



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-1300 • Voice: (202) 720-4623 • Email: oc.news@usda.gov • Web: <http://www.usda.gov>

Release No. 0125.04

Alisa Harrison (202) 720-4623
Ed Loyd (202) 720-4623

VENEMAN ANNOUNCES NORMAN E. BORLAUG INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FELLOWS PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, March 29, 2004 – Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today launched the Norman E. Borlaug International Science and Technology Fellows Program to support technological progress in the developing world.

“This program will honor Dr. Borlaug by promoting the transfer and adoption of new technologies to improve global food availability,” Veneman said during the program’s inaugural event. “Science and technology can help raise agricultural productivity, improve food processing and marketing and address global hunger and poverty.”

The Borlaug program will be targeted to developing countries, offering short-term scientific training in the United States and supporting the exchange of researchers, policymakers and university faculty. Participants will be placed at land grant and 1890’s colleges and universities, USDA and other government agencies, international research centers and other nonprofit institutions and private companies.

In his speech at the Ministerial Conference on Agricultural Science and Technology, hosted by Veneman in Sacramento last summer, Borlaug challenged government leaders to commit to efforts to accelerate the transfer of agricultural and food technologies to the developing world.

“The Department of Agriculture is responding to Dr. Borlaug’s challenge and shares his commitment,” Veneman said. “This new program is the latest of several initiatives to build on the momentum from that conference.”

Veneman recognized Borlaug, who recently turned 90, for his groundbreaking achievements and life-long commitment to raising agricultural productivity in parts of the world where poverty, hunger and malnutrition are worst.

Often hailed as the father of the Green Revolution, Borlaug won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970 for his success in developing high-yielding dwarf wheat varieties and reversing severe food shortages that haunted India and Pakistan in the 1960’s. Credited with saving millions of lives, his work virtually eliminated recurring famines in South Asia and helped global food production outpace population growth.

-more-

The Borlaug program will be open to participants worldwide but will focus on African, South American and Asian nations. Current plans are to place about 100 fellows from developing countries in the program. The program will be administered by USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service in cooperation with the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. Department of State, land grant colleges and Texas A&M University, where Borlaug is professor emeritus.

In addition to Borlaug and Veneman, other speakers at today's announcement included Dr. J.B. Penn, USDA Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services; Dr. George H. Atkinson, Science and Technology Adviser to the Secretary of State; Dr. Edward Hiler, Vice Chancellor for Agriculture and Life Sciences, Texas A&M University; and Dr. Jim Butler, USDA Deputy Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services.

Borlaug is president of the Sasakawa Africa Association, which works with the Carter Center in encouraging sustainable development and raising the productivity of African farmers. He is also a senior consultant to the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center in Mexico. More than 60 years ago, Borlaug worked for USDA's Forest Service.

#