EarthOptics

4:00 PM PERSPECTIVE

Moderator: Philip Brasher

- Senate Ag Committee Ranking Member. John Boozman, R-Ark.

4:15 PM PERSPECTIVE

Moderator: Sara Wyant

- U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack

4:45 PM PERSPECTIVE

Moderator: Sara Wyant

- Senate Ag Committee Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich.

5:00 PM CUSTOMER APPRECIATION RECEPTION

March 18, 2024
#AgandFood24

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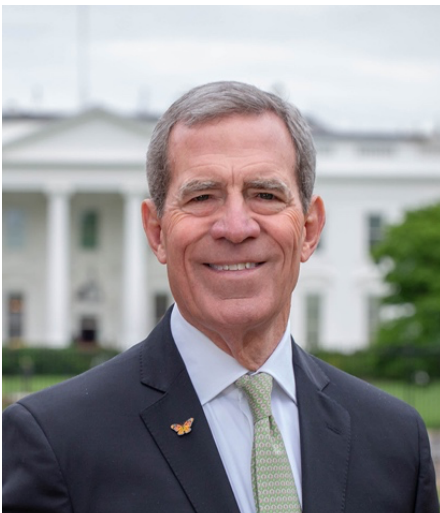




Jackie Applegate

Dr. Jacqueline (Jackie) Applegate serves as President of Bayer Crop Science North America and is a member of the Crop Science Executive Leadership Team. As a transformative leader, Jackie has an exceptional track record of driving commercial success, building high-performing teams and incubating breakthrough innovation. Jackie's career at Bayer began in 1992, and since then, she has held leadership positions all over the world. Most recently, Jackie served as Head of Global Vegetable Seeds and Environmental Science. Before that, Jackie served in a variety of leadership positions at Bayer, including President of Environmental Science; Senior Bayer Representative for Australia and New Zealand; President of Environmental Science North America; Vice President of Environmental Science Consumer Products; and Head of Global Project Management. In addition, Jackie served as the Culture and Change Management Lead for the Bayer/Monsanto integration.

Jackie is active in multiple philanthropic, community and business organizations. A passionate advocate for ag youth, she serves on the board of trustees of the National 4-H Council. Additionally, she is a member of the CropLife America Board of Directors. A strong leader in career development, Jackie is the National Executive Co-sponsor of Bayer's employee-led resource group GROW, which advocates for women's advancement in leadership. A scientist by training, Jackie holds a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Wright State University, earned her MBA from Rockhurst College, and holds a doctorate in organic chemistry from Iowa State University. In her free time, she enjoys cooking, traveling and spending time with her son, Matthew.



John Bode

John Bode is President & CEO of the Corn Refiners Association, the trade association representing the corn milling industry. He has been involved in every significant change in federal food law since the 1981 Farm Bill.

In private practice, Bode counseled leading food and agriculture trade associations and companies regarding legislative and regulatory policy advocacy, regulatory compliance and congressional investigations. He has served as lead counsel for several of the nation's largest food recalls and general counsel for leading food trade associations.

Bode served in three Presidential appointments at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, including Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Food and Consumer Services. Before joining the USDA in 1981, he was on the staff of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, and served on the staff of then-Governor of Oklahoma David L. Boren.

Born in Oklahoma City, John was educated at the United States Naval Academy and the University of Oklahoma, receiving his B.A. in 1977. He received his J.D. from George Mason University School of Law in 1983.



Sen. John Boozman, R-Ark.

Boozman serves as the ranking member of the Senate Ag Committee in the 118th Congress. He also serves on the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on the Environment and Public Works, where much of the nation's infrastructure policy is developed. He graduated from the Southern College of Optometry in 1977. Boozman entered private practice that same year, co-founding a family business with his brother to ultimately become a major eye care provider to Northwest Arkansas. Boozman is married to the former Cathy Marley and they currently reside in Rogers. The couple has three daughters and four grandchildren.



Dana Brooks

Dana Brooks is the president and CEO of the Pet Food Institute in Washington, D.C.

Dana has worked in government relations for 22 years representing a range of agricultural and food interests. She is a recipient of the Women in Agribusiness Ambassador Award, Woman of Influence by Pet Age magazine in 2019 and 2021 and Top 50 in 2022. Also, she serves as the chair of the board of directors for Pet Partners.



Cathy Burns

Cathy Burns is CEO of the International Fresh Produce Association (IFPA), the largest and most diverse international association serving the entire fresh produce and floral supply chain, and the only one to seamlessly integrate world-facing advocacy and industry-facing support. The association's purpose is to create a vibrant future for all with the members' prosperity in mind.

With 30 years of leadership experience in the grocery industry, she led large teams and transformations across multiple retail banners. Most recently, she served as president of Food Lion, Harveys and Reid's, and was a member of the Delhaize America Executive Committee. She spent 20 years at Hannaford serving in multiple leadership roles across disciplines.

