The definition for Sustainable Agriculture in multidimensional and the understanding of the term varies greatly from person to person. For some people, Sustainable Agriculture is more of a philosophy that can border on anti-science. Science and the resulting technologies can be used in ways that run counter to Sustainable Agriculture, but science and technology can also be used to enhance sustainability of our agriculture systems. This presentation, presentations by panel members, and interactions with panel members will focus on three foundational principles of Sustainable Agriculture. 1) Profit - any system that is to be adopted and used by large number of farmer must be profitable. 2) Stewardship - we must marshal our science and technology to that we provide future generations with soils, crops, and environments that are better than the ones we inherited. 3) Quality of life - farms are not islands, but integral components of communities. Real world examples of sustainable agriculture systems will demonstrate these principles.
Putting Sustainability in Perspective

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Definition of sustainability depends on perspective
Definition of sustainability depends on perspective.
Economist may think of balance between costs and revenues.
Soil scientist may think of soil erosion and degradation.
Plant breeder may think of saving wild germplasm.
Biofuel engineer might think of carbon footprint.
Ecologist might think of the interrelationships of multiple species.
Agronomist might think increasing yield to feed increasing population.
Sustainability is an attempt to merge ecology and economy into one system
Sustainability means living life of dignity in harmony with nature
Sustainability means renewing resources at a rate equal to or greater than the rate at which they are consumed
Sustainability means creating an economic system that provides for quality of life while renewing the environment and its resources
Sustainability is creating a world where everyone can have fulfilling lives and enjoy a rich level of well-being within the limits that nature can provide
Sustainability means taking the long-term view of how our actions affect future generations and making sure we don’t deplete resources or cause pollution at rates faster than the earth is able to renew them
Satisfying human needs

Enhancing environmental quality, the resource base, and ecosystem services

Sustaining the economic viability of agriculture

Enhancing the quality of life for farmers, ranchers, forest managers, workers and society as a whole
Native Americans of the Iroquois Confederacy

“In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations”