

ETHICS & THE 21ST CENTURY FOOD SYSTEM

- John D. Copeland, J.D., LL.M., Ed.D
- Professor, Business Division, John Brown University & Executive in Residence, Soderquist Center for Leadership and Ethics, Siloam Springs, Arkansas
- Executive Fellow, Center for Business Ethics, Bentley College, Waltham, Massachusetts
- Adjunct Professor, Trinity Western University, Langley, Canada



***"Food makes philosophers of us all.
Death does the same...but death comes
only once...and choices about food
come many times each day."***

The Ethics of Food: A Reader for the Twenty-First Century edited by Gregory E. Pence

Corporate Social Responsibility Debate

- Traditional View

The major responsibility of business in American society is to produce goods and services and to sell them for a profit

Economist Milton Friedman

Corporate Social Responsibility Debate

- Non-Traditional View

Business must do more than make a profit. Business must :

1. Refrain from harming society
2. Contribute actively and directly to public well-being
3. Serve the interests of all stakeholders

Multiple Stakeholders

Stakeholders are those who have a stake in, or are impacted by, a corporation's activities.

- “[E]xcellence in business is about more than profits for shareholders—it’s about serving a variety of stakeholders well...[I]t’s about having your good deeds outweigh your misdeeds.”

~Peter Asmus, “Business Ethics, Corporate Social Responsibility Report,”
“100 Best Corporate Citizens for 2004,”

www.business-ethics.com/100best

**AGRICULTURE IS INEXTRICABLY
RELATED TO WIDER
ECONOMIC, SOCIAL &
ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS**

- **“Like it or not, ready or not, the age of agricultural ethics has arrived.”**

- Ferre, 1994

- Hugh Sidey, a contributing Editor of TIME magazine:

“ So much of recorded history is about the struggle of individuals and families to feed themselves, That changed dramatically in this country”

Quoted by Robert L. Zimdahl in AGRICULTURE'S ETHICAL HORIZON, p.74

- Hugh Sidey, a contributing Editor of TIME magazine:

“The greatness of this country was rooted in the fact that a single farmer could produce an abundance of food the likes of which the world had never seen or imagined, and so free the energies of countless others to do other things. ”

Zimdahl, p.74

Food is more than a necessity, more than a diversion; it is a subject filled with ethics issues:

- Food-borne illnesses
- Growth Hormones
- Irradiation
- Pesticides & Herbicides
- Consolidation
- Pollution
- Factory farming
- Food Security
- Illegal Immigration
- GMOs
- Subsidies
- Obesity
- Country-of-origin labeling
- Trade Agreements

Moral dilemmas are common in agriculture and we need an ethical foundation to help decide between two choices where each has strong supporting arguments. For example:

- Should we increase agricultural production to feed more people, **regardless of the environmental harm the technology that creates the production causes?**
- Should we raise animals in confinement if it is harmful to the animals **but makes meat cheaper for consumers?**
- Should we mine water from deep aquifers to maintain present irrigated farms in dry land areas **even though the production system is not sustainable?**

Moral dilemmas are common in agriculture and we need an ethical foundation to help decide between two choices where each has strong supporting arguments. For example:

- Should family farms be protected and preserved **or allowed to die because... they can't make sufficient profits?**
- Should we give more (**or less**) food aid to developing countries?
- Should we accept (**or reject**) agricultural biotechnology?
- Should we reduce (**or not reduce**) herbicide and pesticide use?
- Zimdahl, p.54

Food Ethics Council's Three Goals

e|hics matters

GOAL ONE

- THE CREATION OF A FAIR, HUMANE, SECURE AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM

GOAL TWO

- TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO THINK ETHICALLY ABOUT FOOD BY ASKING WHAT IS FOOD REALLY WORTH TO OURSELVES AND TO OTHERS?

GOAL THREE

- THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOOLS TO MAKE ETHICAL THINKING A STANDARD PRACTICE IN AGRICULTURE

Ethical Profitability

- Profitability is not a “good” separate from other considerations.
- Profitability is acceptable only in contexts of wellbeing, autonomy & justice.

