

#AGTECH24



**TUESDAY**  
**MARCH 5, 2024**

  
Illinois Conference Center  
Champaign, IL

PRESENTED BY:



**Research Park**

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



**INTERSECT**  
Illinois





Thank you to our 2024 AgTech Summit sponsors and partners:



This event is presented by the University of Illinois Research Park in collaboration with the College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences and the Office of Corporate Relations at the University of Illinois.

# AGENDA

## 2024 AGTECH SUMMIT

• = University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

8:00 AM

### Welcome & Opening Remarks

- **Laura Appenzeller** - Executive Director, University of Illinois Research Park

8:10 AM

### Champaign-Urbana AgTech Week Proclamation

**Deborah Frank Feinen** - Mayor, City of Champaign

**Diane Wolfe Marlin** - Mayor, City of Urbana

8:30 AM

### Intersect Illinois Welcome

**Dan Seals** - CEO, Intersect Illinois

8:45 AM

### Navigating Digital Ag

MODERATOR: ELHAN ERSOZ

- **Elhan Ersoz** - Clinical Assistant Professor, Crop Sciences
- Justin McMenemy** - VP of Disruptive Products, Precision Planting
- Dave Knippenberg** - Director of Data Platforms, Elanco
- Jared Fry** - Director of Modeling & Simulation, Mondelez
- Dominic Walkes** - Director of Technical Product Management, CNH

9:30 AM

### Fireside Chat: Corteva Agriscience

MODERATOR: KIM KIDWELL

- **Kim Kidwell** - Associate Chancellor for Strategic Partnerships and Initiatives
- Sam Eathington** - Chief Technology and Digital Officer, Corteva Agriscience

10:00 AM

### Policy Impact on AgTech

MODERATOR: STEPHEN WALD

- **Stephen Wald** - Director of External Communications and Government Relations
- **Jonathan Coppess** - Associate Professor, College of Agricultural, Consumer, & Environmental Sciences
- Greg Webb** - Vice President, State Government Relations, ADM
- Aleksi Knepp** - Legislative Assistant, United States House of Representatives, Office of Congresswoman Nikki Budzinski

### BREAK

10:45 AM

### Regional Partnership in Bioprocessing: iFAB Tech Hub

MODERATOR: NICOLE BATEMAN

**Nicole Bateman** - President, Economic Development Corporation of Decatur & Macon County  
**Michael Tai** - CEO, Boston Bioprocess  
**James Glueck** - Senior Vice President, Advanced Bioproducts, Corn Refiners Association  
**Beth Conerty** - Regional Innovation Officer, iFAB Tech Hub  
**Eric Lee** - Director, Business Development – Fermentation and Bioindustry, Primient

11:30 AM

## Edwin Moore Family Agriculture Award Ceremony

11:45 AM

## Fireside Chat: Hypercell

MODERATOR: GERALD WILSON

- **Gerald Wilson** - Director of Entrepreneurship, EnterpriseWorks
- Bruno Jactel** - CEO, Hypercell

## LUNCH

12:45 PM

## Fireside Chat: GDM

MODERATOR: GERMÁN BOLLERO

- **Germán Bollero** - Dean, College of Agricultural, Consumer, & Environmental Sciences
- Gastón Suardiaz** - Global Strategy Lead, GDM

1:15 PM

## Lightning Presentations

- **Andrew Leakey** - Director, Center for Advanced Bioenergy and Bioproducts Innovation
- Dennis Beard** - Managing Partner, Serra Ventures
- AgTech Hackathon Presentation** - Winners

2:00 PM

## Glen "GB" Brandt Prize for Ag Entrepreneurism Presentation

## BREAK

2:30 PM

## The Journey of Sustainability

MODERATOR: JOHN REID

- **John Reid** - Executive Director, Center for Digital Ag
- Jamie Ridgely** - VP of Product and Operations, HabiTerre
- Sumeeta Salvador** - Sr. Associate, Corporate Development in Food & Agriculture, S2G Ventures
- Alexey Rostapshov** - Head of Labs and Sustainability Solutions, John Deere
- Charlie Foresman** - Ecosystems Impact Lead, Bayer

