Critical Conversation on the Nitrogen Reduction Challenge
for the Mississippi River Basin
May 3-4, 2018
Millennium Room, University Club, Chicago

Agenda

Thursday, May 3

5-6 p.m. — Keynote Address: “The Next Conservation Revolution Is Upon Us: How Can We Match Potential With Results?”
   Jason Weller, Senior Director of Sustainability, Land O’ Lakes

6-7 p.m. — Reception

7 p.m. — Dinner (by invitation)

Friday, May 4

8-8:30 a.m. — Welcome and Introductions
   Evan H. DeLucia, Baum Family Director, Institute for Sustainability, Energy and Environment, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
   Praveen Kumar, Department of Civil Engineering, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
   Madhu Khanna, Associate Director, Institute for Sustainability, Energy and Environment, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
   Nelli Noakes, Facilitator, Community At Work, San Francisco

8:30-10 a.m. — Panel I: “Perspectives from the Field: Best Management Practices for N Use and Incentives for Adoption”

   8:30-9 a.m. — Panelists: Travis Deppe (Illinois Corn Growers Association), Jerry Flint (DowDupont), Larry Clemens (The Nature Conservancy), Robb Fraley (Monsanto)

   9-10 a.m. — Group discussion

   Goal — To understand the drivers of nitrogen application decisions on the field and incentives and barriers to adopting best management practices from multiple perspectives

   Key issues to be addressed —
   • How does nitrogen loss reduction fit with the strategic objectives of your organization?
   • What are the incentives and barriers for farmers to adopt conservation practices to reduce nitrogen loss?
   • From your experience and perspective, how effective are such practices in reducing nitrogen loss?
   • What are the ways in which your organization is contributing to nutrient loss efforts?
   • What are the key uncertainties about these and other practices that require additional research?
10-10:30 a.m. — Break

10:30 a.m.-noon — Panel II: “Emerging Practices and Technologies to Increase N Use Efficiency”

10:30-11 a.m. — Panelists: Lyndsey Ramsey (Illinois Farm Bureau), Sam Eathington (The Climate Corporation), Sally Flis (The Fertilizer Institute), Cathy Kling (Iowa State University)

11 a.m.- noon — Group discussion

Goal — To understand the challenges and opportunities to increase nitrogen use efficiency using innovative management practices, big data and information technologies

Key issues to be addressed —

- What are the new developments in technology that can help with nitrogen loss?
- To what extent are these proven technologies with demonstrable benefits to farmers and the environment and how much still under development?
- What are the perspectives of farmers towards these technologies and willingness to adopt them?
- What might be some of the economic factors that could affect the adoption of these technologies?
- What are other concerns, such as data privacy and security, that can limit the uptake of emerging big data technologies?
- What is the role for researchers and public-private partnerships to demonstrate and enhance the potential of emerging technologies?

Noon-1:15 p.m. — Lunch and Small-Group Discussion

1:15-2:45 p.m. — Panel III: “Effective Demand-Driven and Market-Based Policy Options to Reduce N Runoff”

1:15-1:45 p.m. — Panelists: Otto Doering (Purdue University), Julie Armstrong (Illinois Nutrient Research & Education Council), Suzy Friedman (Environmental Defense Fund), Allison Thomson (Field to Market)

1:45-2:45 p.m. — Group discussion

Goal — To explore the role for market demand and for policy incentives to influence adoption of best management practices to increase nitrogen use efficiency and reduce run-off.

Key issues to be addressed —

- How can we make existing conservation programs more effective in reducing nitrogen loss?
- How can big data be used for the public good?
- How can we enhance the non-regulatory incentives that NGOs and other interest groups create for upstream producers to reduce nitrogen loss?
- Are moral suasion and education enough, or are monetary incentives essential to solve nitrogen loss problem?
- What are the key obstacles to implementing innovative policies like water quality trading?
- Can state nutrient loss reduction strategies, that are voluntary by nature, be sufficient to address the hypoxia problem or are regulations needed?

2:45-3 p.m. — Break

3-4 p.m. — Wrap Up and Next Steps