

# Vita Plus gives \$75,000 to IFEEDER for research, education

BY JANE FYKSEN  
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Vita Plus was recognized for making a \$75,000, platinum-level, founding member donation to the Institute for Feed Education and Research (IFEEDER) last week during World Dairy Expo in Madison. IFEEDER is a charitable foundation founded in 2009 to provide grants for projects address the challenges of the U.S. feed industry.

In the next 40 years and beyond, the world's population is expected to grow by almost 2.5 billion people; food production needs will double. IFEEDER, which collectively represents the food and feed industries in this country, is committed to supporting critical education and research activities to allow the food and feed-production industries to meet this increasing demand of feeding over 9 billion people worldwide in 2050.

Today, the average U.S. farmer feeds 144 people—compared to only 19 in 1940. Despite such progress, one acre feeds 1.6 people today, but by 2050, an acre must feed four mouths. The U.S. feed industry, and companies like Vita Plus, are rising to the challenge.

IFEEDER was the brainchild of the AFIA (American Feed Industry Association) board as a way to make the food and feed industries “sustainable well into the future.” IFEEDER offi-

cers are: Board of Trustees Chairman Alan Gunderson with Vita Plus, Trustees Vice Chairman Dean Warras of Prince Agri Products; President Joel Newman of AFIA (headquartered in Arlington, Va., where IFEEDER is also housed); Corporate Secretary Richard Sellers, also with AFIA; and Treasurer Andy Timmins, AFIA.

Sellers tells *Agri-View* that IFEEDER's fund-raising goal for its first year was \$500,000, but the granting foundation exceeded that by \$150,000 in its initial year. To date, almost \$900,000 has been raised.

He says IFEEDER's first grant was to the National Research Council (NRC) to update NRC swing nutrient requirements, which were well over 10 years old. IFEEDER's \$75,000 funding for that project over two years leveraged an additional \$240,000 from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), National Pork Board, NRC's own funds and more. IFEEDER has now also agreed to donate \$45,000 to NRC to update beef nutritional requirements (used by cattle nutritionists to develop rations).

Beyond research projects like this, benefitting the feed industry and producers, IFEEDER also has a consumer/feed education component. For instance, Sellers says it has given \$30,000 for coloring books educating urban children about production agri-



Photo by Jane Fyksen

Vita Plus Corporation was cited for its \$75,000 charitable donation to IFEEDER (the Institute for Feed Education and Research) during World Dairy Expo in Madison. IFEEDER is a new granting foundation seeking to address food and feed industry challenges. Left to right are: Al Gunderson, IFEEDER's Board of Trustees Chairman, Chair-Elect of the American Feed Industry Association (AFIA) board, and Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Vita Plus; Richard Sellers, IFEEDER Corporate Secretary and AFIA's Vice President for Feed Regulation and Nutrition; Bob Tramburg, CEO of Vita Plus; and Allan Schultz, Vice President of Technical Services for Vita Plus.

culture, and \$15,000 to public awareness-of-agriculture groups like the Animal Agriculture Alliance ([www.animalagriculture.org](http://www.animalagriculture.org)).

Other more-specific challenges IFEEDER funds will likely address include the enlarging gap in public sector funding for research, a shortage of technically trained professionals in the feed industry, public misperceptions of animal agriculture, and the need for greater funding of projects related to more sustainable practices in feed man-

ufacturing. Issues like measuring carbon footprints within the feed industry, the impact of a ban on low-level antibiotics feeding to livestock, Salmonella and other food pathogens, and promoting feed industry careers are also potentially on IFEEDER's radar screen.

IFEEDER seeks to minimize “overhead” and/or administrative costs through voluntary service of its Board of Trustees and committee members. AFIA provides staff time and shares

office space currently. As IFEEDER grows, an executive director and full-time staff may become necessary, but IFEEDER will endeavor to hold administrative costs to no more than 15 percent of annual receipts. The only formal connection between IFEEDER and AFIA is that many individuals and/or organizations—like Vita Plus—involved in the food or feed industries may have involvement in both organizations. Technically, IFEEDER is completely independent from AFIA.

Vita Plus received a trophy during Dairy Expo to mark its \$75,000 donation to IFEEDER on behalf of its 350-plus employee-owners and its customers.

Farmers and companies within agriculture can make tax deductible contributions to IFEEDER. For more information, visit its website [www.ifeeder.org](http://www.ifeeder.org) or call 703-650-0142. For more information on Vita Plus, headquartered in Madison, go to [www.vitaplus.com](http://www.vitaplus.com) or call 800-362-8334.