

EXPONENTIAL GROWTH

INDUSTRY FLOCKS TO FORUM

ONCE AGAIN, THE 2015 EGG INDUSTRY ISSUES FORUM SET NEW PARTICIPATION RECORDS: REGISTRATION FOR THE EVENT INCREASED BY 33 PERCENT OVER THE 2014 FORUM, AND THE NUMBER OF INDUSTRY SPONSORS DOUBLED.

When asked about the formula for success in growing the event, Lesa Vold, communications specialist said, "Listening to producers' needs and recognizing the value of an intimate atmosphere for learning and discussion."

Held in Des Moines, the forum opened with an address from Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey. Next came the inaugural Don Bell Memorial Lecture given by Robert Fraley, executive vice president and chief technology officer at Monsanto. Fraley discussed the effects of genetically modified organisms on the egg industry and noted that the link between feed and egg production means agriculture must increase as a whole in order for egg producers to meet the demands of a growing world population.



ROBERT FRALEY, executive vice president and chief technology officer at Monsanto, delivers Don Bell Memorial Lecture.

Also new to the forum this year was a dual-track format that allowed participants to choose among topics, and a panel discussion where industry leaders addressed the aftermath of California Proposition 2.

"It was interesting to hear from the people who have to interpret a law that is vague and put money and time into addressing it with housing and management changes," said Gregory Martin, extension educator at Pennsylvania State University.

Other popular sessions addressed salmonella control, global market trends for feed grains, cage-free housing system management and genetic improvement of hens raised in alternative hen housing systems.

"The variety and quality of topics was good. I especially liked Dr. Sullivan's talk on genetic improvements and alternative hen housing because it fits what I do on a daily basis," said Mark Oldenkamp, vice president of Northwest Operations for Valley Fresh Foods, Inc. "The forum plays an important role in disseminating information that is timely for the industry."

Retained from last year's list of firsts was the post-forum workshop. This year participants had the option of attending a poultry-handling class where they could earn certification through the Poultry Handling and Transportation Quality Assurance Program now offered by the U.S. Poultry & Egg Association.

Said Martin, co-instructor for the workshop, "Everyone should have the opportunity to learn something new in their occupation. The Egg Industry Issues Forum provides opportunities to hear from people and see things you typically don't experience at other national meetings."

SAVE THE DATE!
2016 Egg Industry Issues Forum
April 20-21, Chicago, IL