



World Food Prize President Continues Celebration of Borlaug in Trip to Iran

Ambassador Ken Quinn will participate in special Borlaug Centennial Ceremony, Crop Science Congress of Iran

Aug 26, 2014

The President of The World Food Prize Foundation, Ambassador Kenneth Quinn, will travel to Iran this week to address a Centennial Observance Celebration for Dr. Norman Borlaug, "Father of the Green Revolution" and world hunger activist.

While in Iran, Quinn has been invited to take part in a special Borlaug Centennial Ceremony organized by the Agricultural Biotechnology Research Institute of Iran. He will also participate in the Crop Science Congress of Iran, and the Iranian Seed Science and Technology Conference, where he will address national and international scientists, researchers, policy makers, academics and students.

According to Quinn, Dr. Borlaug was held in high esteem by Iranian agricultural scientists because his "miracle wheat" developed in the 1960s played a significant role in enhancing wheat production in the country.

Iran's Ministry of Agriculture presented a special gold medal to Dr. Borlaug when he visited the country fourteen years ago, and most recently, some Iranian scientists have informally expressed interest in placing a statue of Dr. Borlaug on display in the country.

"Dr. Borlaug's life shows that confronting hunger and alleviating human suffering can unite people across very large differences in politics, nationalities, religion or diplomatic relations," Quinn said.

A key example of cooperation and unification is the story of 2012 World Food Prize recipient Dr. Daniel Hillel, an Israeli citizen who received the prize after being nominated by three individuals from Arab countries.

"Iowa's history is replete with examples of agricultural and humanitarian endeavors that have brought people together and provided openings in strained or volatile relationships," Quinn said.

Quinn cited Herbert Hoover's taking food to feed the children of the Soviet Union at the end of World War I; the Iowa Hog Lift to Japan which came shortly after World War II; George Washington Carver's sharing nutritional advice with Mahatma Gandhi; Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's visit to the Garst farm at the height of the Cold War; Gov. Robert Ray's assistance

to refugees following the end of the Vietnam War; and, "of course, Norman Borlaug's staving off famine in India and Pakistan while those two countries were fighting one other," Quinn said.

"This trip to Iran is being undertaken in this very same spirit."

Iranian scientists are currently playing a significant role in the worldwide effort to defeat the threat of wheat rust disease in cooperation with the Borlaug Global Rust Initiative, spearheaded by WFP Council of Advisors member Dr. Ronnie Coffman, WFP said.

Trip represents larger celebration of Borlaug

The trip to Iran comes as Quinn and other WFP representatives have spent most of the year participating in events to honor Borlaug's legacy.

To date, Quinn has spoken at the United Nations' World Food Day Observance in New York; the World Farmers Organization's global conference in Buenos Aires, Argentina; the Sasakawa Africa Association Borlaug Centennial conference in Jinja, Uganda; the USDA youth symposium in Washington, D.C.; and at the unveiling ceremony for [Dr. Borlaug's statue in the U.S. Capitol's Statuary Hall](#) on March 25, the exact 100th anniversary of Dr. Borlaug's birth and national Agriculture Day.

Other ceremonies in India, Pakistan and Mexico have also included WFP representatives and celebrated Dr. Borlaug.

"Scientific cooperation and collaboration across national borders is essential to controlling and eliminating threats to global food security, such as the wheat rust disease that Iranian scientists have been instrumental in combatting," Quinn said.

"My visit to Iran continues Dr. Borlaug's legacy. He played a unique and significant role in promoting understanding, particularly among countries that have been serious adversaries, and his leadership always illustrated how, through scientific cooperation in producing food, confronting hunger and alleviating human suffering, we can help build a more peaceful world."