SmartAg Visionary Session and Strategic Planning Workshop Aug. 1-2 in Detroit

As the world population continues to increase against the sustainability challenges on water and nutrients around the globe, the need to expand the innovation of agricultural technology is becoming an urgent issue.

Michigan State University will join with the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE) and the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) for a SmartAg Visionary Session and Strategic Planning Workshop to discuss solutions on Aug. 1-2 at Cobo Center in Detroit.

John Verboncoeur, associate dean for research in the College of Engineering, said scientific and technological breakthroughs offer many opportunities to meet the food, fiber, water and energy needs around the world.

"Technologies from robotics, sensors, wireless communications, and AI to big data, phenomics, and genomics are finding new applications throughout the food supply chain," Verboncoeur said. "We'll be taking a look at soil preparation to production, harvest, post-harvest, processing, packaging, transportation, cold chain, to wholesale, retail, and the consumer as we continue our strategic planning."

The workshop is set for 3 to 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 1, and 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 2.

Presenters on Wednesday include:
- Robin Lougee, research scientist at the IBM T.J. Watson Research Center, “A vision for SmartAg,”
- John Reid, director on product technology and innovation, John Deere, “Precision Agriculture,”
- Paul Zorner, president and CEO, Locus Agricultural Solutions, “Smart Bio/Agricultural Biotechnology,” and
- Andy Kennedy, interim director of IFT's Global Food Traceability Center, “Social Need/Consumer Expectations.”
A reception will follow the afternoon’s events from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Activities on Aug. 2 include the reporting of outcomes and recommendations from the SmartAg International Symposium at Michigan State University in December 2017, and a set of strategic planning breakout sessions designed to solicit feedback and insights from the attendees.

Topics for the breakout sessions are:
• Soft Technology: Big Data, AI, Machine Learning, etc.
• Hard Technology: Sensors, Mechatronics, robotics, drones, autonomous vehicles etc.
• Biotechnology: Systems biology, metagenomics, gene editing etc.
• Systems integration: Urban agriculture, plant/animal-machine interface; value-chain

For those not attending the ASABE Annual International Meeting, July 29-Aug. 1 in Cobo Center, Detroit, contact Jessica Bell at bell@asabe.org. Registration includes a reception, lunch, and coffee breaks.

Related Website: ASBE
Communications contact: Patricia Mroczek

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