Prior to her current role with IFPA, Burns was the CEO of the Produce Marketing Association from 2013-2021. She was integral in bringing the PMA together with the United Fresh Produce Association. Under her leadership, IFPA

was launched to serve the global fresh produce and floral industries.

Burns was named a 2007 Top Woman in Grocery by *Progressive Grocer* and was awarded *The Packer's* 2008 Produce Marketer of the Year award. She also was named one of *Supermarket News's* Power 50 in 2009 and one of *Mass Market Retailer's* Most Influential Women in Mass Market Retailing in 2010. Lastly, she was recognized as one of the top 25 leaders in the produce and floral industries by *The Packer* in 2018.

Burns inspires audiences on topics such as leadership, consumer trends, company strategy transformations, mergers and acquisitions, and organizational change efforts. She holds bachelor's degrees in management and marketing from the University of Maine and completed coursework in strategic retail management at the College of William and Mary.



Beth Conerty

Beth Conerty currently serves as the Associate Director for Business Development for the Integrated Bioprocessing Research Laboratory and Regional Innovation Officer for the iFAB Tech Hub. Beth received her Bachelor's in Chemistry and Master's in Bioenergy from the University of Illinois, and she received her Ph.D. in Energy Science and Engineering from the University of Tennessee and Oak Ridge National Lab. After grad school, Beth took a job with the Office of Partnerships and Economic Development at Oak Ridge National Lab building the Knoxville, Tennessee, entrepreneurship community where she helped launch Innovation Crossroads – a program that helps energy startups access the resources at the national lab. In her current roles at IBRL, she leads the effort to build relationships with researchers and industry clients and develop the biomanufacturing economy in Central Illinois.

In the six years in her role, Beth has helped shepherd over 100 industry clients through the facility.



Amelia DeLuca

Amelia DeLuca serves as Chief Sustainability Officer at Delta Air Lines, leading Delta on its journey to reach net-zero emissions by 2050 and deliver a more sustainable and elevated travel experience along the way. Prior to her appointment as Chief Sustainability Officer, DeLuca served as Vice President, International Customer Experience and Partner Sustainability. In that role, DeLuca led cross-divisional efforts to deliver a consistent premium customer experience across Delta's partners. She also supported the development of Delta's partner sustainability strategy across Delta's global partner network to enhance and accelerate the alliance's leading sustainability position and provide greater collective impact across the Delta network.

During her 17-year career with Delta, DeLuca has held varied leadership positions within the Sustainability, Global Sales, Revenue Management and Network Planning teams and has been based in Mexico City, Minneapolis, Amsterdam, New York City and Atlanta. She graduated from Washington University in St. Louis with a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics and has her M.B.A. from the University of Amsterdam.

She currently lives in Atlanta with her husband and two daughters.



Betsy Dirksen Londrigan

Betsy Dirksen Londrigan is serving as the Rural Business Cooperative Service Administrator. Dirksen Londrigan has over 20 years of experience in the nonprofit sector, working with community, regional, and state leaders to effect positive change. Dirksen Londrigan is the Lead for the Illinois Basin Rapid Response Team for the Interagency Working Group (IWG) for Energy Communities. She is a lifelong resident of Springfield, Illinois, and is proud that her family members still own and operate the Centennial farm in Central Illinois where her grandmother was raised. Dirksen Londrigan graduated from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and is a former Director at the University of Illinois Springfield.



Tom Dower

In January 2021, carbon recycling company LanzaTech announced the appointment of Tom Dower as Vice President, Public Policy. With over 25 years of experience in government and the private sector, including over 15 years in the U.S. Senate on both sides of the aisle, Dower will lead on all global public policy-related activities for the company.

In 2012, Tom became Senior Director, Government Relations for the North American branch of the world's leading steel company, ArcelorMittal. In this capacity, he coordinated public policy for automotive, energy, environment, climate change, transportation, infrastructure, defense, and health and safety from ArcelorMittal's Washington, D.C. office.

Prior to joining ArcelorMittal, Tom spent over 12 years on the staff of US Senator Arlen Specter (Republican from Pennsylvania) focusing on energy, environmental, and natural resource issues, departing as Deputy Chief of Staff and Legislative Director in 2008. During his time with Senator Specter, he helped enact the abandoned mine reclamation reauthorization and co-authored the Bingaman-Specter "Low Carbon Economy Act" – a bipartisan economy-wide cap-and-trade bill.

After this period in the Senate, he was Vice President of Lighthouse Consulting Group, a Washington, D.C.-based energy and environment consulting firm representing energy sector and environmental group clients including the U.S. Climate Action Partnership (U.S. CAP), a business-environmental-NGO coalition advocating for comprehensive climate legislation.