3:15 PM

## Perspective of Growers & Producers

MODERATOR: JIM GOSS

- Jim Goss** - VP of TAG Farms, The Atkins Group
- Sarah Hastings** - Co-Owner, Hastings CCI Equipment and Hastings Farm
- Eric Miller** - Co-owner, Roots Run Deep Farm
- Eric Rund** - Owner/Operator, Rund Farms

4:00 PM

## AgTech Showcase & Networking Reception



## Master of Ceremonies



### Katheryne Rehberg

Owner-Partner, Capitol City Speakers Bureau

Katheryne Rehberg is a proud alumna with a BS in Food Science and Human Nutrition from the College of ACES. Rehberg is an Owner-Partner at Capitol City Speakers Bureau, a boutique speakers bureau founded by an Illinois alum 31 years ago. Rehberg brings a unique perspective to her role as Partner. Her past experience includes managing food ingredient product lines at ADM and managing corporate partnerships at the University of Illinois Office of Corporate Relations. Capitol City Speakers Bureau partners with meeting planning professionals to bring keynote speakers, celebrities, athletes, authors, and business thought leaders to client events, conferences and meetings across the country.

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8:00 AM

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## Welcome and Opening Remarks



### Laura Appenzeller

Executive Director, University of Illinois Research Park

Laura Appenzeller is the University of Illinois Research Park Executive Director and the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Innovation for the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus. She is responsible for managing startup company services at the EnterpriseWorks technology incubator, marketing and developing the Research Park, and supporting the University's economic development and technology commercialization efforts. Appenzeller has developed innovative entrepreneur support programs as well as has attracted many new companies who are interested in engaging with the University of Illinois.

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8:10 AM

## Champaign-Urbana AgTech Week Proclamation



**Deborah Frank Feinen**  
Mayor, City of Champaign

Deborah Frank Feinen has been a proud resident of Champaign for over 45 years and the mayor for the past eight years. Deb earned a BA in Psychology and Education from Mount Holyoke College and a Juris Doctor from the IIT-Chicago Kent College of Law. Before becoming mayor, she worked as an Attorney from 1998 to 2019 and served as a Champaign County Board member for fourteen years, including serving as the vice-Chair of the County Board. Feinen is passionate about making positive change in Champaign and among other things is an advocate for the City's Goal Getters program, CU-Fresh Start, and the LIFT Champaign program.



**Diane Wolfe Marlin**  
Mayor, City of Urbana

Diane Marlin is the City of Urbana's 50th Mayor. She has dedicated herself to moving the City of Urbana forward, so it becomes a center of inclusion, opportunity, and innovation. She earned a bachelor's degree in Human Development and a master's degree in Foods and Nutrition from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She worked as a registered dietitian and affiliate faculty member at Parkland College and retired from the University of Illinois as Coordinator of Research Programs in the Family Resiliency Center. Marlin has extensive community, environmental, and professional service. She and her husband, John, have also propagated native woodland wildflowers and made them available to local schools, parks, and homeowners interested in sustainable landscaping.

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8:30 AM

## Intersect Illinois Welcome



**Dan Seals**  
CEO, Intersect Illinois

Dan Seals is the Chief Executive Officer of Intersect Illinois, a public private partnership focused on global business development for the State of Illinois. He oversees all aspects of the organization, including marketing, sales, financing, and personnel. Seals has previously served as a Director at the American Medical Association, led business marketing for a division of GE Capital, and led a marketing team at T-Mobile. Seals also served as the Assistant Director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, where he oversaw programs for business attraction, small business support, workforce development, tourism, and international trade. During that time, he led the development of the first Illinois Economic Development Plan in years.



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8:45 AM

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## Navigating Digital Ag



### MODERATOR

#### Elhan Ersoz

Clinical Assistant Professor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign  
Crop Sciences

Elhan Ersoz is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Digital Agriculture & Computational Biology. Previously, she was a technical lead at the Moonshot Factory, formerly Google [x], the Associate Director of Educational Programs at the Center for Digital Agriculture, and founded Umbrella Genetics. Her current research program focuses on improving the sustainability and climate resilience of cropping systems for agriculture, leveraging technological advances including AI and synthetic biology.

