

## First Ever Iowa Agri-Business Development Team Deploys

by Capt. Peter Shinn  
734th Agri-Business Development Team

7/6/2010 - **Camp Dodge, Iowa** -- The 734th Agri-Business Development Team left Iowa on July 1 after two separate send-off events that highlighted the strength of the community's support for the ADT. Some 300 people attended the first event, a Family Send-Off Picnic on June 30, and around 1,000 were on hand for the Community Send-Off Ceremony the next morning.

A group of Iowa agricultural producer groups including the Iowa Pork Producers Association, Iowa Corn Growers, Iowa Soybean Association, Midwest Dairy Association and Polk County Farm Bureau put on the Family & Friends Send-Off Picnic for the ADT. Food companies including Roberts Dairy, Anderson Erickson and Swiss Valley Co-op donated food for the event. Polk County Farm Bureau President Steve Lee called his group's support of the ADT "a great pleasure and honor" and emphasized his strong belief in the ADT's mission, which is to protect the people of Afghanistan by improving their food security.

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"Helping people to become self sufficient in food production is a wonderful way to earn their respect, Lee said. "It also helps them to know the dignity and self worth of providing for their families and eventually, their country."

Col. Craig Bargfrede, who commands the ADT, has 20 years experience in agri-business. And he expressed his thanks for the outpouring of support from Iowa's agri-business community.

"Iowa's farmers and agri-businesses produce the safest, most affordable and abundant food supply in the world, and that was very evident at our Family & Friends Send-Off Picnic," Bargfrede said. "As we deploy, we plan to take some of the Iowa ag know-how that made the bounty at our picnic possible and translate that into greater food security for ordinary Afghan families."

The next morning, Iowa Lt. Gov. Patty Judge presided over the Community Send-Off Ceremony and gave remarks to the standing-room-only crowd at the Iowa National Guard Freedom Center on Camp Dodge, in Johnston, Iowa. Judge, the former Iowa Secretary of Agriculture, pointed out that Iowa is uniquely suited to fulfill the ADT mission.

"The agricultural expertise you have learned and honed over the years as well as the new training you have undergone is critical to food security in the region and an important step toward completion of the overall mission," Judge said. "As your former Secretary of Agriculture, I know there is no one in the world better prepared to serve."

The current Iowa Secretary of Agriculture, Bill Northey, also attended the Community Send-Off Ceremony. He described the ceremony as "moving," and he agreed with Judge's assessment of the ADT's capabilities.

"It's just so fitting that an Iowa group is going to Afghanistan to help their people with agriculture," Northey said. "Everyone connected with Iowa agriculture is behind this team and is paying attention to every bit of news the can get about it."

Iowa's ADT is historic in another important way as well, according to Brig.Gen. Timothy Orr, Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard. He pointed out the Iowa ADT is the Iowa National Guard's first true Joint deployment.

"This is the first time in the history of the Iowa National Guard that we've deployed our Army National Guard, our Air National Guard and even U.S. Army Reserve soldiers together on one common mission, which is to make a difference in Afghanistan," Orr said. "This is a big commitment, and any time you go away for a year, it's a hardship. I want the Soldiers and Airmen of the ADT, and especially their families, to know we're behind them."



The Iowa National Guard's 734th Agri-Business Development Team "brings it in" at the conclusion of the Team's Community Send-Off Ceremony on July 1 at Camp Dodge, Iowa. USAF Photo Capt. Peter Shinn, 734th ADT Public Affairs (Released)