Tom returned to the U.S. Senate in 2009 as Senior Climate Adviser to Chairman John D. Rockefeller IV (Democrat from West Virginia) through 2012, serving on the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science & Transportation. In that position, he advised Senator Rockefeller and the committee on energy and climate issues including then-pending cap-and-trade legislation and carbon regulations, and co-authored comprehensive carbon capture utilization and storage (CCUS) legislation.

Tom graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from The American University in Washington, D.C., where he was also Director of the Kennedy Political Union (non-partisan speakers bureau). He also graduated

with an associate's degree in liberal arts from Keystone Jr. College in La Plume, Pennsylvania, where he was the Outstanding Traditional Student (valedictorian).

Tom was raised in Northeastern Pennsylvania, and graduated from Tunkhannock Area High School. He currently resides in Silver Spring, Maryland, with his wife, Erin, and their children, Hannah and Zach. Tom and Erin are volunteer singers in the semi-professional Washington Master Chorale, where Tom was the inaugural board chair.

Alexandra Dunn



Alexandra (Alex) Dunn joins CLA after serving as a Partner in the Environmental, Safety, and Incident Response group at the international law firm of Baker Botts, LLP in its Washington, DC office. While at Baker Botts, Alex worked on crop protection issues, chemical regulation, water quality, enforcement, litigation, environmental justice and community engagement, and risk communication.

Alex is one of the top environmental lawyers in the nation, with a strong background in leading organizations. She has nearly three decades of experience working at the local, state, and federal levels of government. Her deep relationships across the nation and passion for transparency, equity, and sustainability, make her a perfect fit for CLA at this moment in time.

From 2019-2021, with unanimous consent confirmation by the U.S. Senate, Alex served as Assistant Administrator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention. There, she was responsible for implementation of programs of critical relevance to CLA and cultivated her passion for agricultural issues.

Prior, she was EPA Administrator for New England from 2018-2019, where she focused on watersheds, enforcement, the agriculture of New England, and environmental justice.

Previously, Alex served as Executive Director and General Counsel of the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS), the non-partisan association of U.S. state and territorial environmental commissioners. She held other dynamic positions in her career, including Executive Director and General Counsel of the Association of Clean Water Agencies (ACWA); Dean of Environmental Law Programs at the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University; General Counsel of the National Association of Clean Water Agencies; and Counsel at the American Chemistry Council.

Alex is a nationally known author on the topics of sustainability, chemical regulation, environmental justice, and watershed management; she also has taught environmental justice at four law schools and is a current Lecturer in Law in Environmental Justice at Catholic University, Columbus School of Law (Fall 2022, 2023) and a Professorial Lecturer in Law at the George Washington University School of Law (Spring 2023, 2024).

Alex is ranked by Chambers as one of the top attorneys in the environmental law field. Lawdragon named her a 2024 Leader in Environmental Law. The National Law Journal recognized her in 2021 as an Energy and Environmental Trailblazer. She serves on the Columbus School of Law Alumni Advisory Council, the Leadership Council of the Environmental Law Institute, the Board of Regents of the American College of Environmental Lawyers, on the American Law Institute's Environmental Law Advisory Panel, and as a leader in the American Bar

Association's Section of Environment, Energy and Resources and on the Section of Litigation's Environmental Litigation Committee.

Alex grew up with a passion for the environment and sustainability as a Girl Scout, equestrian, and outdoor adventurer.

She has been fortunate to call many states home, including New York, Illinois, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Virginia, as well as the District of Columbia. Today she can be found most weekends hiking trails near her home in Loudoun County, Virginia with her two rescue dogs, kayaking on the Potomac River, or visiting one of Loudoun's many farm stands.



Lars Dyrud

Lars Dyrud has founded three companies. He enjoys advising engineers and scientists on innovation and entrepreneurship.

Prior to EarthOptics, Lars founded, developed, and led OmniEarth to a successful exit through acquisition by EagleView Technologies, where he most recently served as the Senior Vice President of Business Development. OmniEarth developed and provided machine-learning-based imagery analytics tools to the insurance, public utility, and land management industries. In his career as a scientist Lars has served as PI on R&D grants and contracts from NSF, DOE, NASA, AFOSR, Air Force SMC, and industry in a range of Earth and Space Science and engineering applications.

He was the founder of the APL Center for Public/Private Partnerships and has led space-related missions and projects as head of the Earth and Space Science group at Draper Laboratory. He previously as senior scientist and section lead at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in the areas of space physics, GPS tomography, Novel Earth observation missions, and mobile applications.

Lars is from Minneapolis, Minnesota, and received a B.A. in Physics from Augsburg College. He was a Fulbright Scholar in space and plasma physics at the University of Oslo and received a Ph.D. from Boston University.



Gene Gebolys

Gene Gebolys is the founder and CEO of World Energy. For over 25 years, World Energy has been at the forefront of commercializing renewable fuels and was the world's first commercial-scale sustainable aviation fuel producer. Today, World Energy is investing over \$15 billion into major new projects in California, Texas, and Newfoundland to help leaders accelerate their efforts to make net-zero real.

Gene holds a Master's in Public Administration from Harvard University and a Bachelor of Science degree in economics & business management from The Ohio State University.



James Glueck

As Plant Based Products Council's Executive Director, James Glueck leads the organization's advocacy for a shift toward a more circular bioeconomy through greater adoption of renewable, plant-based materials. He works to educate stakeholders on programs and policies that will improve the value chain and support the growth of the plant-based products industry, helping to harness its economic potential and deliver a more sustainable future.

Previously, James held many positions with the Torrey Advisory Group, the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry, Senator Mike Johanns, Bunge North America, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

He holds a Bachelor's degree in agricultural development with a minor in business and a certificate in Spanish from Texas A&M University as well as a graduate certificate in Advanced International Affairs from the George Bush School of Government and Public Service.



Dr. Patrick Gruber

Dr. Gruber, CEO and Board Member of Gevo, has spent over 30 years developing and commercializing renewable biobased technologies to replace petrochemicals. His teams have developed and commercialized several renewable resource-based products, including organic acids, plastics, fibers, advanced alcohols, hydrocarbon fuels, and the like. Gruber led the development and commercialization of PLA at Cargill and co-founded Natureworks. As CEO of Gevo, Dr. Gruber leads the business to commercialize Isobutanol for gasoline blendstock, renewable, low carbon jet fuel, and low carbon renewable gasoline.

Dr. Gruber received a bachelor's degree in chemistry and biology from the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota, and a doctorate in chemistry

from the University of Minnesota. He also earned a master's degree in business administration from the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Gruber is also a member of the National Academy of Engineering.

Dr. Gruber has received numerous awards including: The George Washington Carver Award from BIO, The Presidential Green Chemistry Award, The Discover Award for Environmental Innovation from Discover Magazine, The Lee W. Rivers Innovation Award from CDMA, an Outstanding Achievement Award from the University of MN in 2011, The Julius Stieglitz Award from the University of Chicago, The Kirkpatrick Award from Chemical Engineering, Design and Engineering Award from Popular Mechanics, Technology of the Year Award from Industry Week, Technology of the Year Award from United States DOE, and numerous others. Dr. Gruber was the editor of the two-volume book "Biorefineries—Industrial Processes and Products," and holds more than 60 US patents, with several others pending.



Dan Halstrom

Dan Halstrom is the President and CEO of the U.S. Meat Export Federation, appointed in 2018. Dan leads USMEF's implementation of marketing, trade service and market access programs in key markets around the world to further increase U.S. red meat exports. Having originally joined USMEF in 2010 as the Senior Vice President of Marketing, Dan was responsible for global marketing, including the coordination of programs in 19 regions around the world promoting U.S. beef, pork, and lamb. In addition, he oversaw industry relations and membership activities for USMEF and its nine sectors of membership. Prior to USMEF, Dan spent 27 years in the meat industry with Swift & Company, now doing business as JBS, based in Greeley, Colorado. His tenure at Swift started as a management trainee at the plant level before moving into commercial

sales and eventually into international sales.

As Senior Vice President of the International Division for Swift/JBS from 2000-2010, he directed global beef and pork operations for the world's largest red meat company. Dan was an active member of USMEF for many years, including holding various volunteer positions and officer roles with the USMEF Executive Committee from 2005-2007, which culminated in his being named Chairman in 2008. In 2019, Dan was appointed to USDA's Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee (APAC), and he currently serves on the boards of the U.S. Agricultural Export Development Council (USAEDC), the International Meat Secretariat (IMS), and the University of Iowa Institute for International Business. A graduate of the University of Iowa, Dan was born and raised near Cherokee, Iowa, on a 1,000-acre grain farm, which included a 3,000-head cattle backgrounding operation.



Corwin Heatwole

A sixth-generation family farmer who grew up working on his family's Shenandoah Valley farm, Corwin Heatwole founded Farmer Focus in 2014 with a dream of creating a financially viable farming business that he could pass down to his own children. Today, Farmer Focus is the #1 organic chicken brand on the east coast, partnering with over 100 independent farmers who continue to raise the standards for raising chickens organically and humanely. Thanks to Corwin's vision and leadership, Farmer Focus has built a sustainable and profitable future for its farmers, while growing a thriving company.

In addition to receiving an Impact Award from Progressive Grocer in recognition of outstanding environmental, social and governance leadership and being included in Fast Company's list of 2022 World Changing Ideas, in 2023, Heatwole was invited to join President Biden at a roundtable to discuss competition in the meat industry. During this conversation with the President and other key members of his cabinet, Heatwole advocated for independent farmers and explained how Farmer Focus is creating a new and equitable business model for the poultry industry.

In addition to championing Farmer Focus' mission as Chairman of the Board, Corwin still farms his own land with the goal of creating a farm that uses sustainable and regenerative farming methods to improve resiliency, sustainability and animal welfare.