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#### Justin McMenemy

VP of Disruptive Products, Precision Planting

Justin McMenemy currently serves as the VP of Disruptive Products at Precision Planting, where he has worked for the past decade. In this time, he oversaw 25 new product launches and helped navigate multiple acquisitions, divestiture, the exit of a charismatic founder, and a global chip shortage. In his time at Precision Planting, the company has grown into one of the largest AgTech companies in the world and the Product Development team has grown from four Caterpillar and John Deere transplants to over 100 data scientists and engineers.

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#### David Knippenberg

Director of Data Platforms, Elanco

David Knippenberg is the Director of Data Platforms at Elanco, a global leader in animal health. He has 18 years of experience in this field, including 10 years with Eli Lilly. He holds a Bachelor of Science from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Illinois, and a Master of Science from Purdue University. As a technical leader, Knippenberg is passionate about leveraging his empirical background to drive innovation and operational excellence at Elanco. Outside work, he enjoys spending time with his family and experiencing the world from the perspective of his two young children.





**Jared Fry**  
Director of Modeling & Simulation, Mondelez

Jared Fry currently leads the Modelling & Simulation group at Mondelez International, creating predictive models enabling R&D to innovate with greater confidence, agility, and impact. By bringing data science and computational physics to the world of snacking, he demonstrates how digital capabilities can help tackle the biggest R&D challenges facing the industry. Never one to be comfortable with the status quo, Fry continuously pushes boundaries and confronts the norm. In his spare time, Fry enjoys being with his family and exercising, the latter often being sacrificed in favor of his other passion, sleeping.



**Dominic Walkes**  
Director of Technical Product Management, CNH

Dominic Walkes has served as the Director of Technical Product Management at CNH Industrial since 2023. Since joining CNH in 2012, Walkes has led various multi-disciplinary engineering and product management teams. He helped develop and execute the organization-wide initiative to boldly invest in autonomy and automation in 2019 and most recently worked with CNH to strengthen partnerships and collaboration through acquisition and development.

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**9:30 AM**

## **Fireside Chat: Corteva Agriscience**



**MODERATOR**

**Kim Kidwell**  
Associate Chancellor for Strategic Partnerships and Initiatives,  
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

In close collaboration with personnel in the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation, Dr. Kim Kidwell assists the Chancellor with the strategic development of high-priority, high-impact, multi-stakeholder initiatives for the University. She provides leadership in pursuing resources and developing new and sustained partnerships with academic institutions, foundations, federal and state agencies, alumni, and the private sector to position the University to lead scientific discoveries and innovations that will inspire and empower tomorrow's sustainable food, agriculture, nutrition and rural health systems.



## **Sam Eathington**

**Chief Technology and Digital Officer, Corteva Agriscience**

Sam Eathington is the Executive Vice President and Chief Technology and Digital Officer of Corteva Agriscience, where he is responsible for leading the company's global Research and Development organization and driving digital innovation companywide. A recognized leader in agricultural innovation, Eathington served as Chief Science Officer of The Climate Corporation (part of Bayer Crop Science) for four years before joining Corteva Agriscience. He also spent nearly two decades with Monsanto, holding multiple roles in quantitative traits and molecular breeding and serving as Vice President of Global Plant Breeding. Eathington holds a Bachelor of Science in agronomy, a Master of Science in soybean breeding and genetics and a PhD in quantitative genetics and maize breeding, all from the University of Illinois.

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**10:00 AM**

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## **Policy Impact on AgTech**



**MODERATOR**

### **Stephen Wald**

**Director of External Communications and Government Relations,  
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign**

Stephen Wald provides leadership in the College of ACES for government and stakeholder relations and public policy. Before he assumed this position, he worked for the Illinois State Geological Survey, the Prairie Research Institute, the University of Illinois Extension, and then he transitioned to be government relations lead from 2018 to 2022. Earlier, Wald worked in water, energy, and environmental policy in California and the Pacific Northwest.



