



Third Hemispheric Forum for Young Agricultural Leaders will focus on agricultural entrepreneurship

- To call attention to business opportunities in the rural sector is proposed as a strategy for slowing rural-urban migration, offering young leaders a global vision of agriculture.
- The IICA Offices in its Member States are now in the process of selecting participants for the Forum, to be held on August 2-6.

San Jose, Costa Rica, June 4, 2010 (IICA). The objective of the Third Hemispheric Forum for Young Agricultural Leaders, to be held in Lincoln, Nebraska, on August 2-6, is to offer outstanding young people with training in leadership and technical topics related to agricultural management.

The central theme of this year's Forum, being held for the first time outside Costa Rica, will be agricultural entrepreneurship, which is being put forth as a business alternative in rural areas which would lead to better living conditions in rural communities and slow the flow of so much talent to the cities.

The Forum will be co-sponsored by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL).

Hernan Chiriboga, Coordinator of IICA's Center for Leadership in Agriculture, said "We want to increase the number of young leaders who can play an influential role in decision making and in policies and projects intended to promote well-being in the rural sector."

IICA and UNL will provide two scholarships (one full and one half) per country, with the participant covering the cost of airfare. The selection criteria are that participants be between 22 and 40 years of age and be actively in projects related to agriculture and rural well-being.

The IICA Offices in its Member States will be responsible for selecting participants for the Forum. Interested parties should contact the IICA Office in the corresponding country.

The main themes to be addressed during the Forum are agricultural entrepreneurship, agribusiness, biotechnology, natural resources and climate change.

Closing the Forum will be roundtable discussion on opportunities for generating wealth in the rural sector, involving two former U.S Secretaries of Agriculture, two Ministers of Agriculture from Latin America and the Director General of IICA, Victor M. Villalobos.

The Forum will coincide with the opening of the Engler Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Program, at UNL, made possible through a donation of US\$20 million from Paul F. Engler, an alumnus of UNL.

In addition to the Forum, IICA, through its Offices, is coordinating other national fora for young leaders in Honduras (June), to be attended by the President Porfirio Lobo, and the Minister of Agriculture, Jacobo Regalado; in Uruguay (June), with support from six rural youth associations; and in Belize (July) and in St. Lucia (September).

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