



Field to Market

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New Online Calculator Helps Growers Analyze Natural Resource Use, Sustainability

DALLAS [Feb. 26, 2009] – Farmers will now be able to analyze their natural resource use and key crop production inputs using a new online tool introduced today at Commodity Classic by Field to Market, The Keystone Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture.

The Fieldprint Calculator is a free, confidential online tool developed with input from a diverse group of grower organizations, agribusinesses, food companies, economists and conservation groups, to help farmers evaluate natural resource use on their operation compared to industry averages. These measures could help improve production efficiencies and profit potential. The calculator will be available at www.fieldtomarket.org beginning March 15 for grower testing and feedback.

The new data-driven calculator illustrates the connection between resource and economic sustainability, so growers can more easily see how their choices impact natural resources, production levels and ultimately the efficiency of their operation.

“Farmers have historically strived to be good stewards of the land. Sustainable agriculture must make sense economically as well as environmentally or it’s not sustainable,” says Doug Goerhing, who grows corn, soybeans and wheat in North Dakota. “This calculator will help me understand how we’re being sustainable on the farm today, while providing insight into for future improvements that can benefit the environment and my bottom line.”



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The calculator also helps growers tell the positive story about environmental improvements being made in production agriculture. Increasingly consumers are asking questions about sustainable food and fiber practices, says Diane Holdorf, senior director environmental stewardship, Kellogg Company. “This tool is important to help growers make decisions for themselves about what makes sense for their operations. When added to efforts throughout the food supply chain, we can show the consumer we’re working together to make progress from the fields to the grocery stores.”

Growers can be part of testing and shaping the tool to fit their needs, according to Sarah Alexander of the Keystone Center. “This tool will evolve and improve with ongoing feedback from a broad and diverse base of growers.”

In addition to benchmarking their operation against the industry index, the calculator allows growers to securely save data to compare year-to-year changes, which can help determine the value and impact new practices are having. Ultimately the site will serve as an online community where growers can learn from experiences of other growers, as well as gain expert advice.

Field to Market, the Keystone Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture, includes representatives from throughout the food and fiber chain, including grower organizations, agribusinesses, food companies and conservation organizations. The group defines agricultural sustainability as meeting the needs of the present while improving the ability to feed future generations by focusing on increasing agricultural productivity while decreasing environmental impact, improving human health through access to safe, nutritious food and improving social and economic well-being of rural communities. The Alliance is facilitated by the Keystone Center, a neutral, non-profit organization specializing in collaborative decision-making processes for environment, energy, and health policy issues.

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Field to Market is continually expanding. Recent new members include: Conservation Technology Information Center, CropLife America, CropLife International, Land O'Lakes, Inc. and World Resources Institute. Other *Field to Market* members include: American Farm Bureau Federation; American Soybean Association; Bayer CropScience; Bunge; Cargill, Incorporated; Conservation International; Cotton Incorporated; DuPont; Fleishman-Hillard; General Mills; Grocery Manufacturers Association; John Deere; Kellogg Company; Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences; Mars, Incorporated; Monsanto Company; National Association of Conservation Districts; National Association of Wheat Growers; National Corn Growers Association; National Cotton Council of America; National Potato Council; Syngenta Corporation; The Coca-Cola Company; The Fertilizer Institute; The Nature Conservancy; United Soybean Board; University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture; University of Wisconsin-Madison College of Agricultural and Life Sciences; and World Wildlife Fund.