

Roland Bunch of Honduras will keynote IAA symposium

Roland Bunch, Area Representative for World Neighbors in Honduras, Central America, will give the keynote address at the March 6, 1990, IAA symposium in Washington, DC. The topic of Bunch's talk will be "The Meaning and Benefits of Partnership in Agricultural Research and Information: Past Successes, Future Potentials."

Three panels will address different aspects of partnerships in sustainable agriculture. A morning session called "Learning from Each Other: Three Perspectives" will be moderated by William Liebhardt of the University of California, Davis. Panelists will include Robert Miller of the University of Rhode Island, Charles Francis of the University of Nebraska, and Richard Thompson of the Practical Farmers of Iowa.

The second panel session, moderated by Michael Heller of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Clagett Farm in Maryland, will address "Involving Farmers in Agricultural Research." Panelists will be John Gardner of North Dakota State University, Kay Thornley of Davenport, California, and William Lockeretz of Tufts University.

The third panel, moderated by Jerry DeWitt of Iowa State University, will speak on "New Models and New Visions." Panelists include Myron Johnson, Administrator of Extension, USDA, and Richard Sauer of the National 4-H Council. Jim Bender of Weeping Water, Nebraska, and Ward Sinclair of Warfordsburg, Pennsylvania, will respond to the panelists.

Participants will be welcomed by Mrs. Jean Wallace Douglas, President of the Institute. Opening remarks will be given by Charles Hess, Assistant Secretary for Science and Education,

USDA, and Gordon Watkins of Parthenon, Arkansas.

Use sustainability as overall theme for 1990 Farm Bill, IAA urges Congress

Congress should use the goal of sustainability "as the principal organizing theme in fashioning the 1990 Farm Bill," IAA Executive Director Garth Youngberg told the Research Subcommittee of the House Agriculture Committee on July 19. To make this discussion meaningful, some criteria for what count as methods which achieve more sustainability would need to be developed, Youngberg suggested. "Merely labeling a particular production method as 'sustainable' does not guarantee that it is," he commented.

"Those who favor low-input and other alternative farming systems would welcome the opportunity to have these systems evaluated in relation to a thoughtful set of sustainability criteria," Youngberg said. Taking this approach would imply evaluating commodity programs as well as conservation sections of the farm bill by the criteria of their support for sustainability, an approach radically different from past farm bills.

Rep. George Brown (D-CA) called the hearing to ask whether sustainability is an operable concept for 1990 Farm Bill discussions. "I would argue that U.S. agriculture is not now sustainable, given the billions of dollars we pour into agricultural subsidies, the environmental problems we face with soil erosion and water quality, and the rural distress that continues to linger.... We need a new vision and some goals to work towards in the next farm bill," Brown said.

Dennis Keeney of the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture in Ames, Iowa, joined Youngberg in sup-

porting sustainability as a central goal for the 1990 Farm Bill. "A whole-systems approach to research, coupled with direct input in the research agenda by farmers and conservationists, is the only way we can achieve sustainability," he remarked. "All provisions in all sections of the farm bill must meet the criteria of sustainability, else the bill will become riddled with inconsistent provisions working at cross-purposes," commented Raymond Weil of the University of Maryland.

Bezdicek, Sinclair, Heller named to IAA Board

At their meeting on September 9 in North Carolina, the Institute Board of Directors elected three new members. David F. Bezdicek, Professor of Soils at Washington State University, has done research in a wide variety of alternative agriculture techniques. Ward Sinclair, a Pennsylvania organic grower of specialty vegetables and a writer, was formerly an agricultural reporter for the *Washington Post*. Michael Heller is Director of Clagett Farm in Maryland, a 285-acre research and demonstration farm operated by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to educate farmers and the public on environmentally sound farming methods. The three will begin their terms in March, 1990.

Leaving the IAA Board at the March, 1990, meeting will be Earl Lawrence, Thomas B. Harding, and Jean Wallace Douglas. In recognition of her central role in the life of the Institute, the Board named Mrs. Douglas Honorary President for life. Mrs. Douglas currently serves as President of the Board. In addition to their regular business, the Board toured the low-input research center coordinated by Dr. Larry King of North Carolina State University. 