



Social networking sites to facilitate contact between young agricultural leaders in the Americas

The Second Forum for Young Leaders in Agriculture, organized by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), comes to a close.

San Jose, Costa Rica, September 2009 (IICA). Some 70 young people from throughout the Americas will use popular social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to share information on leadership in agriculture and other topics of interest to the region, which, they assured, will enable them to work together in addressing problems shared by the countries.

From September 7-11, these young people, from 34 countries, participated in the “Forum for Young Leaders Involved in the Sustainable Development of Agriculture in the Americas in the 21st Century,” an initiative launched by IICA Center for Leadership in Agriculture in 2008.

People interested in joining the groups and participating may visit twitter.com/centroliderazgo or on Facebook search for “Leadership in Agriculture.”

“We want to promote new means of communication focused on creating community and, by doing so, encourage learning,” said Hernan Chiriboga, Coordinator of the Center for Leadership in Agriculture.

In addition to Twitter and Facebook, the young people joined the Virtual Community of Practice of the Center for Leadership, which helps share information of importance to the agricultural sector.

Chiriboga explained that the Community of Practice is another network that can be used to strengthen relationships and address important problems of common interest over the Internet.

He added that “This community of practice may give rise to work, business and education opportunities that will improve the quality of life for rural youths and enable them to continue working in agriculture in their countries. We have to make life in rural areas more attractive so that young people will stay closer to home.”

The Forum was held at IICA Headquarters in San Jose, Costa Rica, and addressed topics such as value-based leadership, teamwork, systemic thinking, dispute resolution, agroenergy, entrepreneurship and project design and preparation.

On Wednesday, Sept. 9, the young leaders took a field trip to EARTH University, where they engaged in activities aimed at promoting teamwork and visited organic agriculture farms and sustainable agriculture projects operated by EARTH.

On the last day of the event, IICA’s Director General, Chelston Brathwaite, addressed the participants and told them “great accomplishments, efforts and undertakings are not accomplished all at once; rather, they are the sum of many small accomplishments.”

According to Brathwaite, “a leader must have a vision and share it with his/her team, have values and inspire confidence, seek efficiency, unleash the talent of others, building a working team and balance his/her health, well-being and family life.”

Upon receiving their certificates of participation, the young people reaffirmed their commitment to agriculture and pledged that they would return to their countries and share the knowledge they had acquired, empower young people and work to benefit the sector.

By sponsoring the Forum, IICA promotes the development of leaders with a global vision and affords young people whose work is associated with agriculture and rural life in the Americas an opportunity to enhance their understanding of global issues.

For further information

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