### **Jonathan Coppess**

**Associate Professor, College of Agricultural, Consumer, &  
Environmental Sciences, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign**

Jonathan W. Coppess is an Associate Professor and the Director of the Gardner Agriculture Policy Program. He is a member of the farmdoc project and a frequent contributor to farmdoc daily. Jonathan previously served as Chief Counsel for the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, as well as on a temporary, part-time basis as a special counsel. Prior to his service on the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee, Coppess served as the Administrator of the Farm Service Agency at USDA and Legislative Assistant to Senator Ben Nelson. His research interests include agricultural law and policy, including farm support and risk management, natural resource conservation, and biofuels.



### **Greg Webb**

**Vice President, State Government Relations, ADM**

Greg Webb joined ADM in 1986, working in the North American oilseeds processing business. In July 2002, he was named the company's North American trade representative for Grains and Oilseeds. He has served in his current role since October 2007. Webb holds a bachelor's degree in agriculture economics from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale.



**I**  
ALUM

### **Aleksi Knepp**

**Legislative Assistant, United States House of Representatives,  
Office of Congresswoman Nikki Budzinski**

Aleksi Knepp is a Legislative Assistant for Congresswoman Nikki Budzinski in her Washington, D.C. office. She advises the Congresswoman on a variety of policy areas, but the largest part of her portfolio is the Congresswoman's position on the House Committee on Agriculture. Knepp grew up in Tazewell County, Illinois, with farms on both sides of her family, before coming to the University of Illinois where she graduated with her bachelor's degree and master's degree from the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics.

## **BREAK**

**10:45 AM**

## **Regional Partnership in Bioprocessing: iFAB Tech Hub**

**MODERATOR**

### **Nicole Bateman**

**President, Economic Development Corporation of Decatur & Macon County**

Nicole Bateman is the President of the Economic Development Corporation of Decatur & Macon County. She is responsible for promoting the region for growth through new developments and expansions, executing marketing and branding campaign for the area, and working with the community to shift perceptions and recruit new residents to Decatur and Macon County. She joined the EDC in 2015 and additionally manages the Limitless Decatur & Macon County community marketing campaign and the Midwest Inland Port development and marketing efforts. She has a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign College of ACES in Agriculture and Environmental Communications and Education.



**I**  
ALUM



**Michael Tai**  
CEO, Boston Bioprocess

Michael Tai, the co-founder and CEO of Boston Bioprocess, is a bioprocess strategic and business leader who focuses on transforming lab technology breakthrough into commercialization with economic feasibility. Tai has a PhD in Biological Systems Engineering, six years of experience at ADM, and two years at Motif FoodWorks as Head of Bioprocess. Tai co-founded Boston Bioprocess Inc. in 2022 as a CRO and CDMO platform to help fermentation product-companies develop and scale up their bioprocesses to get into commercial manufacture.

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**James Glueck**  
Senior VP, Advanced Bioproducts, Corn Refiners Association

James Glueck oversees and executes legislative and regulatory priorities for policies related to advanced bioproducts. He works to educate stakeholders on programs and policies that will improve the value chain and support growth of the industry, helping to harness its economic potential and deliver a more sustainable future. Previously, Glueck served in roles with the Torrey Advisory Group, the US Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry, Senator Mike Johanns, Bunge North America, and the US Department of Agriculture.

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**Beth Conerty**  
Regional Innovation Officer, iFAB Tech Hub

Beth Conerty is the Associate Director for Business Development for the Integrated Bioprocessing Research Lab, part of the Department of Ag and Biological Engineering, the College of ACES, and the Grainger College of Engineering on the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus. She also serves as the Regional Innovation Officer for the Illinois Fermentation and Agriculture Biomanufacturing (iFAB) Tech Hub. She has her bachelor's in chemistry and a master's in bioenergy from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She completed her PhD at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and Oak Ridge National Lab.

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**Eric Lee**  
Director, Business Development – Fermentation and Bioindustry, Primient

Eric Lee has over 35 years of experience in the fermentation and bio-processing industry. He has led several teams to the development and commercialization of fermentation-based products. He has extensive expertise in business development and market management. Lee is primarily focused on evaluating and developing strategic partnerships that leverage Primient's current and evolving capabilities in this high growth market space. He also provides technical support for Primient products used within the fermentation & bioindustry market segment, as well as evaluating development of new products.