Nacú Hernández

Dr. Nacú Hernández specializes in the development of biobased products from agricultural sources. With a Ph.D. from Iowa State University, he's made substantial contributions to biobased materials, especially in creating the first soybean oil-based elastic plastics. With a rich publication record and a history of speaking at major international conferences, Dr. Hernández is a recognized voice in the field of biobased polymer development.

In 2020 Dr. Hernández co-founded SoyLei Innovations, a company that commercializes biobased products for the asphalt paving industry, helping advance the use of agricultural products for sustainable and innovative applications.



Stanley Janicki

Joining Sedron Technologies in 2018, Stanley began as a software developer working on the Varcor system before transitioning into a business development role. He raised \$800 million in project financing capital for the deployment of the Varcor in the industrial and agricultural sectors. Stanley created a market for Sedron's low carbon and certified Organic nutrients, including long-term offtake contracts with Fortune 500 fertilizer companies, enabling the rapid deployment of Varcors. Stanley led the development of a \$25M Varcor project in Washington State that processes biosolids (currently operational) and an \$80M Varcor project currently under construction in Indiana that processes dairy waste. Stanley also leads Sedron's media outreach, public relations, and lobbying efforts.

Prior to joining Sedron, Stanley worked as a software engineer for a large server-side software engineering team on Cisco System's Collaboration products, helping bring new features to market.



Charles Jefferson

Charles Jefferson currently serves as Vice President, Federal & International Public Policy, at Wine Institute. In this role, he leads all of Wine Institute's government relations and advocacy efforts at the federal and international levels. Charles joined Wine Institute as Vice President, Federal Relations in April of 2013. Before this, he spent nearly 20 years working in the public and private sectors at the intersection of public policy and politics. He served as Chief of Staff for Representative Mike Thompson of California, a member of the House Ways and Means Committee and co-chair of the Congressional Wine Caucus, and held senior positions for former House Democratic Leader Richard A. Gephardt of Missouri. Earlier in his career, Charles served in the Clinton White House and on several congressional campaigns in California and nationally. He also served as Vice President at BGR Government

Relations.

Charles is active in several key trade-related bodies. He currently serves as the interim Co-President of FIVS, an international trade association representing 75% of the global wine trade before key intergovernmental organizations such as the WHO, Codex and the OIV. Charles is also serving as the 2022-2023 Industry Section Chair for the World Wine Trade Group. Since 2019, Charles has served on USDA's Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC) as a Cleared Advisor consulting with the U.S. government on all trade negotiations. Wine Institute is the public policy advocacy association of the California wine industry, representing over 1,000 wineries and associate members responsible for 81% of U.S. production and more than 95% of U.S. wine exports. Wine Institute is the only U.S. organization working at the local, state, federal and international levels to initiate and advocate public policy that enhances the ability to responsibly produce, promote and enjoy wine.



Kevin Johansen

Kevin has always been passionate about agriculture. As a fifth-generation farmer, he quickly became active in 4-H and FFA and holds a bachelor's degree in Animal Science. His family has a deep history in agriculture, starting as row crop farmers before diversifying into seedstock cattle in the late 1980s. The AgButler platform stems from the means of which actually put Kevin through college and young adulthood as a day laborer on cattle operations across the country. His vision is to create a platform connecting agricultural communities and supplying a tool that can revitalize rural America.



Scott Kalb

Scott Kalb is Co-founder and Chairman of Bright Feeds, a Connecticut-based company using patented technology and AI to convert food waste into animal feed, saving millions of dollars for businesses while removing harmful carbon emissions. He serves as Director of the Responsible Asset Allocator Initiative, rating and ranking the world's 250 largest asset owners on their responsible investment practices. Mr. Kalb also consults for the World Bank on capital markets projects in developing countries. Previously, he served as CIO of the KIC, Korea's \$200 billion sovereign wealth fund. He lives in Greenwich, Connecticut, and serves on the Board of Estimate and Taxation.



Samuel Liebl

Sam Liebl is Director of Communications at Denali, the nation's leading full-service recycler of organics. Based in Colorado, he oversees the many ways in which the company communicates its role in the circular economy. Denali is one of the largest recyclers of food waste from grocery stores, byproducts from food processing facilities, and residuals from wastewater treatment plants. Liebl has a background in journalism and agriculture, and is involved in sustainability reporting, governmental affairs, and public relations at Denali.



Deeann Lufkin

Deeann Lufkin is one of three owners of CannonBelles Cheese and CannonBelles Coffee and Ice Cream in Cannon Falls, Minnesota. Deeann attended Iowa State University where she majored in Meteorology and was then commissioned in the Air Force. She spent 20 years as a Weather Officer, 12 of which were spent in the Air Force Reserves flying with the Hurricane Hunters. Having completed her dream job, she was faced with the challenge of what to do next.

