The challenge to feed 7 billion people today and 9 billion in 2050 will rely heavily on more yield per unit of soil under production. No doubt this will require improved access to modern agricultural inputs (e.g., seed, fertilizer, pesticides, and irrigation) by smallholder growers in the developing world combined with extension efforts to educate growers on how to use such inputs properly in intensified, sustainable crop production. Numerous barriers exist to the distribution of agronomic inputs to the world’s farmers in developing countries. The ASA Global Agronomy Section has the experience and network of contacts necessary to overcome such barriers to access and impact on smallholder farmers in the developing world.

Therefore, the Gaining Access to Agronomic Inputs Community, which was created in 2012, is interested in:

• Evaluating and removing barriers hindering smallholder grower access to modern crop inputs
• Supporting extension programs that educate growers on the benefits and proper use of inputs
• Bringing private and public agronomists together to work and share experience to improve farming practices where the lack of agronomic inputs has been most limiting to crop yield
• Empowering and encouraging entrepreneurship of local input distributors with sound business practices

At the 2013 International Annual Meetings in Tampa, this Community is co-hosting a symposium with the Field Diagnosis for Smallholder Agriculture Community entitled “Smallholder Farming Systems and Extension Education Opportunities.” The objective of this symposium will be to highlight the current trends and examples of extension education practices for smallholder farmers that are working in some of the most undeveloped areas of the world. The hope is that ideas could be generated for how the public and private sectors could work more closely together to improve productivity on current acreage through better and creative extension education. What forms of communication are likely to succeed? How have barriers to disseminating information been overcome? How have field diagnosis and subsequent management practices to improve productivity been successfully linked? Watch for more details about this symposium in the coming months.

This Community is also hosting a tour on Saturday, 2 November to Educational Concerns For Hunger Organization (ECHO), in Ft. Myers, FL.

The Community welcomes participation of all ASA members who have interests in these topics. If you are interested in joining, see the My ASA Communities page at: www.agronomy.org/account/communities/asa and select our community under the Global Agronomy Section. You can also visit the Community’s website (www.agronomy.org/membership/communities/gaining-access-to-agronomic-inputs) and Linked In group.

2013 Community Leaders

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