

# International insight part of direct-seed conference

By T.J. BURNHAM

**M**EETING Global Demand — the theme of the Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association's Kennewick, Wash., conference Jan. 21-22 — will focus on the role reduced tillage plays in feeding 9.5 billion people by 2050.

"Direct-seed cropping systems deliver improved farm economics, improved soil quality, increased productivity and many ecosystem services," says Russ Evans, PNDSA executive director. "The adoption process, however, does come with some challenges and risks."

The conference will provide on-the-ground economic value to growers, according to Evans. "It will deliver a comprehensive program of direct-seed cropping system agronomics, technology and applications — a program that will benefit all growers," he adds.

A look at speakers and topics for the 2009 meeting in the Three Rivers Convention Center reveals a wide range of information.

## Jan. 21 lineup

The speaker lineup for Jan. 21:

■ Alex McGregor, president, The McGregor Co., will discuss challenges and opportunities for the agriculture industry

## Key Points

- PNDSA's annual meeting to feature international farmers.
- No-till farmers from Brazil and Finland join list of speakers.
- Ohio State soil scientist will discuss carbon sequestration.

at a 1 p.m. plenary session. McGregor will cover nutrient supply and demand, emerging carbon and ecosystem markets, farm succession, research priorities, and farm economics.

■ Also at the plenary session, Chuck Foresman, weed-resistance strategies manager, Syngenta Crop Protection Inc., will offer an overview of the company's mission to develop high-quality crop protection and life science products. Another topic will be the support network the company expects to provide for the Pacific Northwest to meet global demand.

■ At the evening banquet, Franke Dijkstra, a no-till farmer from Brazil, will detail how his 4,000-head dairy and 5,000-acre no-till cropland has pioneered conservation farming in that nation. As president of the Brazilian No-till Federation, he will discuss Brazil's adoption of a 60% no-till rate on 64 million acres. He will speak about the ABC Foundation, a grower-fi-



nanced organization in his home nation dedicated to providing advanced no-till solutions.

## More speakers for Jan. 22

Speakers for Jan. 22 include:

■ At a breakfast from 7 to 8:30 a.m., Eero Kovero, a direct-seed farmer from Finland, will talk about building his own direct-seed drill. Kovero, who direct-seeded his entire farm this year, is a familiar figure in the PNW. He visited many farms in the area and hosted PNW growers who visited Finland. He will focus on how direct seeding works in Finland's climate.

■ Key speaker Rattan Lal, Ohio State University soil scientist, will discuss the role of soil

organic carbon in the global economy during a plenary session at 8:30 a.m.

Lal is considered an international authority on the ability of agriculture to sequester carbon, and the important role of soil organic carbon in meeting global demand for food, fiber and energy products.

He will review the role of conservation agriculture's cropping systems to long-term food security. Lal also will discuss ongoing research priorities needed to generate greater knowledge of soil ecosystems and the interactions of cropping systems with those diverse systems.

For more on the conference, see [www.directseed.org](http://www.directseed.org).

## PNDSA posts roster of conference sessions

**T**HREE sessions running concurrently during the 2009 Direct Seed Cropping Systems Conference will be held on Jan. 21 from 3:30 to 5 p.m. (Session 1), and on Jan. 22 from 10:30 a.m. to noon (Session 2) and 2 to 3:30 p.m. (Session 3).

Discussions will be held more than once for delegates to attend as many sessions as possible. Topics will include:

**Wireworm Diagnostics and Control** (low- and intermediate-rainfall areas; Sessions 1 and 3) Speakers include Aaron Esser, Adams County Cooperative Extension Service director, and Mark Sheffels, a grower from Wilbur, Wash.

**Energy Crops: Seed Establishment and Harvest Strategies** (intermediate- and high-rainfall areas; Sessions

1 and 2) Speakers will be Scot Hulbert, Washington State University plant pathologist; Laylah Sullivan, WSU associate researcher; and growers Wade Troutman of Bridgeport, Wash., and Lee Druffel, Colton, Wash.