Deeann and her partners, Jackie Ohmann and Kathy Hupf, met through P.E.O., a philanthropic women's organization. They began to make cheese as a hobby in 2011. They knew they had a great product that could become a new career. In August 2016, CannonBelles made their first commercial cheese at the University of Minnesota. From there they've seen steady growth. In April 2022, their cheese plant in Cannon Falls was finally completed. It was a long and difficult road to get where they are. They had to find creative solutions to funding problems. Through their funding experience, Deeann was selected as a 2021 and a 2022 grant reviewer for the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Meat, Poultry, Egg, and Milk Processing Grant.

Deeann is CannonBelles' head cheese maker, having taken courses such as the Wisconsin Cheesemakers Short Course, Pasteurizer, Boiler, Food Safety and many other plant-related courses.

Deeann is married to Greg and has three stepsons and two grandchildren. She lives in Northfield, Minn., with Greg, her two dogs, and two cats.



Rick McNary

Rick McNary is a writer, photographer, speaker, humanitarian, and consultant for communities starting local food systems. He has been involved in international hunger relief for more than 20 years after a starving girl in Nicaragua asked him to feed her.

Rick founded Shop Kansas Farms (SKF) in the early stages of the pandemic in 2020 to connect consumers to producers who sold food from their farm. In the early stages of the Facebook group, more than 10,000 members joined each day as consumers began to purchase food from local farms and ranches. Since then, a website was built, which attracts more than 10,000 consumers per month from all over the U.S., and destination marketing events known as the Market of Farms have been created. In addition, it has given Rick the opportunity to work on a local food system model known as Harvest Hubs. He sold SKF to Kansas Farm Bureau in 2022 which, in turn, kept him on as a consultant for the Harvest Hub model, which creates positive impacts, especially in rural communities.

Throughout his professional career, Rick has excelled in community leadership, teaching others the power of effective teamwork and volunteerism. He is a frequent speaker on the topic of world hunger, local food systems as keys to rural prosperity and as a motivational speaker. He's the author of three books and writes for Kansas Farm Bureau's Kansas Living magazine and the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, along with national fly-fishing publications.

March 18, 2024
#AgandFood24

HARVESTING
PERSPECTIVES

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Admittedly not a farmer because he lacks the courage, faith and intelligence, his desire is to be known as the farmer's biggest cheerleader. Rick considers his greatest professional accomplishments being awarded the Kansas Farm Bureau Friend of Agriculture award as well as the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Hero Award, both in 2020.

He lives in Kansas with his wife, Christine. They have five children and nine grandchildren.



Alex Menotti

Alex Menotti is the VP of Government Affairs, Policy, and Sustainability at LanzaJet. Alex leads LanzaJet's global policy and regulatory engagement, with a focus on developing policies to catalyze the Sustainable Aviation Fuel industry. Before joining LanzaJet, Alex was the Federal Affairs Manager at Neste and led Neste's North American policy and regulatory engagement on aviation decarbonization. Alex was previously the Director of Environmental Affairs at Airlines for America and was an environmental attorney in private practice, focusing on renewable fuels and the Clean Air Act.



Kyle Mohler

Kyle Mohler, PhD, is the Founder and CEO of Insignum AgTech. Based near Indianapolis, Indiana, Insignum creates new genes from plants' own DNA that enables them to use pigments to talk to you. Their first technology causes corn leaves to turn purple when first infected, so farmers can treat exactly when, precisely where, and only if needed to sustainably improve crop production. Kyle was raised on a crop farm in central Indiana, has a PhD in biochemistry from the University of Edinburgh, and now tests their technology back on the family farm. Recently, Insignum's venture-funded genetic technologies were granted a U.S. patent and the USDA deemed it to be safe, or not subject to regulations. Kyle first developed the concept of Insignum's technology to help his family farm solve problems, and if they're successful, will improve crop production around the world.



Tim Obitts

Tim Obitts is the Chief Executive Officer at Alder Renewables, bringing nearly three decades of legal and executive experience to the role. Before joining Alder, Tim served as the Chief Executive Officer and President of the National Air Transportation Association (NATA), a trade association of more than 3,700 companies. NATA represents aviation businesses from across the entire sector, including aviation fuel suppliers, ground handlers, FBOs, on-demand air charter, fractional air carriers, and MROs.

In this role, Tim worked on emergent issues affecting aviation businesses, including sustainability, often representing the sector before Congress, the administration, and various federal and state agencies. Before serving as CEO and President, Tim served as the Chief Operating Officer and General

Counsel for NATA. Before his time at NATA, Tim was managing shareholder of the law firm Gammon & Grange, P.C., where he served as counsel for numerous for-profit and nonprofit firms and led advocacy efforts with Congress and federal agencies on behalf of his clients.

Tim also served as co-chair of the firm's litigation section, focusing on constitutional law, and was with the firm for 19 years. He is a member of the bars of California, Colorado, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Tim is admitted to practice before numerous federal District and Appellate Courts and is member of the bar of the Supreme Court of the United States of America.

