IFPRI AT 40
LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

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Speaker Remarks

Keynote Speaker: **Jim Borel**
Executive Vice President
DuPont, USA

OPENING REMARKS

- It's a pleasure to join you today.
- Congratulations to IFPRI on your 40th anniversary! The Institute's influential policy research to sustainably reduce poverty and end hunger and malnutrition has benefitted so many.
- At DuPont, we are heavily focused on helping the world address unprecedented demands in three key areas – food, energy and protection (of people and the environment).
- Since I lead our Agriculture and Nutrition & Health businesses, I am immersed in issues pertaining to food and nutrition insecurity, farmer productivity, research and product innovation, and related policies.

EMERGING FOOD POLICY ISSUES

- Policies that are inefficient or burdensome impact whether or not food gets to the people and places that need it most.
- I would like to briefly discuss three critical policy related areas that we must address if we are to achieve food security for the citizens of the world and the additional 2 billion or more of the future.
- **First**, border and trade restricted food systems hinder the health of people and hurt businesses that are critical to the food and agriculture value chain.
- It is estimated that roughly 85% of food produced never crosses a border today. Food is largely local. It should be. Food needs to be grown where it is needed most.
- As the world becomes richer and more urbanized, greater amounts of food must also move affordably and sustainably to consumers in large population centers.
- But we must keep in mind that we do not live in a perfectly ordered world. We have some spots on the planet like Iowa, where I grew up, that are agriculturally rich, but have a relatively low population. And then there are other areas with high population but poorly productive farm land.
- It will become increasingly imperative to remove barriers to global trade as agricultural productivity continues to improve in surplus regions like the U.S. and Brazil, while demand grows and evolves in productivity deficit regions like China and India.

- **Second**, we must remove policy barriers to breakthrough research and innovation globally so we can get new technology into the hands of farmers more quickly.
- Dated regulatory policies that don't recognize the speed at which technology is evolving are detrimental to efforts to advance global food and nutrition security.
- We need policies that encourage innovation, not hinder it.

- Government, in particular, can incite innovation and growth by ensuring necessary regional infrastructure, pragmatic regulatory oversight, and predictable market access.
- I have been encouraged by the progression of conversations about GMO safety, for example, due to decades of rigorous testing and adoption around the world.
- But we need to reduce process redundancies and implementation of approaches that were developed for the innovations of 10 and 20 years ago.
- Let's consider investment for research and innovation in the agricultural sector. Typically, this produces significant returns — but over the long term.
- On average, it often takes two to three decades from the start of basic research for major technologies to become widely adopted and unleash their full benefits.
- This means that the research and investment decisions made today and over the next decade will largely determine the ability of global agricultural systems to meet mid-century demand for food.
- Who knows the types of scientific innovations that are on the horizon that will change the way we produce food and breed plants in 20 years?
- Our researchers are already applying advanced technology to help plants grow, even in drought conditions, to protect plants from yield-robbing insects, weeds and disease and to make products with improved nutritional quality.
- In the future, our strategic application of tools like biotechnology will help staple crops weather increasingly challenging growing conditions globally and enable the value chain to make the most of every crop.

- **Thirdly**, addressing food security challenges will require policies that are informed by accurate data – that provides tangible insights and fosters collaboration.
- IFPRI's report, "Food Security in a World of Resource Scarcity," and the associated Agritech Toolbox come to mind as I think about data that inspires insights and collaborative action. These resources provide analytics that demonstrate, and then model, the impacts of introducing different agriculture technologies in different parts of the world.
- Another powerful tool is the Global Food Security Index, which annually measures the complex set of issues and vulnerabilities that together define food security.
- In 2012, DuPont teamed up with the Economist Intelligence Unit to develop this comprehensive data tool that could help us all determine how we can collaborate, best pool our resources and focus our actions.
- From a policy perspective, governments are using the Index to better understand food security issues and help prioritize efforts.
- And NGOs like the Aspen Institute are using the Index to determine key countries in which to focus efforts to advocate for food security policy changes.

WRAP-UP

- We should all leverage the best available resources to help address critical challenges facing our global community.
- It will take each of us in our own way – pooling our skills, resources and energy – to ensure that people everywhere have enough nutritious food to eat. It's a human right. Together, I believe we can, and we will, provide new hope – and possibility – to millions of people around the globe – from the farm gate to the dinner plate.
- It has been my pleasure to speak with you today.
- Again, congratulations to IFPRI!

- Thank you for 40 years of important research. Thank you for your undying willingness to collaborate to reduce hunger and poverty, and to promote international development.