

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY

Voluntary - Public

Date: 5/26/2010

GAIN Report Number: JA0513

Japan

Post: Tokyo ATO

Global Food Security Symposium - Partners in Agriculture

Report Categories:

CSSF Activity Report

Approved By:

Jeff Nawn, Senior Agricultural Attaché

Prepared By:

Jeff Nawn, Senior Agricultural Attaché, Matthew John Thoren, Intern, ATO Japan

Report Highlights:

On April 7, 2010, FAS/JAPAN, in conjunction with the U.S. Grains Council, hosted the Partners in Agriculture Global Food Security Symposium. This meeting was a unique opportunity for government, academic, and private sector leaders from around the globe to come together to discuss the food security challenge that the world is facing.

General Information:
Introduction

On April 7, 2010, FAS/JAPAN, in conjunction with the U.S. Grains Council, hosted the Partners in Agriculture Global Food Security Symposium at the Okura Hotel in Tokyo. This meeting was a unique opportunity for government, academic, and private sector leaders from around the globe to come together to discuss the food security challenge that the world is facing. The symposium was comprised of several presentations and two panel discussions which addressed a broad range of food security issues. Prominent speakers at the symposium included U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, Japan Minister of Agriculture, Food, and Fisheries Hirotaka Akamatsu, and the 2009 World Food Prize Winner, Dr. Gebisa Ejeta.



The Symposium stage at the Okura Hotel in Tokyo

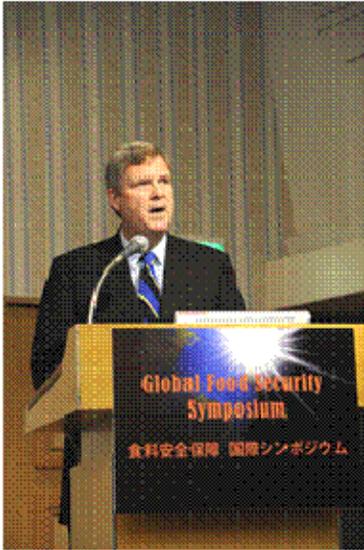
According to the United Nations, global food production must double by 2050 in order to meet the demands of the world's growing population. Environmental factors and climate change threaten to place even greater stress on our ability to meet these demands. Many of the solutions that will lead the world through current and future challenges facing food security depend on the leadership of the world's two largest and most innovative economies: the United States and Japan.



U.S. Grains Council CEO Thomas Dorr at the opening of the Symposium for Global Food Security

The symposium was opened with welcoming remarks from Thomas Dorr, CEO of the U.S. Grains Council, Koichi Takemasa, State Secretary from the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and U.S. Ambassador to Japan, John V. Roos. Each of these speakers addressed the importance of working together to address global hunger and poverty.

Keynote Address



Secretary Vilsack delivers the keynote address

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack delivered the keynote address, following an introduction by Ambassador Roos. Secretary Vilsack's address highlighted the plight of the nearly one billion chronically hungry people around the world, and the actions that must be taken to increase global food security. "We should all feel a humanitarian imperative to take on the challenge and ensure that children do not go to sleep hungry," stated Secretary Vilsack. He outlined the Obama administration's strategy to increasing global food security, which addresses the root causes of hunger and poverty. He also called upon Japan to join the United States in renewing its commitment to increasing global food security. "In the coming years we must tackle food security with a renewed commitment to agricultural development and give the world's poor a reason for hope. The world's economic and political stability, and the prosperity of our two nations, depends on how well we meet this challenge," stated Vilsack.

Secretary Vilsack's speech touched upon the importance of researching and adopting advanced agricultural production technologies, including biotechnology. "Over time biotechnology holds the promise of creating crops that better tolerate drought, toxicity, and salinity," stated Vilsack. He

called upon all countries to develop consistent and science based regulatory processes so that the benefits of biotechnology can be realized by the world's poor and hungry.

Following the keynote address, Professor Robert L. Thompson of the University of Illinois presented "A Daunting Task: Projections of the Challenge Ahead". Professor Thompson spoke to how global demographic trends mandate that significant advancements in agricultural production technology are realized in order to feed the world's growing population. He called attention to the fact that the world's population is growing most rapidly in areas of the world which are expected to face the greatest agricultural production resource constraints, such as a lack of arable land and potable water. Thompson also discussed how global hunger is mainly due to poverty, and that in order to solve the world's hunger problem, the world's poverty problem must be first be addressed.



Attendees seated at the Okura Hotel for the Global Food Security Symposium

Panel A



Rick Fruth

The first panel, “Feeding a Growing World”, was moderated by Rick Fruth, Chairman of the U.S. Grains Council. Mr. Fruth is currently the chairman of the U.S. Grains Council, a non-profit organization that promotes the use of U.S. barley, corn and sorghum and related products worldwide. In this capacity, Fruth serves as a member of a 14-person Board of Directors comprised of individuals from member organizations who oversee the Council’s operations.

Panelists for “Feeding a Growing World” included:



Dr. Gebisa Ejeta, Ph.D. , Purdue University

Dr. Gebisa Ejeta, an Ethiopian-American is a faculty member at Purdue University where he holds the position of Distinguished Professor of Plant Breeding & Genetics and International Agriculture. For over 30 years, Dr. Ejeta has led a global educational and research program with emphasis on African agricultural research and development. He has trained a large cadre of international students, mostly Africans. He has been a leader of many collaborative agricultural research and development projects, providing technical backstopping to crop improvement programs in several national agricultural services (NARS) in Africa.

For his research and educational efforts, Dr. Ejeta has been acknowledged by several scientific societies and organizations with prestigious awards and fellowships. He is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a Fellow of the Crop Science Society of America, and a Fellow of the American Society of Agronomy. Among his many awards, Dr. Ejeta was the recipient of the 2009 World Food Prize.



Dr. Masa Iwanaga, Ph.D., Director General of the National Institute of Crop Science (Japan)

Mr. Masa Iwanaga has served as the Director General and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the National Institute of Crop Science since April, 2008. Located in Tsukuba, Japan, the National Institute of Crop Science is a division of the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.



Dr. Rattan Lal, Ph.D., Ohio State University

Rattan Lal, Ph.D., is a professor of soil physics in the School of Environment and Natural Resources, and Director of the Carbon Management and Sequestration Center, FAES/OARDC at Ohio State University.



Dr. Jason Pyle, Ph.D., Sapphire Energy

Dr. Pyle was formerly Chief Technical Officer and co-founder of Epoc, Inc., a privately held medical engineering company. Currently, he holds an appointment as adjunct professor of bioengineering at Vanderbilt University where he has worked to develop cross-disciplinary programs of biological and engineering research.



Panelists Dr. Pyle and Lal

Following Panel A, Japan Minister of Agriculture Hirotaka Akamatsu gave a presentation about Japan's contribution to global food security. His speech outlined Japan's principles for foreign direct investment in agriculture, examples of agricultural cooperation projects between Japan and Brazil, and Japan's initiative to double African rice production by 2018.



Japan Minister of Agriculture speaks on Japan's role in global food security

Following lunch, Will Martin, manager for Agricultural and Rural Development in the World Bank's Development Research Group presented results of some of his work on policy making. The overarching theme of Martin's presentation was the importance of successfully concluding the Doha Development Round to increasing global food security.

Panel B



Moderated by Dr. Kenneth M. Quinn, the second panel focused on the importance of collaborating on international development activities. Dr. Quinn, former U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia, assumed the leadership of the World Food Prize Foundation on January 1, 2000, following his retirement from the State Department after a 32 year career in the Foreign Service.

Panelists for the discussion on development collaboration included:

Dr. Masayoshi Honma, Ph.D., University of Tokyo (Japan)

Dr. Masayoshi Honma has served as a Professor of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the Graduate School of Agricultural and Life Sciences at the University of Tokyo since 2003. In addition, he has served as a Professor of Economics at Seikei University, a visiting professor at the Australian National University and as a professor and associate professor of economics at the Otaru University of Commerce.

Dr. Tom Reardon, Ph.D., Michigan State University



Tom Reardon has served as a professor in the Department of Agricultural, Food, and

Resource Economics at Michigan State University since January 1992, and from 1984-1991 with the International Food Policy Research Institute.



Mr. Izumi Takashima , Vice President, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

Mr. Takashima received his Bachelor's degree in Faculty of Law from the University of Tokyo in 1979 and joined the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in that same year. In the course of his career he has held several key policy and planning positions within this Ministry.

John A. Beed, Counselor for Development Cooperation



United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

John Beed is a Senior Foreign Service Officer with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). In his current position as the USAID Representative and Development Counselor in U.S. Embassy Tokyo, Mr. Beed is responsible for promoting global aid coordination and development partnerships between the U.S. and Japan, two of the world's largest donors of bilateral overseas assistance.

The symposium concluded with a presentation of the Borlaug Medalian to Yohei Sasakawa, in recognition for his collaboration with Norman Borlaug to increase agricultural productivity in sub-Saharan Africa.

Media

The symposium received wide media coverage with 64 individual journalists attending from nearly 50 media outlets. Major media organizations attending include the following:

Asahi Television

NHK Television

Bloomberg News

Kyodo News

Reuters

TBS Television

Tokyo Television

Nippon Television

Japan Agricultural News

USDA Japan has featured the Global Food Security Symposium on its Partners in Agriculture Website. Speaker biographies, presentations, press, and photos can be found at:

http://partners-in-agriculture.org/food_security_symposium/