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11:30 AM

## Edwin Moore Family Agriculture Award Ceremony

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11:45 AM

## Fireside Chat: Hypercell



### MODERATOR

#### Gerald Wilson

Director of Entrepreneurship, EnterpriseWorks

Dr. Gerald O. Wilson is the Director of Entrepreneurship at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. He is responsible for the development and implementation of a vision and infrastructure to establish and accelerate a cross-campus culture of entrepreneurship that spans research institutes, colleges, and departments. His responsibilities include leading the staff of the EnterpriseWorks incubator, in supporting entrepreneurship programming and business development for clients. Prior to joining the University of Illinois, Wilson was President and CEO of Autonomic Materials, Inc. (AMI), an advanced materials company based in Champaign, IL. Wilson is also a Clinical Assistant Professor in the University's Technology Entrepreneur Center.



#### Bruno Jactel

CEO, Hypercell

Bruno Jactel is the CEO and cofounder of Hypercell Technologies. Prior to this, Jactel was CEO of TyraTech, Inc., which he transformed from a research company to a commercial company, building best-in-class national brand offerings for non-pesticide alternatives to insect control. Jactel was Chief Marketing and Innovation Officer of Sanofi-Merial from 1999 to 2012, where he led marketing and innovation across all brands and countries. Jactel has also worked as an Assistant Professor at the National Veterinary School of Alfort in Paris, France. He holds a Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine, a master's degree in Economic Policy from the Sorbonne University in Paris, and a Post-master's degree in agricultural economics.

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LUNCH

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12:45 PM

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## Fireside Chat: GDM



### MODERATOR

#### Germán Bollero

Dean, Professor, College of Agricultural, Consumer, & Environmental Sciences, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Dr. Germán Bollero has been a member of the ACES family for nearly 30 years. Bollero received a bachelor's degree in agronomy from the National University of Rosario, Argentina and continued his education at the University of Illinois, earning his master's and PhD from the Department of Agronomy. In 1998, he joined the crop sciences faculty as assistant professor of biometry and cropping systems, leading the department from 2009 to 2018. Bollero is internationally recognized for his scholarship in biometry and cropping systems and is a Fellow of the Crop Science Society of America and the Agronomy Society of America.

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#### Gastón Suardiaz

Global Strategy Lead, GDM

Gastón Suardiaz is an experienced business leader with a demonstrated history of working in the farming industry. Before working at GDM, Suardiaz was a Product Management Leader at Monsanto and worked for Dow AgroSciences.

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1:15 PM

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## Lightning Presentations



#### Andrew Leakey

Director, Center for Advanced Bioenergy and Bioproducts Innovation

Dr. Andrew Leakey is the Michael Aiken Professor and Head of the Department of Plant Biology at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, where he has worked since 2002. He is also the Director of the Center for Advanced Bioenergy and Bioproducts Innovation (CABBI). CABBI is a nation-wide collaborative research enterprise involving over 300 scientists and students developing the scientific understanding and technological innovations necessary to support development of a profitable bioeconomy. Leakey's research focuses on integrative physiology, genetics and genomics that promote successful farming where there is insufficient water supply. He received a Fulbright Scholarship, the Calvin-Benson Prize for excellence in early-career research, and he has been elected as a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.





**Dennis Beard**  
Managing Partner, Serra Ventures

Dennis Beard has been a Managing Partner at Serra Ventures since 2010. He has built a successful 40-plus year career in financial services, healthcare services, and technology, including ag tech. He is a manager of a family of venture capital funds since 2010 and has worked over 10 years with the University of Illinois technology community. He is a charter member of the University's Entrepreneur-in-Residence program at the EnterpriseWorks incubator in the Research Park. Beard holds a BS in Accounting from Millikin University and an MBA from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.



## Winners Presentation

**2:00 PM**

### Glen "GB" Brandt Prize for Ag Entrepreneurism Presentation

**BREAK**

**2:30 PM**

### The Journey of Sustainability



**MODERATOR**

**John Reid**

Executive Director, Center for Digital Ag, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Dr. John Reid has over 35 years of technology leadership experience in industry and academia. From 1986-2000, he served on the faculty at the University of Illinois, where his research focused on sensing, automation, and control of food and agricultural systems. He then spent 19 years with Deere and Company, where initiated the development of enterprise field robotics capabilities. He has experience in innovation management, having served as Director, Enterprise Product Innovation and Technology for 14 years. In 2017 he was recognized as John Deere Technical Fellow for his contributions in Technology Innovation.