### 2008 Farm Bill: Direct-Seed Opportunities in the Conservation Title

(Sessions 1 and 2) Speakers include Meta Loftsgaarden of Oregon's Partnership Liaison of the Natural Resource and Conservation Service; David Brown, NRCS assistant of programs for Washington state; and Bob Bartholomew, NRCS assistant of programs in Idaho.

**Harvest Yield Data to Optimize Nutrient Planning** (Sessions 1 and 3) Speakers will be Dave Huggins, Agricultural Research Service soil scientist; Berk Davis, Adams County, Ore.,

producer; and Nate Riggers and Mike Kennedy of Clearwater Farms, Nezperce, Idaho.

**STEEP Research Update** (Sessions 1, 2 and 3; each is different.)

**Emerging Carbon Markets: The Idaho, Oregon and Washington Perspective** (intermediate- and high-rainfall areas; Sessions 2 and 3) Speakers will be Chad Kruger, WSU Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources director, and Mike Hoffman, Idaho Soil Conservation Commission.

**Energy Crops: Weed, Fertility and Herbicide Management Strategies** (intermediate- and high-rainfall areas; Sessions 2 and 3) Speakers will be Don Wysocki, Oregon Cooperative Extension Service soil scien-

tist; Rich Olson, a Garfield, Wash., producer; Ian Burke, WSU weed scientist; and Steve Swannack, grower, Lamont, Wash.

**International Direct Seeding: Q&A with Franke and Eero.** (Session 3) Speakers include Franke Dijkstra, a no-till farmer from Brazil, and Eero Kovero, a direct-seed farmer from Finland.

PNDSA will sponsor a trade show during the conference, which will be open throughout the meeting. Special program breaks will be provided to visit the exhibits, which include a booth provided by *Western Farmer-Stockman*, the official publication of the conference.

Also, PNDSA's ninth annual meeting will be held at the Three Rivers Convention Center at 5 p.m. on Jan. 21.

## Western Close-up

### Utah high school rodeo champs honored

Utah's high school rodeo cowboys and cowgirls are the undisputed national rodeo champions. A team of 24 Utah students won their third consecutive national crown during the National High School Final Rodeo competition in Farmington, N.M., this year. Utah scored a total of 9,229 points. Second-place Texas scored 7,918. The third win in a row allows the Utah team to keep the traveling high school rodeo trophy permanently. It will be displayed at the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food building in Salt Lake City.

### Outstanding Montana ag leaders named

Montanans Taylor Brown of Huntley and Les Graham of Bozeman have been named as the 2008 Outstanding Ag Leaders by the College of Agriculture at Montana State University. Brown is known as one of the nation's top leaders in the field of agricultural broadcasting. Graham is president and CEO of Les Graham and Associates, a consulting business for the farm industry.

### University of Idaho hires new dairy vet specialist

Roxanne Pillars has joined the faculty of the University of Idaho's Caine Veterinary Teaching Center as a veterinarian bovine specialist with an emphasis on dairy animals. She completed her doctorate in large-animal clinical services, with a focus on epidemiology, at Michigan State University.

### Washington 4-H Hall of Fame inducts 6

Six Washington residents were inducted into the Washington 4-H Hall of Fame this year. Included were Bonita Elfstrom, Mount Vernon, founder of the first 4-H Dog Club in Skagit County; Jean Swift, Burlington, who travels throughout the state judging cat shows; Pat Pehling, Snohomish, a volunteer with the Snohomish County 4-H for 38 years; Tom and Ann Muchoney, Snohomish, volunteers for more than 26 years; and Jan Hiller, Pullman, who devoted 58 years to 4-H.

### Montana 4-H picks Saunders as top alumna

Fergus County, Mont., 4-H leader and volunteer Jennifer Saunders is the state's Outstanding 4-H Alumna for 2008. She "exemplifies what it means to be an outstanding 4-H alumna," wrote the Fergus and Petroleum counties 4-H executive board members.