



EARTH University hosts the Biennial Conference of the Global Consortium of Higher Education and Research in Agriculture March 5th-8th

Event marks the first time a Latin American country will host the international caucus

Costa Rica (March 6, 2007) - On March 5, 2007, scholars, researchers, directors and university presidents from a diverse array of international institutions arrived in San José, Costa Rica to participate in the fifth world conference of the Global Consortium of Higher Education and Research in Agriculture (GCHERA).

Held previous years in Amsterdam, San Francisco, Kiev, Ukraine, and the People's Republic of China, 2007 marks the first time a Latin American country has the honor of hosting the world conference. This year's conference, the theme of which is "**Making vital changes in agriculture through innovation and leadership,**" will include 200 distinguished educators and researchers from over 50 countries.

Created in 1998, the primary goal of the biennial conference is to share information and experiences while exploring new and unique opportunities to promote sustainable development. The attendees seek ways to successfully respond to society's changing needs for agriculture in an increasingly global world economy.

The conference began March 5, 2007 in San José's National Theater with a speech by Dr. Oscar Arias, President of Costa Rica, who stated, "Those who will define the future of agriculture will also define the future of the human race." Other speakers during the conference will include among others Mr. Joseph Lekuton, Educator and Member of Parliament, Kenya; Dr. Rick Foster, Vice-President of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation; and Mr. Walter Robb, President and Chief Operating Officer of Whole Foods Market, Inc.. One day of the conference will be entirely spent on EARTH University's campus so that conference attendees can experience and gain a better understanding of the unique educational model pioneered by EARTH University.

About GCHERA

GCHERA (<http://www.gchera.org/>) grew out of an international conference held in 1998 in Kiev, which marked the 100th anniversary of the National Agricultural University of Ukraine and the completion of a four-year university linkage project involving many institutions around the world and financed by the United States Information Service. The consortium was formed as a result of shared concern for the future of the planet and a conviction that higher education in agriculture should play a leadership role in solving problems associated with food security and environmental sustainability. The consortium aims to include and serve institutions with programs in agriculture, veterinary medicine, and natural resources management, including the biological, physical and social sciences dimensions of these fields. The consortium is governed by a regionally balanced Executive Committee and led by a President. Global meetings of the consortium are held every two years, the first having been held in Amsterdam in 1999. Currently the consortium has approximately 400 members from more than 100 countries.

About EARTH University

EARTH University (<http://www.earth.ac.cr/ing/index.php>) is a sustainable agriculture school located in Costa Rica, dedicated to educating students from throughout Latin America, Europe, Asia, and Africa in the areas of entrepreneurship, sustainable agriculture, ethics and human relations. EARTH, founded in 1990, currently has a total population of 400 students from 23 countries around the world. In keeping with EARTH's mission of affecting change in the areas in greatest need of development, 80% of students are granted full or partial scholarship. The University has graduated nearly 1,200 professionals from Latin America, Europe and Africa. The faculty is composed of 44 professors representing 20 countries. The EARTH University Foundation, based in Atlanta, Ga., coordinates fundraising and special events for the University in the United States.

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