



Ag-Urban Leadership Initiative  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Participants Gather for 2009 Ag-Urban Leadership Initiative**

URBANDALE, Iowa —On Thursday, March 26, the Ag-Urban Leadership Initiative class of 2009 held its first class session. The kickoff session laid out the groundwork of what will be happening throughout the year. Class sessions will focus on the exploration of Iowa's opportunities and approaches for building leadership that brings Iowa's ag and urban sectors closer.

Pat Grote of TPG Companies started by explaining the plans for the day. ISA's Carol Balvanz explained the history of the Ag-Urban Leadership Initiative and why the Iowa Soybean Association fits and works so well with the purpose of the program.

The class of twenty members then introduced themselves to each other. The Class of 2009 includes Dwayne Faidley, educator at DMACC; Jim Fitkin, farmer; Chris Gaesser, farmer; Marian Riggs Gelb, executive director of the Iowa Environmental Council; Sherry Teachout Glenn, educator and administrator for Iowa State University; Lindsay Greiner, farmer; Cindi Grover, farmer; Hubert Hagemann, farmer; Barb Hervey, area manager for Pioneer Hybrid International; Linda Kinman, research/regulatory coordinator for Des Moines Water Works and the Iowa Association of Water Agencies; Kevin Klommhaus, fertilizer program

administrator and emergency response coordinator for Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS); Kevin Krause, marketing vice president for Kum & Go; Jill Paxton, bureau chief for IDALS; Karen Rawson, agricultural program technology specialist for USDA-FSA; Megan Ritter, senior field coordinator for the Coalition to Support Iowa's Farmers; Paul Schultz, real estate broker and developer for Schultz Realty Group Inc.; Randy Taber, managing director of investments for Wells Fargo Advisors and goat farmer; Tom Vincent, farmer and consultant; Jeff Ward, executive director for Iowa Ag Development Authority; and Sarah Willis, sales specialist for Niman Ranch.

Following introductions, Paul Kirpes of TPG Companies explained the goals and plans for the year.

Richard Rowe gave a presentation on behavioral styles and power bases. His energetic talk included learning what behavioral styles are based on, having all class participants complete a behavioral style inventory, and an explanation of the different styles and what verbal and nonverbal behaviors they project, the personal characteristics of each style and different describers of each style. Rowe explained that all behavioral styles are based on personality, past experiences and current positions.

Following lunch, Bob Riley, president and CEO of Feed Energy Company and Solutions, and Dave Coppess, executive vice president of Heartland Cooperative, each shared different views about where Iowa is at and where it is going by talking about different options, opportunities and challenges they see for the state. Riley focused on the areas of consolidation, globalization, environmental issues and triple bottom-line accounting as areas that Iowa's ag and urban sectors need to work together on. Coppess drew attention to the changes and importance of competition, infrastructure and risk management.

The rest of the afternoon was focused on Challenge Iowa, which presents a new opportunity for members to look at Iowa's opportunities and challenges through the eyes of ag-urban collaboration. Over the course of the year, participants will be

engaged in addressing real issues and creating concrete responses to some of Iowa's opportunities. Challenge Iowa will provide a forum that promotes discussion rather than debate, as it explores Iowa's opportunities. It will also introduce alternative approaches and methods of integrating diverse opinions into discussions, in order to reinforce communications and understanding. Also, it will collectively create visions of and for Iowa. And finally, Challenge Iowa will build relationships among participants, alumni, and others that extend beyond five class sessions into networks that share common values and outlooks for Iowa.

The class will reconvene on June 18.

Ag-Urban Leadership Initiative sponsors include West Central Co-op, Heartland Co-op, Iowa Farm Bureau Federation and the Iowa Soybean checkoff. For more information about ISA's Ag Urban Leadership Initiative, contact Carol Balvanz at 515-251-8640.

To learn more about ISA, visit its Web site at [www.iasoybeans.com](http://www.iasoybeans.com).

*Iowa Soybean Association develops policies and programs that help farmers expand profit opportunities while promoting environmentally sensitive production using the soybean checkoff and other resources. The Association is governed by an elected volunteer board of 21 farmers.*

*Partially funded by the soybean checkoff.*