

Global Soy Forum 99: Special Issue Celebrating the Past and Future Successes of Soy



From August 4 to 7, 1999, more than 1,800 people from 61 countries came together at Global Soy Forum 99 to celebrate the past successes and chart the future of the soybean industry. This event represented a truly unique gathering of the entire global soybean community—researchers, producers, agribusiness representatives, industry leaders, policy makers, and consumers—under one roof in Chicago, Illinois at the heart of the U.S. soybean industry.

Two conferences, the Sixth World Soybean Research Conference and the Fourth Midwest Soybean Conference, served as core components of the Forum. The event also included major symposiums on soy and human nutrition and on soy and animal nutrition. In addition, it featured a knowledge management center and a major industry exposition.

As the crossroads of the global soybean industry and home to the Board of Trade, Chicago served as the ideal location for Global Soy Forum 99.

Global Soy Forum 99 was organized by the National Soybean Research Laboratory at the University of Illinois and the Soybean Research Development Council, a joint venture of the Illinois Soybean Checkoff Board and the Iowa Soybean Promotion Board. Sponsors of the event included major agribusiness, the Illinois and Iowa Checkoff Boards, and the United Soybean Board.



Gaining a Real-life Introduction to the Future

Events throughout the forum were aimed at assisting people from all parts of the industry to cut across the borders that separate us.



In his welcoming address, Earl D. Kellogg, Associate Provost for International Affairs at the University of Illinois, declared that Global Soy Forum 99 should best be viewed as a real-life introduction to the future, which will be characterized by increasing globalization in all spheres of human activity. He noted that the future will be shaped most of all by forces that lead to human interactions in networks, forums, and alliances.

“The vision of the Global Soy Forum was to have a worldwide event that would cut across borders of all kinds,” Kellogg said. “People were to be included who were involved with soybeans in science, input supply, production, marketing, processing, and consumption. It also was designed to cut across geographical borders all around the world where soybeans are present.”

He further emphasized that, although the histories of people involved in the soybean industry in different parts of the world may be very different, our destinies will be more common and linked than ever before.

“This globalization, therefore, is not a choice,” he said. “It will continue whether we choose to engage with it or not. While we cannot stop the process, we can become responsibly involved and help shape globalization to improve the lives of all people and those of our children and others to come in the future.”



With more than 1,800 people from 61 countries in attendance, Global Soy Forum 99 served as a dynamic example of the globalization that will mark the future of the industry.

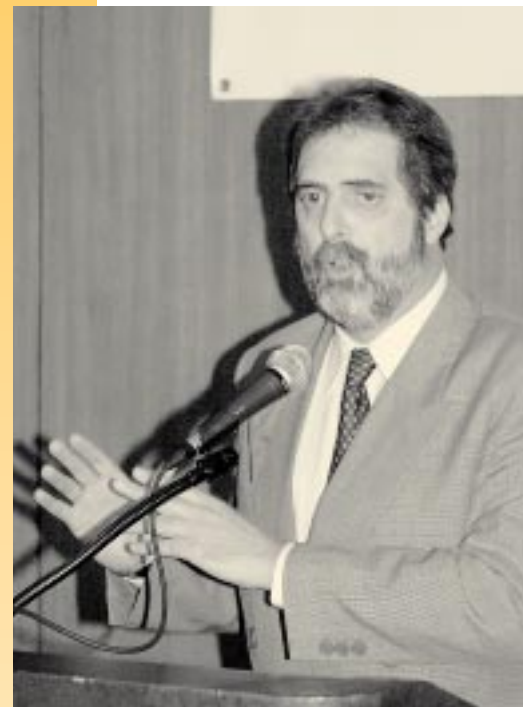
Creating Global Partnerships for the Future



The Sixth World Soybean Research Conference provided the ideal setting for meaningful interactions among soybean scientists from all over the world.

The Sixth World Soybean Research Conference, which served as a major component of Global Soy Forum 99, continued the tradition established by the five previous meetings, where scientists from around the world have shared research results and discussed ways to increase the value and profitability of the industry. The first of those conferences was held at the University of Illinois in 1975. Subsequent meetings were held in Raleigh, North Carolina; Ames, Iowa; Buenos Aires, Argentina; and Chiang Mai, Thailand.

This conference, which once again was hosted by the University of Illinois, brought together the largest, most distinguished group of soybean researchers ever assembled at one time and in one place. Global Soy Forum provided researchers from more than 60 different countries a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to interact with soybean policy makers, industry leaders, producers, agribusiness representatives, and consumers and to gain a clearer vision of the critical role research will play in shaping the industry of the future.



Dr. Alberto Duque Portugal, president of Embrapa, was among the dignitaries on hand for this first-ever event.



More than 60 entrepreneurs from 20 countries received specialized training in soybean utilization at the NSRL before traveling to Chicago for Global Soy Forum 99.

Responding to a Rapidly Changing Global Economy

Another key component of Global Soy Forum 99 was the Fourth Midwest Soybean Conference. This event offered soybean growers a special opportunity to explore the issues and challenges facing the industry. Concurrent sessions focused on topics of vital interest to U.S. producers, such as risk management in the global economy, biotechnology and genetic engineering, component pricing, global competition and industry cooperation, and maximizing production efficiency.

Growers from throughout the country learned first-hand about the latest progress in soybean research and the market trends that will affect the crop in the coming years. By exchanging ideas with other producers and industry leaders and with soybean customers from around the world, participants gained valuable insights into how international markets affect what they grow and the profits they make.



An exposition highlighting the latest in new technologies and extensive sessions on the issues and challenges facing U.S. producers served as the focus for the Fourth Midwest Soybean Conference.