**Jamie Ridgely**  
VP of Product and Operations, HabiTerre

Jamie Ridgely is a seasoned leader with a proven background in developing, managing and scaling innovative product strategies. Prior to joining HabiTerre, Ridgely held several key positions at agriculture and technology companies, where she successfully led program, product, and operational teams, oversaw creation and scaling of a major soil carbon program, developed a scalable framework for conservation planning across the ag value chain, and executed the fruitful exit of a small agtech company. In addition to her experience across many aspects of business, Ridgely actively farms and firsthand experiences the implications of climate change and conservation efforts at field level.

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**Sumeeta Salvador**  
Sr. Associate, Corporate Development in Food & Agriculture, S2G Ventures

Sumeeta Salvador leads corporate development efforts for S2G's food and agriculture portfolio, focusing on collaborating with entrepreneurs, corporates, investors, nonprofits, and government stakeholders to accelerate the growth of climate-smart technologies. Prior to S2G, Sumeeta worked in innovation insights & analytics for CPG companies such as Conagra Brands, RXBAR, and NielsenIQ. S2G provides capital, mentorship, and value-added resources to innovative companies in food and agriculture, oceans, and clean energy.

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**Alexey Rostapshov**  
Head of Labs and Sustainability Solutions, John Deere

Alexey Rostapshov's career has centered on solving technology, product, and business challenges from a variety of angles. He is excited by companies that apply technology in the physical world in a range of fields, including agriculture, energy, industrials, transportation, travel, and financial services. Additionally, he is on the Board of Directors at Carbon Crop, an Edmund Hillary Foundation Fellow, and the Independent Director of the Nelson AI Institute.

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**Charlie Foresman**  
Ecosystems Impact Lead, Bayer

In his role within the Global Sustainable team at Bayer Crop Science, Charlie Foresman leads efforts to better understand the technical challenges, emerging opportunities and solutions surrounding sustainable agriculture, for Bayer's farmer customers and overall business. Prior to joining Bayer, Foresman worked as a corn breeder for Monsanto and held a variety of roles within US Commercial and the Global Technology organizations. Charlie grew up in Champaign, IL.

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3:15 PM

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## Perspective of Growers & Producers



### MODERATOR

#### Jim Goss

Vice President of TAG Farms, The Atkins Group

Jim Goss has been with the Atkins Group since 1999 and has managed farms in Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa for 35 years, including managing the farmland portfolio for the Atkins Family for 25 years. Currently, Jim works with 11 families, providing management for over 14,000 acres. He also created and helps manage Clearview Farm, a regenerative agriculture project in northwest Champaign. In his spare time, Jim enjoys playing golf and spending time with family.

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#### Sarah Hastings

Co-Owner, Hastings CCI Equipment and Hastings Farms

Sarah Hastings graduated from the University of Illinois College of ACES with a bachelor's degree in Animal Sciences and currently farms just outside Urbana with her husband, Brandon. Sarah and Brandon grow traditional corn and soybeans. Their company, Hastings CCI Equipment, designs, constructs and repairs grain handling equipment.

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#### Eric Miller

Co-Owner, Roots Run Deep Farm

Eric Miller of Roots Run Deep Farm has been farming for three decades. He recently grew his 19th crop in Piatt County, Illinois. Miller is a director on the Piatt County Soil and Water Conservation District Board, and starting in 2014, he began conducting long-term research with the University of Illinois on the 400-acre farm he co-owns with his sister Lori Sandin. Miller was awarded the 2023 Glen "GB" Brandt Prize for Ag Entrepreneurism at the 2023 AgTech Innovation Summit.

