There are more than 500 million smallholder farmers worldwide. Over multiple decades, the sustained rate of agricultural productivity growth in the developing world as compared with the developed world differs significantly (Fugile, 2012). In sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia, where challenges persist, smallholder farmers will need to double productivity to meet demands by 2050 (FAO, 2017). The factors that contribute to successfully meeting this demand for smallholder farmers are complex. There is a great deal of work being done in academia, the private sector, and NGOs towards a common goal: to increase agricultural productivity by improving access to agronomic inputs. The Gaining Access to Agronomic Inputs (GAAI) Community of ASA was started in 2012 by Technology Development Agronomist, Darin Lickfeldt, who saw an opportunity to engage the diverse membership of ASA, CSSA, and SSSA to share perspectives, learn from different approaches, and highlight successful solutions to this great challenge.

Our Focus

While the original intent of GAAI remains, it has also evolved in the past five years since the start of the community. The focus for the 2017 symposium at the Annual Meeting in Tampa, FL is “Gaining Access to Food Security in Developing Countries: A Systematic Approach to Modernizing Productivity.” Securing the livelihood of smallholder farmers in emerging markets includes a multi-faceted approach. The session will focus on how modernizing techniques are critical to food security and will highlight progressive initiatives focused on increasing productivity through knowledge transfer, research, outreach, and service provided by NGOs, academia, government, and industry. Invited speakers will highlight successful approaches to research and development through capacity building. Speakers will share work in utilization and access to high quality inputs and mechanization. This integrated approach to modernizing agricultural productivity for smallholders is one way to make large-scale gains in productivity.

Our Activities

The community participants are active contributors who play a crucial role in gaining access to agronomic inputs, knowledge transfer, teaching, and service. Continuing the discussion with a multi-faceted integrated approach and learning from experts across public and private sectors are all part of the mission of the Societies. To raise awareness for training and development of students in this domain, the GAAI Community is excited to be hosting a poster contest to highlight excellence in research on improving access to food security in developing countries. A networking reception will follow the symposium.

We welcome input and questions to our leadership, Dr. Stella Salvo, presiding leader, Monsanto Company (stella.salvo@monsanto.com), and Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, PMAS Arid Agriculture University, vice-leader (ahmadmukhtar@uaar.edu.pk).

References


S. Salvo, presiding leader, Gaining Access to Agronomic Inputs Community of ASA