



Ag-Urban Leadership Initiative
Professional Iowans Producing Solutions

2009 Ag-Urban Leadership Class meets for final session

Ankeny, Iowa —The Iowa Soybean Association's (ISA) Ag-Urban Leadership Initiative class of 2009 met for its final session in Ankeny on Dec. 10.

The class, which brings together community leaders from agricultural and urban professions, encourages them to develop their skills as “professional Iowans” and focus on challenges as well as growth opportunities for Iowa. Throughout the course of the year, they met for five sessions in various locations, to hear speakers address agricultural and urban issues.

Participants in the 2009 Ag-Urban class were: Dwayne Faidley, Colfax; Jim Fitkin, Cedar Falls; Chris Gaesser, Creston; Marian Riggs Gelb, Des Moines; Sherry Glenn, Urbandale; Lindsay Greiner, Keota; Cindi Grover, Elma; Hubert Hagemann, Carroll; Barb Hervey, Clive; Linda Kinman, Urbandale; Kevin Klommhaus, Mount Ayr; Kevin Krause, West Des Moines; Jill Paxton, Baxter; Karen Rawson, Dubuque; Megan Ritter, Bondurant; Randy Taber, Van Meter; Tom Vincent, Perry; Sarah Willis, Thornton; and Jeff Ward, Des Moines.

In addition to hearing speakers and engaging in follow-up discussions, members of the class formed groups and worked together by leading discussions on several current issues, including energy alternatives that make sense, developing engaged citizens able to critically evaluate information presented by biased sources, responsible land use in Iowa, and how to deliver education more efficiently. The groups then explored ways that ideas brought forth in the discussions might be followed up and developed. As just one example, the group that focused on education plans to propose an Education Task Force to the legislature.

As the culmination of their five-session class, groups presented reports on their Challenge Iowa discussions to delegates of the ISA Statewide Policy Conference during lunch. Members shared their project's objective, the process they followed and how the project will be taken to the next level. Following the lunch, they interacted with members of the audience regarding how their projects will be continued.

Ag-Urban Leadership Initiative sponsors include West Central Co-op, Heartland Co-op, Iowa Farm Bureau Federation and the Iowa Soybean checkoff. For more information about ISA's Ag Urban Leadership Initiative, contact Carol Balvanz at 515-251-8640.