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#### Eric Rund

Owner/Operator, Rund Farms

Eric Rund produces corn, soybeans and miscanthus in East Central Illinois. Learning from work done at the University of Illinois, three biomass study trips to Europe, and from his own experience, Rund produces 40 acres of miscanthus on ground that is not well suited for row crops. He harvests, stores, and delivers miscanthus chips for boiler fuel and poultry bedding. In 2017, he helped source a multi-fuel biomass boiler to heat a greenhouse at the University of Illinois' biomass research farm, displacing the use of about 10,000 gallons of LP gas.

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**4:00 PM**

## **AgTech Showcase & Networking Reception**



The AgTech Showcase is an opportunity to connect with other attendees and see what innovations companies are working on. More than a dozen companies will showcase their technology.

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## **SPONSORS**

**2024 AGTECH SUMMIT**



Intersect Illinois is the state's business attraction arm. The organization generates new jobs and investment in Illinois by showcasing the state's assets, collaborating with partners, and helping companies find a site to call home. Intersect Illinois works with industry, academic, civic and government partners to make it easier for companies to expand in the state, while also promoting Illinois' unique assets for business including its unmatched talent, infrastructure, quality of life and ecosystems of support across a diverse range of industries. A non-profit, public-private partnership, Intersect Illinois acts as a free concierge for companies, helping with site selection, analytics and more. Visit [intersectillinois.org](https://intersectillinois.org) for more information.



John Deere relies on more than 180 years of experience and terabytes of precision data to know them and their businesses better than anyone else. Our easy-to-use technology helps deliver results they see in the field, on the job site, and on the balance sheet. We ensure seamless access to parts, services, and performance upgrades from take home to trade-in by providing world-class support throughout the lifecycle of their equipment, with productivity and sustainability always in mind. At John Deere, we innovate on behalf of our customers because what we learn is not a byproduct of what we do—it's the fuel that powers what we can do better. Our solutions empower customers to achieve their aspirations, to do their jobs more precisely and productively through advanced technology, as well as make better decisions based on data.



Bayer is a global enterprise with core competencies in the life science fields of healthcare and agriculture. Put simply: we're an organization focused on Health for All, Hunger for None. We're committed to driving sustainable development and generating a positive impact. We know that no two fields are alike, and that farmers need solutions that will work in tandem to address their challenges and optimize their yields. We focus on creating innovations that are flexible enough for each grower's needs and can work as systems that can be fine-tuned to the unique needs of their fields—from high-performing seeds at planting to the crop protection and digital tools they use to manage their fields every day. Our Crop Science R&D priorities are driven by farmers' needs for integrated, effective solutions that help them combat crop threats and maximize productivity, all while reducing environmental impact and optimizing farm productivity.



At Corteva R&D, we take the approach of combining scientific innovation and applied know-how. We call it applied agriscience. It's exclusively focused on agriculture. It's inspired by farmers—resourceful caretakers who have an innovation mindset, common sense approach and strong work ethic. They take the best from the past and adapt quickly to prepare for the future.

We work in the lab and on the land to deliver sustainable solutions that farmers and ranchers can use to improve their operations for generations to come. We are innovating with advanced breeding techniques and sustainably-advantaged crop protection solutions to create transformational change. We believe no farmer should have to make trade-offs with productivity, sustainability or financial security.

Our scientists apply advanced agriscience in R&D facilities and in field tests around the world, with the goal of helping farmers improve yields and minimize inputs to build whole farm systems that are strong and sustainable.



AGCO stands at the forefront of agricultural innovation, championing the future of farming with its diverse array of powerful brands, including Challenger, Fendt, GSI, Massey Ferguson, and Valtra. As a global leader in the design, manufacture, and distribution of agricultural solutions, we are dedicated to enhancing farm productivity and profitability. Our commitment to innovation is unwavering, with advancements such as hybrids, telemetry-based tracking systems, and flexible technologies tailored to regional farming needs. At AGCO, we are more than just machinery and equipment manufacturers; we are visionaries working for the farmers, their teams, and the global community, ensuring a sustainable future for food and fuel production. Our journey is one of constant evolution, ensuring that we remain at the cutting edge of agricultural technology, driving progress for a more efficient and prosperous tomorrow.



