



## **IDFA Debuts New Signature Session for International Dairy Show**

July 21, 2011

Continued population growth, increasing pollution and changing climate conditions have created the potential for unprecedented water scarcity in coming years, according to prominent environmental scientists, international organizations and business consultants. Recent headlines and a myriad of new publications urge immediate action, saying that business as usual is not a real option.

These alarming predictions about the availability of and access to abundant supplies of fresh water prompted the dairy industry to take a deeper look into what farmers and manufacturers can do now to assess their operational and supply-chain water footprints and create water-management strategies to ensure long-term prosperity.

The International Dairy Show, which is hosted by the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA), Washington, D.C., and is set for Sept. 19-21 at the World Congress Center in Atlanta, will feature a Signature Session titled "Global Water Scarcity: What Dairy Needs to Know," on Sept. 20. The session, sponsored by the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, the leader of sustainability research and implementation in the dairy industry, will demonstrate the risks of inaction and the rewards of implementing a series of immediate, short-term and long-range steps that all dairy processors — large and small — can and should take.

In addition to the main session, the show will include a series of education sessions featuring best practices in sustainability and plant operations for the dairy industry.

"Companies that heed the warning signs and plan wisely will be able to protect their operations and gain significant cost savings, while helping to advance the broader goal of solving the water challenges facing us all," said Robin Cornelison, IDFA tradeshow director. "In this session, industry experts will describe how farms and businesses can act now to identify and manage water risks and opportunities based on sound science. They'll also share the positive results of water-conservation strategies in current use today."

### **Prominent experts lead panel discussion**

Tuesday's Signature Session panelists include environmental science and dairy experts Marty Matlock, professor and area director for the Center for Agricultural and Rural Sustainability at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Ark., and Ying Wang, assistant professor for the Department of Mechanical Engineering at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, La.

Agriculture secretary, Tom Vilsack, recently appointed Matlock to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Advisory Committee on Biotechnology and 21st Century Agriculture. Over the last decade, he has developed an internationally recognized program in ecological engineering at the University of Arkansas. Matlock also is working with the Sustainability Consortium in the Sam M. Walton College of Business in Fayetteville, Ark., to develop a global platform for science-based, outcome-driven, transparent metrics for sustainable production across the food, beverage and agriculture supply chain.

Wang is also director, sustainability research for the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, responsible for overseeing all sustainability research projects, including the development of life-cycle assessments (LCAs) for dairy products and packaging, and coordinating with international dairy organizations to establish uniform standards for dairy LCAs. Wang has more than 10 years of research experience in LCAs, eco-design and eco-materials.

Session attendees will hear real-life stories about what's being done to reduce, reuse and recycle water on farms and in plants. They also will consider how the implementation of water conservation strategies can help decrease costs and their companies' carbon footprint while preparing their businesses for long-term prosperity.

To register to attend or exhibit at the International Dairy Show, go to [www.dairyshow.com](http://www.dairyshow.com). To learn more about the events, sessions, speakers and other show information, turn to the International Dairy Show pre-show section of *Dairy Foods* August 2011 issue.