Tim is a recognized thought leader on sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) and speaks regularly at events worldwide. He helped found and served as the Chairperson of the Business Aviation Coalition on Sustainable Aviation Fuel and the Council on Sustainable Aviation Fuel Accountability, a collaborative effort between business and commercial aviation. In addition, Tim served on several working groups inside the Federal Aviation Administration and on a number of nonprofit boards. Raised in Santa Barbara, California, Tim received a B.A., double major in History and Philosophy, from Gordon College, where he was All-New England NAIA in Tennis. He earned his Juris Doctorate, *cum laude*, from California Western School of Law.



Kam Quarles

Kam Quarles is the Chief Executive Officer of the National Potato Council. He assumed this role in May 2019 after serving as Vice President of Public Policy and Communications. Since taking on the job of running the U.S. potato industry's national trade association, Kam has overseen a comprehensive overhaul of the organization and its activities. These include building a strong team of professional staff and consultants, rebranding the organization and its signature Potato Expo, coordinating the largest disaster relief response in the industry's history, securing significant victories in the long-standing Mexican trade dispute, and supporting a new multimillion-dollar foundation dedicated to industry leadership.

As a national leader in the fruit and vegetable industry, Kam serves as co-chairman of the Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance, and as a member of the USDA/USTR Agricultural Trade Advisory Committee. Prior to joining the Council staff, Kam worked for the international law firm of McDermott Will & Emery with clients including NPC, the Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association, Sunkist Growers, Chiquita Brands

International, the California Avocado Commission and other specialty crop interests. He served as a vice president for both the United Fresh Produce Association and the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives and the managing director of the D.C. office for Sunkist Growers, the world's largest citrus marketing organization. Kam was also a staff member in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. Kam holds a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Southern California and a master's degree in international commerce and policy from George Mason University in Virginia. He and his wife Karen live on Capitol Hill. Their daughter Cate is a freshman at the Marshall School of Business at the University of Southern California.



Darin Riggs

Darin Riggs is co-founder and co-owner of Riggs Beer Company with his brother Matt. They grow barley, wheat, and specialty corn for the beer on their family's 300-acre, fifth-generation farm in East-Central Illinois, which they also operate. They are the Midwest's leaders in vertically integrating beer production "from field to foam." Darin specializes in the repairs and maintenance that keep the brewery running, running the farm's day-to-day operations, as well as brewing. Prior to opening their own brewery, Darin completed the Master Brewers Program at the University of California, Davis, and worked in production at an Anheuser-Busch brewery in Northern California. Darin earned a bachelor's degree in computer science from the

University of Illinois, spent 10 years on active duty as a nuclear submarine officer in the U.S. Navy, and recently retired after serving another 10 years as a navy reservist. His favorite beer style is a traditional American Lager made with corn.



Shannon Schlecht

Shannon M. Schlecht, Executive Director of the Agricultural Utilization Research Institute (AURI) is responsible for the overall strategic and operational oversight of the organization's staff, programs, and execution of its mission. AURI provides technical services to businesses, conducts applied research initiatives, and convenes networking events to create value-added economic opportunities for the food and agriculture sector. AURI operates two laboratories, and its dedicated staff assists industry participants on over 150 food and agricultural innovation projects each year to further the Institute's mission of accelerating the expansion of the agricultural economy by empowering expanded uses and markets of agriculturally derived products.

Before coming to AURI, Schlecht served as Vice President of Policy for U.S. Wheat Associates in Arlington, Virginia, and held numerous roles within the trade association during his 14 years with the organization. Internationally, he conducted initiatives to develop U.S. wheat exports in over 40 countries. Shannon has an extensive background in agriculture, policy, market development, international trade, strategic planning and management.

He is currently a director for the Ag Innovation Campus, an advisor to the University of Minnesota Food Science and Nutrition Department, represents AURI on the MBOLD Executive Council where he co-leads the Innovation and Entrepreneurship collaborative projects, and is a trustee for the North Dakota State University Foundation. He holds Bachelor's and Master of Science degrees in Agricultural Economics from North Dakota State University in Fargo, North Dakota.



Jeff Simmons

Jeff Simmons serves as President and CEO of Elanco Animal Health (NYSE: ELAN), an independent animal health leader with the ability to reach the world's animals. The Elanco team has established a unique innovation engine grounded in a higher purpose: Food and Companionship Enriching Life.

Elanco's Pet Health business is innovating effective products and therapeutic solutions for veterinarians helping pets live longer, healthier, more active lives. Elanco's Farm Animal business focuses on helping farmers and veterinarians raise healthy livestock to make food safer. Elanco is also a pioneer in livestock sustainability and is developing and delivering a portfolio of new products and solutions designed to make a tangible, positive impact on reducing climate

warming.

