



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Richard Kirchhoff, 202/296-9680
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MEDIA ADVISORY

State Agriculture Leaders Available for Interviews At Farm Broadcasters Convention

National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) Members will be available at the NAFB's Trade Talk, **NASDA Booth #80**, on November 13, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Gene Hugoson, NASDA President and Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture; **Peter Hofherr**, Director of the Missouri Department of Agriculture; **Rick Kirchhoff**, Executive Vice President & CEO, NASDA, along with public information officials from several state departments of agriculture will be available to answer questions about NASDA policy and "hot issues" including implementation by USDA of the U.S. Warehouse Act, conservation and the environment, pesticide management, food safety and security, specialty crop block grants, farm labor legislation, and other issues of concern to producers and the agricultural community. Take the opportunity to interview those who set and implement agricultural policy in their states and, through NASDA, influence policy at the federal level.

WHO:

- GENE HUGOSON**, NASDA President and Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- PETER HOFHERR**, Director of the Missouri Department of Agriculture
- RICK KIRCHHOFF**, Executive Vice President & CEO, NASDA

- Ron Zellar, Public Information Officer, Montana Department of Agriculture
- Lisa Taylor, Public Information Officer, Kansas Department of Agriculture
- Sally Oxenhandler, Public Information Administrator, Missouri Department of Agriculture
- Angie Daly, Public Information Specialist, Missouri Department of Agriculture
- Charlie Ingram, Director, Legislative & Regulatory Affairs, NASDA

WHAT: Available for Interviews from Farm Broadcasters and Media

WHEN: 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., November 13

WHERE: Trade Talk, National Association of Farm Broadcasters Convention, Westin Crown Center, Kansas City, MO

CONTACT: Betsy Maixner, 202/296-9680 or betsy@nasda.org, to schedule interviews

NASDA is a nonprofit association of public officials comprised of the commissioners, secretaries, and directors of agriculture in the fifty states and four territories.

GENE HUGOSON
NASDA President and Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Governor Tim Pawlenty appointed Gene Hugoson Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture in January 2003. A south-central Minnesota farmer from the East Chain area, Hugoson was first appointed Agriculture Commissioner in July 1995 by Governor Arne Carlson, and was reappointed in 1999 by Governor Jesse Ventura. Hugoson and his wife, Patricia, operate a corn and soybean farm in Martin County. His son, Jon, and daughter-in-law Jaime are also involved in farm operations.

Hugoson served five terms in the Minnesota House of Representatives, having been first elected in 1986, and served four years as Assistant Minority Leader. Hugoson served on agriculture, taxes, transportation and transit committees during his time as a legislator.

Hugoson earned a degree in social science education from Augsburg College in Minneapolis. After graduating he served in the U.S. Army, including a tour of duty in Vietnam. He has also done graduate work at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Hugoson's lifelong farming background helps him maintain a producer's perspective on the challenges facing Minnesota's rapidly changing agricultural industry. He recognizes the need for agencies to be accessible to citizens, and consequently has worked on an ongoing reorganization of the department to ensure the organization's focus remains squarely on providing superior service to its stakeholders.

As Commissioner, Hugoson has worked to strengthen Minnesota's value-added industries and international trade opportunities. Seeking to boost demand for Minnesota products in promising markets, he has participated in successful trade development missions to China, Mexico, Cuba, Japan and other several other nations. Hugoson frequently hosts international government and business leaders as well.

As the livestock industry has attracted controversy across the country, Hugoson has argued that it is possible indeed necessary for a community to have both a clean environment and a strong agricultural sector. As a member and now chairman of the state's Environmental Quality Board, he helped build support for a statewide study on the economic, environmental and social impacts of animal agriculture. The study will help guide state and local policy for years to come.

Hugoson is president of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture.

PETER HOFHERR
Director of the Missouri Department of Agriculture

Gov. Bob Holden appointed Peter Hofherr as director of the Missouri Department of Agriculture on July 29, 2003. As director, Hofherr manages the department's six divisions and directs department policy.

Hofherr had served as the department's deputy director since February 2001. In that capacity, he helped manage the department's programs and operations and handled special projects for the administration. Those projects included working with the Department of Economic Development to coordinate statewide economic development activities between agencies. He also helped with emergency recovery efforts following the devastating tornadoes that hit the state in May. In 2001, Hofherr represented Gov. Holden in discussions between the Midwestern Governor's Association and the European Union on genetically enhanced organisms.

Before joining the state agriculture department, Hofherr ran his family's business, St. James Winery, one of Missouri's oldest wineries. He also worked as a manager for Coopers and Lybrand, a Big Six accounting and consulting firm in Atlanta, where he was a consultant on financial matters. From 1988 to 1992, Hofherr worked as a consultant on mergers and acquisitions for the Atlanta consulting firm BDO Seidman.

Hofherr is a former commissioner on the Missouri Soil and Water Conservation Districts Commission. He is also a former member of the American Society of Enology and Viticulture and the Missouri Grape Growers Association and has served on the Missouri Restaurant Association and the Missouri Grape and Wine Advisory boards. Hofherr is a member of the Association for Management and Research, the Institute for Chartered Financial Analysts and the Phelps County Regional Health Care Foundation.

A chartered financial analyst, Hofherr holds a bachelor's degree in microbiology from Auburn University and a master's degree in business administration from Georgia State University. He also studied international banking and finance at the University of London.

Hofherr is married to Beth Reeds Hofherr. He has two children, Brandon and Finlay. A native of St. James, Hofherr enjoys reading, traveling, wine tasting and promoting Missouri agriculture.

RICK KIRCHHOFF
Executive Vice President & CEO, NASDA

Richard (Rick) Kirchhoff has served as Executive Vice President and CEO of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) since May, 1992. In his capacity as chief executive officer, Rick manages the operations of the Washington, D.C. office and is responsible for implementation of all NASDA programs and policies as approved by the Board of Directors or the Membership.

Prior to joining NASDA, Rick served as Vice President of the Smokeless Tobacco Council, a private industry trade association, where he was responsible for directing the Council's state government relations division, consisting of an internal staff of four and a national network of 52 contract lobbyists.

Rick came to Washington in 1983, to become legislative assistant to former U.S. Representative Larry J. Hopkins of Kentucky, after having served as the congressman's district director for three years. In 1984, Rick joined the staff of the House Agriculture Committee where he served for three and one half year's before moving to the Smokeless Tobacco Council.

Rick is a native of Lexington, Kentucky and earned both his Master's and Bachelor's degrees from the University of Kentucky. He currently resides in Arlington, Virginia.