

Is Public-Funded Agricultural Research Meeting Producers' Needs? (S06-martin101124-Oral)

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Abstract:

As a Southeastern row crop farmer, my experience in operating a modern farming operation is that there are often communication and structural problems that keep researchers and farmers apart. There is too often no match between the applied research needs of farmers and the work being done at land grant universities and federal agencies. In my experience, the best farmers are often way ahead of researchers in working with new developments for their production systems. Causes for the disconnect are multiple. They include corporate ownership of technology; financially motivated battles for intellectual property rights (public and private) that hinder information flow; tenure protection and the career-reward system for researchers, and the resulting disinterest researchers can develop in keeping up with changes in farmer needs; old fashioned inter and intra university and government agency rivalries; of course funding; and last but not least, the lack of a clear, prioritized needs list from the farming community. I have seen some bright spots and those will be discussed from a producer's perspective.

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Presentation Information:

Presentation Date: Tuesday, November 12, 2002

Presentation Time: 2:40 pm

Keywords:

soil productivity, economics, competitiveness, research relevance