

ilies in their innovations, experiments and trials.”

Farmers as peer level participants. Research in the top-down model is identified, designed, implemented, and delivered by scientists and extensionists and farmers are involved only as passive recipients of the final product. Often the unfortunate result of this approach is research which is insufficient, inappropriate, or impractical for the farmer. Farmers must be actively involved as equals in the entire research process rather than as subordinates or passive recipients of research results.

Outsiders as conveners, catalysts, colleagues, and consultants. Researchers and extensionists should assist farm families in analyzing and identifying research needs, supplying ideas and technologies, and assisting in experiments rather than acting as “missionaries,” spreading the good word passed down from on high, or “doctors,” attempting to cure the ills of agriculture.

Client orientation rather than output orientation. The measure of success in our current system is often the level of output in terms of published articles or, in a stricter sense, bushels per acre, rather than a more service-oriented measure of responsiveness to user needs.

Chambers’ model is only one of many, and I have done it an injustice by providing such a brief sketch of what is a complex, well thought out, and field-tested approach to participatory research. While it may seem somewhat radical to some, as a farmer I feel that these basic principles are the cornerstones of any new model for creating meaningful partnerships; and I hope this presentation can at least serve as a jumping-off point for our discussions and explorations today.

Unfortunately, there are some who would suggest that farmers are too narrowly focused on their own specific needs to adequately address research areas of wider impact. This is where the consulting and convening roles of research and extension become important. Researchers and extensionists must assist farmers in identifying approaches to research which will benefit the farm community as a whole while also meeting the participating farmers’ specific

needs. The two need not be mutually exclusive. It is unfortunate that participatory research is perceived by some as a threat when, in reality, it will have an empowering effect on all involved and will result in a more efficient and effective system.

I invite all of you here to give serious thought to ways in which we can evolve a new, more responsive approach to research in which we can truly learn from each other and take advantage of the tremendous resources offered by farmers, researchers, extensionists, and others involved in agriculture today, a partnership which will surely benefit us all.



UPCOMING EVENTS

June 3-5. Environmental Leadership Conference will be held in Washington, DC, to identify national priorities. Contact Renew America, 1400 - 16th Street, NW, #710, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 232-2252.

June 6-7. “Diet and Health: Where is America Going?”, a conference sponsored by the Center for Science in the Public Interest, will be held in Washington, DC. Contact the Center, Diet and Health Conference, 1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW, #300, Washington, DC 20009.

November 21-22. Conference on Innovative Policies for Agricultural Research seeks papers on professional and institutional reforms to allow research to foster a more resource-conserving and publicly responsive agriculture. Abstracts due by **July 15**. Contact William Lockeretz, School of Nutrition, Tufts University, Medford, MA 02155; (617) 391-1033.

August. “Sustainable Development for the Third World,” a course linked

- References
1. Chambers, R., and R. P. Ghildyal. 1985. Agricultural Research for Resource-Poor Farmers: The Farmer-First-and-Last Model. *Agricultural Administration* 20: 1-30.
 2. Chambers, R., and J. Jiggins. 1986. Agricultural Research for Resource-Poor Farmers: A Parsimonious Paradigm. IDS Discussion Paper 220, Institute of Developmental Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, United Kingdom.
 3. Chambers, R. 1988a. Farmer First: A Practical Paradigm for the Third Agriculture. Institute of Developmental Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, United Kingdom.
 4. Chambers, R. 1988b. To Make the Flip: Strategy for Participatory R and D for Undervalued Agriculture. Institute of Developmental Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, United Kingdom.

with another in Mexico, will be held in Cottage Grove, Oregon. Contact Aprovecho Institute, 80574 Hazelton Road, Cottage Grove, OR 97424; (503) 942-9434.

September 16-22. Organically Grown Week is sponsored by the Committee for Sustainable Agriculture. Contact OGW91, P.O. Box 1300, Colfax, CA 95713; (916) 346-6366.

August 11-16. Eighth Annual Institute on Livestock in Development will be held at the New Windsor Service Center, Maryland. Contact Dan Gudahl, Training and Admin. Assoc., Heifer Project International, P.O. Box 808, 1015 S Louisiana, Little Rock, AR 72202; (501) 376-6836.

September 25-27. “Children, Youth, and Their Families,” the 11th Annual National Rural Families Conference, will be held at Kansas State University. Contact the Conference Office, Kansas State University, 241 College Court Building, Manhattan, KS 66506-6009; (913) 532-5575.