As an advocate for animal agriculture, Jeff is active with HealthforAnimals (H4A) and FFA at the national levels. His board roles reflect his passions for food security with HATCH for Hunger™; commitment to livestock sustainability creating climate-neutral farms this decade with AgriNovus; enabling leaders to thrive with Edge Mentoring; and the human-animal bond with IU Health.



Sen. Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich.

U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow is the Senior Senator from Michigan and Chairwoman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry. She also serves as a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee and is a senior member of the Finance Committee and Budget Committee. As author of the 2014 Farm Bill, Stabenow helped make historic investments in land and water conservation, clean energy, food access, and rural development. In the bipartisan 2018 Farm Bill, she worked across the aisle to provide certainty for farmers, expand the diversity of American agriculture, and create new opportunities for climate-smart agriculture, with the most advanced climate-smart agriculture policies to date. She continues that work as co-author of the bipartisan Growing Climate Solutions Act, which passed the Senate 92-8 and helps farmers tap into new

economic opportunities through voluntary carbon markets. Stabenow received her bachelor's and master's degrees from Michigan State University.



Kent Swisher

Kent Swisher is the President & CEO at the North American Renderers Association (NARA) and President of the Fats and Proteins Research Foundation (FPRF), the rendering industry's research organization. He joined the organization in 2003 as Vice President, International Programs and took on his current role with the association in January 2022.

Kent is a member of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Trade Advisory Committee on Animals and Animal Products and the U.S. Sustainability Alliance, and also serves on the executive committee of the U.S. Agricultural Export Development Council. In addition, he serves as coordinator of the World Renderers Organization.

Mr. Swisher was raised on a grain and livestock farm in Central Indiana. He graduated from Purdue University with a degree in agricultural economics.



Secretary Thomas Vilsack

Thomas J. Vilsack was confirmed as the 32nd United States Secretary of Agriculture on Feb. 23, 2021, by the U.S. Senate. He was nominated by President Joe Biden to return to a role where he served for eight years under President Barack Obama. Under Secretary Vilsack's leadership, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is building back better by restoring the American economy, strengthening rural and historically underserved communities, responding to threats of climate change, creating good-paying jobs for American workers and the next generation of agricultural leaders, and investing in our kids and our families. Prior to returning to USDA, he served as president and CEO of the U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC) from 2017 until February 2021. There, he provided strategic leadership and oversight of USDEC's global promotional and research activities, regulatory affairs and

trade policy initiatives. In addition to his post at USDEC, he also served as a Strategic Advisor to Colorado State University's food and water initiatives.



Alan Weber

J. Alan Weber is a founding partner of MARC-IV, a consulting company that fosters the development of biobased innovations and has been involved with biodiesel commercialization activities since 1991. He currently helps manage the effort to examine the impacts of the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) and quantify the economic benefits associated with increased biodiesel & renewable diesel use. Alan is a nationally known economist with extensive experience in the oilseed industry and soil health strategies, including cover crop analysis and nascent carbon markets. He also is a producer himself, farming almost 900 acres with his family in Central Missouri and using climate-smart ag practices such as no-till and cover crops. Alan also served on the Board of Directors for CoverCress Inc. and was their first independent director prior to acquisition in 2022.



Kevin Welsh

Kevin Welsh is Vice President, Environmental Affairs and Chief Sustainability Officer at Airlines for America. In this role, he leads A4A's sustainability and environmental advocacy and policy initiatives. He works closely with A4A member airlines to support efforts to achieve the sector's ambitious climate and environmental goals. Kevin joined A4A in 2023 from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) where he served as the Executive Director of the Office of Environment and Energy. He also served as Director for Climate and Environment at the National Security Council in the White House from 2015 to 2017, where he helped advance U.S.-international climate and energy objectives, including achieving the Paris Climate Agreement and the adoption of International Civil Aviation Organization CORSIA.



John Wepking

John is co-owner of Meadowlark Organics and Meadowlark Community Mill, a diversified farm and on-farm stone ground flour mill in Ridgeway, Wisconsin. Together with his wife, Halee, and their team of farmers and millers, they farm about 1,000 certified organic acres with crops and grass-fed cattle, purchase milling grain from other organic farmers in the Driftless Area, and produce and distribute thousands of pounds of flour weekly. They are passionate about creating direct, value-added markets for grain, helping farmers maximize their profitability and keep the grains they grow within their local economy and foodshed.



Aaron Wetzel

Aaron Wetzel is the vice president of Production and Precision Ag Production Systems at John Deere. With expertise in agronomy, economics, products, and technology, he leads a global team focused on developing Deere's next generation of products and technology solutions that meet specific customer and market needs. Throughout his 35 years with Deere, he has contributed to the company's success in various locations, including Germany and Latin America, and in a variety of functions, including sales, marketing, strategic planning, and financial services. Aaron earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from Augustana College and a master's degree in business administration from Duke University.