GDM is dedicated to innovative research and development, which has been the beacon of its brand across the globe for over 40 years. They take great pride in investing 25% of their revenue into research and development. That prioritization is why over 45% of soybean acres in the world contain GDM genetics. Join the GDM team at the Tech Showcase to learn more about GDM's U.S. Research & Development in Illinois, Iowa, Arkansas, and Minnesota. Learn more at [GDMSeeds.com](http://GDMSeeds.com).

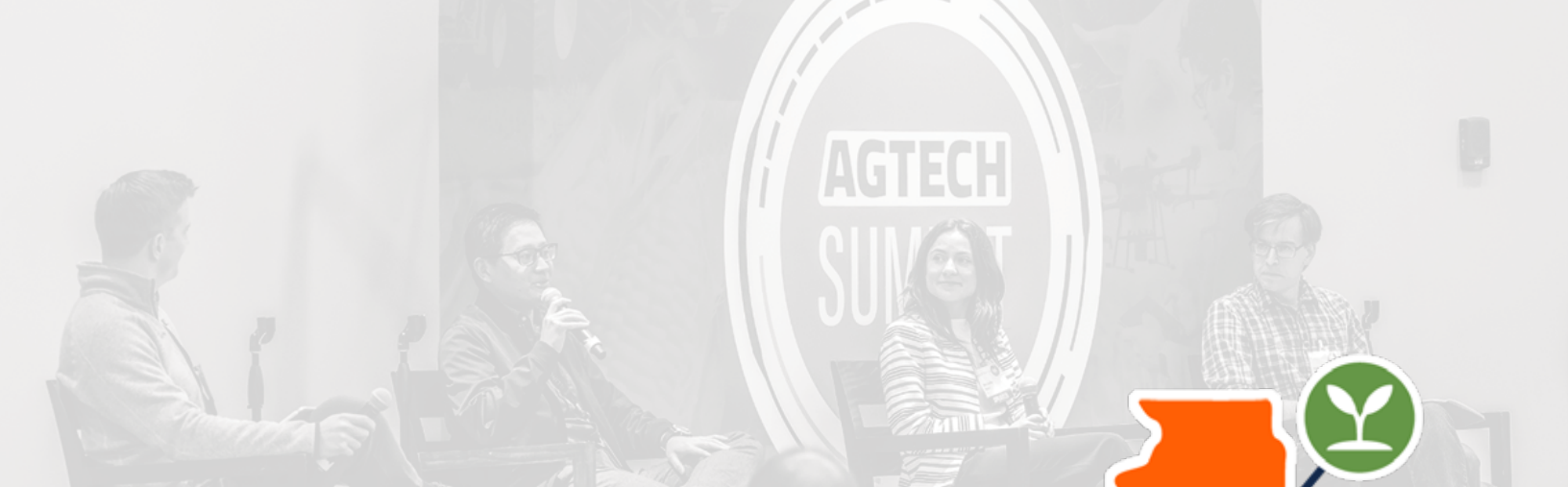


A leading agricultural company, BRANDT operates a full-service Ag retail enterprise for farmers in central Illinois, while serving growers around the globe with advanced ag inputs. The company has deep expertise in sophisticated, proprietary micronutrients that reduce input usage while increasing yield. Founded in 1953 by Glen Brandt and his sister Evelyn Brandt Thomas, the company's mission continues to be to help farmers adopt new and profitable technologies. Over the past decade, BRANDT has experienced aggressive growth under the leadership of President and CEO Rick Brandt. For more information, visit BRANDT on the web at [www.brandt.co](http://www.brandt.co)



The Great Lakes I-Corps AgTech Industry Connect program provides an opportunity for early-stage entrepreneurs pursuing agtech technologies to leverage the AgTech Summit at Research Park. Through this program held in Champaign on March 4-5, teams will be able to learn from and get feedback from potential customers, connect to potential industry partners, and gain exposure to investors.





The University of Illinois is uniquely positioned as a hub where **agriculture, engineering, and technology** intersect.

"We are Midwest modest, but we do have the courage to say that **this is the global epicenter for innovation in agriculture.**"

—University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Chancellor Robert J. Jones



See what **the hub** is about:

**RESEARCHPARK.ILLINOIS.EDU**



**Research Park**

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN