



For Immediate Release
U.S. Poultry & Egg Association

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IPE/IFE Animal Agriculture Sustainability Summit: Building a Culture of Sustainability

TUCKER, GA – “Sustainability is an important part of the company. It started with the values of my grandfather, who, when he started raising chickens, would cut squares of leather from his worn out boots to use as door hinges for poultry houses. Today, sustainability expands beyond environmental issues to concerns for Perdue associates, animal care, and the community. In many of our communities, Perdue is the largest employer. Our role far exceeds just providing a job and a paycheck,” commented Jim Perdue, Chairman of Perdue Farms. He was participating in a panel discussion on *Sustainability Implications for the Poultry Industry* at the Animal Agriculture Sustainability Summit, held as part of the 2012 International Poultry Expo and International Feed Expo.

Also participating in the panel discussion was Mike Helgeson, CEO of GNP Company, who remarked that consumers want to know where their food comes from. This requires the industry to make continuous improvement a priority. It also expands the need for the industry to evaluate its own operations and look at the sustainability of upstream suppliers, downstream distribution, and customers. He went on to comment that the poultry industry’s significant level of integration allows it to impact sustainability more than some of the other proteins.

As part of his presentation on *Building a Culture of Sustainability*, Alan Andrews, director of marketing for Cal-Maine Foods, described the launch of what Cal-Maine calls a “culture of sustainability,” a multifaceted program that the company believes is crucial to its long-term survival. Andrews outlined Cal-Maine’s approach to introducing a comprehensive sustainability initiative, noting that the concept of sustainability, overall and within the poultry industry, is evolving and becoming more complicated. How it is defined and practiced at a particular company will vary.

Building a corporate social responsibility program (CSR) can be challenging for a company, even those with a strong commitment to this goal. Two executives with Keystone Foods shared some advice on starting and maintaining a sustainability program as part of their presentation on *Operational Efficiencies - Tactical*.

“One is to build on your successes and strengths,” said Don Adams, vice president of sustainability for KeySTAR®, the company’s sustainability project. Adams also recommended reaching outside of your organization and talking to other companies who are building programs and are willing to share their experiences.

Keystone's CSR program began about four years ago, and many aspects were modeled on a strong safety program that had been in place for years. "Corporate and divisional managers provide the direction, but employees and facilities provide the drive that will achieve operational efficiencies in a CSR program," remarked Ken Opengart, vice president of live operations and processing.

U.S. Poultry & Egg Association is an all-feather organization representing the complete spectrum of today's poultry industry, with a focus on progressively serving member companies through research, education, communication, and technical assistance. Founded in 1947, U.S. Poultry & Egg Association is based in Tucker, GA.

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Photo Caption:

Panelists for the discussion on *Sustainability Implications for the Poultry Industry* at the Animal Agriculture Sustainability Summit, held as part of the 2012 International Poultry Expo and International Feed Expo. (left to right) Jim Perdue, Perdue Farms; Dr. Brian Kiepper, University of Georgia; Suzy Friedman, Environmental Defense Fund; Mike Helgeson, GNP Company; and Nancy Stoner, Environmental Protection Agency.