

NIFA in Haiti: NPL Kitty Cardwell

National Institute of Food and Agriculture National Program Leader (NPL) Kitty Cardwell represented the agency March 11-16, 2012 in meetings with the Haitian Ministry of Agriculture regarding their vision for the future of the Ecoles Moyenne (EM). EM courses include Haitian agriculture, agro-economy, comparative agriculture, and agriculture in economic development. They discussed what a base curriculum should include, and determined that there should be a high degree of practicality; for example, mathematics courses should include agriculture-specific examples, such as units of measure, accounting, formulations of fertilizers and pesticides and formulations of feed for animals. The group also determined that students should begin their practicum as soon as they arrive at the school, working up to half-time on farm, with classroom activities designed to support on-farm practicum.

Regarding school sustainability, the group discussed many options including engagement of local and state government, commercialization of farm grown productions and a la cart services (such as teaching specific modules on a short term basis). While in Haiti, Cardwell also met with representatives from USAID's mission in Haiti and delegates from the United States Embassy.

For more information contact [Kitty Cardwell](#).

NIFA Helps Lead Agricultural Science Discussions with Indonesia and Malaysia.

Dr. Ann Lichens-Park, NIFA's NPL for Microbial Genomics is helping to organize high level agricultural springtime science discussions with counterparts from Malaysia and Indonesia. She is working with colleagues at the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Department of Energy, USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service and Agricultural Research Service, and with several NIFA colleagues to convene food security-focused discussions as part of joint commission meetings. While topics for discussion are still being chosen, likely areas of shared interest will include innovations in agricultural technologies, microbial communities, extension systems, scientific capacity development, and response to climate variability.

For more information contact [Ann Lichens-Park](#).

Iraq Agricultural Extension Revitalization Project

Texas A & M University has released a report summarizing the work in Iraq done in collaboration with NIFA. You can see the report in PDF form [here](#).

NIFA in Afghanistan: NPL Ann Marie Thro

From March 2011 through February 2012, NIFA National Program Leader Ann Marie Thro served as USDA Senior Agricultural Representative for the U.S. Mission in at Camp Marmal in Mazar e Sharif, the headquarters of Regional Command - North, Afghanistan. In that role, she collaborated with USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) leadership at the United States Embassy in Kabul to develop a team of five USDA advisors based in provinces across the northern region. USDA's assignment in RC North was to help build the capacity Afghanistan's provincial Directorates of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (DAILs). DAIL capability to develop and execute approved annual plans varies widely; needs range from training in project implementation to galvanizing interest and energy of young staff who seek meaningful ways to become involved, even at junior levels. Dr. Thro organized a series of project planning workshops for both junior and senior staff. Their objective was to provide time-tested, practical tools for conceptualizing and structuring activities to implement strategic priorities developed with the central Ministry in Kabul. The workshops were well-attended and attracted staff of other international organizations, including Afghan provincial council members in search of tools to help them in their own provinces. The interest shown suggests that continued opportunities for presenting the basics of organizing agricultural research and extension activities will be welcome. In 2012, as NIFA's Afghan Ag Extension Project (AAEP) comes into position in Balkh province in the north region, USDA agricultural advisors will be interacting with the project managers and extending AAEP's reach.

For more information contact [Ann Marie Thro](#).

Recent Global Seminars/Webinars:

From Concept to Adoption: Integrating Research, Development, and Dissemination at the International Center for Tropical Agriculture

As Director General of CIAT, Dr. Echeverria oversees a broad portfolio of research activities in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia. CIAT curates premier collections of plant genetic resources, and conducts research promoting agrobiodiversity in a range of crops, (i.e. beans, tropical forage, cassava, rice, and tropical fruits), soil fertility, and sustainable land management. In addition, CIAT endeavors to strengthen decision making and policy analysis, capacity building and knowledge management, especially as these relate to climate change and tropical agriculture.

Presenter: [Ruben G. Echeverría](#)

E-Agriculture for Improved Livelihoods and Food Security: Assessing the Requirements for Electronically Linking Farmers with Markets

This session featured experts from Cornell University Cooperative Extension as they discussed the role of new technologies in the development of food distribution channels, both domestically and abroad. A unique tool called “Concept Mapping” has been developed by Cornell University to assess the priorities of producers, brokers, consumers and others in developing food distribution networks. Cornell works across geographic, cultural and stakeholder groups to develop visual maps of preferences and barriers to the use of mobile technology. Join us to see how this new tool for information gathering works, how it links to their MarketMaker software, and to identify emerging issues in SMS platforms in developing countries.

Presenters: [Donald Tobias and Khin Mar Cho](#)

Stay tuned for announcements of upcoming seminars and webinars as part of the Global Seminar Series.

News from Land Grant Partners:

Purdue’s Center for Global Food Security

Dr. Gary Burniske has recently been appointed as the managing director of Purdue’s Center for Global Food Security. Detailed information about Dr. Burniske and his appointment can be found [here](#).

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