ETHICS MATRIX

- THREE ETHICS PRINCIPLES FOR MAKING DECISIONS
 - Wellbeing
 - Autonomy
 - Justice

Ethical Matrix's Value

- Identifies issues & focuses debate
- Good vehicle for education & discussion
- Aids decision-making

Wellbeing: Abandonment of pure utilitarian or cost/benefit analysis and a recognition that “goods” and “harms” are often incommensurable

Autonomy: Responsibility to treat others as ends in themselves

Justice: Fairness and accountability in agricultural practices

- **FOUR INTEREST GROUPS (STAKEHOLDERS) TO WHICH ETHICS PRINCIPLES ARE APPLIED**
- People in the Agricultural & Food Industries
- Citizens
- Animals
- Ecosystem

People in the Agricultural & Food Industries

Wellbeing

- Satisfactory Income & Working Conditions
- Personal Development
- Fabric of Rural Society

Autonomy

- Appropriate Freedom of Action
- Support for Technological Changes
- Avoidance of Undue Concentration of Power

Justice

- Fair Trade Laws & Practices
- Direct Marketing
- Liability Law Protection

Satisfactory Income

- Food service jobs pay 15% less than technology or manufacturing
- Wages based on unrealistically low poverty standards
 - \$18,500 (hrly wage \$8.89)
 - \$30,00 (hrly wage \$14.42)
- Impact of Immigration
- Impact of Globalization

Christian Hog, "Low-paying jobs keep poor mired in poverty," Business & Financial News, July 7, 2004

Citizens

Wellbeing

- Food Safety
- Consumers' Health
- Nutritional Standards & Children

Autonomy

- Education about Agriculture
- Choices e.g. Organic v. Non-Organic
- Labeling
- Regulation of Food Advertising

Justice

- International Development
- Combating Hunger
- Improved Distribution

Health

**The destiny of nations
depends on how they
nourish themselves.**

Jean Anthelme Brillat-Saxarin

1825

Nicholas Fox, SPOILED, p. 335

Adequate Food

- The UN's Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) in 2004 adopted voluntary Right to Food Guidelines in the context of national food security.

Adequate Food

- 852 million people worldwide are chronically undernourished
- One child dies every five seconds as a result of hunger and malnutrition
- Every year that hunger persists at current levels causes deaths and disabilities that eventually cost developing countries future productivity at a value of \$ 500 billion
 - FDA, The State of Good Insecurity in the World, 2004

Food Safety

- More testing for pathogens & diseases
- More food safety training of employees
- Voluntary security measures
- Support of Homeland Security Measures
- Better screening of employees

Food Safety Ethics Issue

- Should U.S. create a single food safety agency?
- Food safety is currently regulated by twelve Federal agencies and numerous state agencies
- In 2005, the General Accounting Office (GAO) recommended the change to a single agency to create a more efficient system and to focus on greatest risks.

Food Safety Ethics Issue

- Should there be national uniform Food-safety and warning labels for packaged food?
- Or
- Should all 50 states continue to impose their own food-safety regulations?

Animals

Wellbeing

- Enhancement
- International Standards
- Improved Transportation

Autonomy

- More Freedom of Movement
- Improved Housing Systems
- Improved Transportation Vehicles

Justice

- Better Training of Personnel
- Enforcement of Animal Welfare Laws
- Recognition of Intrinsic Value
- Reduced Stocking Densities

ANIMALS & AUTONOMY

- Increased space in confinement areas
- Better living conditions in general
- Better transportation vehicles

Animal Rights

- “Treating animals decently is like most obligations we face, somewhere between the most and the least important **a modest but essential requirement to living with integrity.**”
 - Matthew Scully, *The American Conservative*, May 23, 2005, p. 8

Animal Rights

- "It [cruelty to animals] is not simply unkind behavior, it is unjust behavior, and the prohibition against it is non-negotiable. Proverbs reminds us of this - 'a righteous man regardeth the life of his beast, but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel'..."

- Scully, p. 9

Animal Welfare Activity

- **McDonalds** announced in 1999 that it would not buy eggs from producers who failed to adopt McDonald's guidelines for caring of the chickens.
- **Burger King, Taco Bell, Pizza Hut, Wendy's, A&W and KFC** adopted similar policies.
- **Whole Foods** no longer sells live lobsters and live soft-shell crabs due to concern over humane treatment.

Animal Welfare Activity

- Agricultural Research Service launched a program to:
 - Determine whether current production practices severely stressed animals
 - Find objective measures to indicate those levels
 - Determine the impact of stress on the quality of meat products

Animals experiencing only mild stress are more likely to thrive, require less intervention and create fewer food safety problems.

Ecosystem

Wellbeing

- Diminish Pollution Risks
- Proactive Conservation Measures
- Emphasis on Sustainability

Autonomy

- Protection of Biodiversity
- Less Reliance on Strict Cost-Benefit Analysis
- Preservation of Non-agricultural Resources

Justice

- Rectifying Existing Harms
- Polluter Pays Principle
- Provider "Gets" Principle

Pollution

**The health of soil, plant,
animal and man is one and
indivisible.**

Lady Eve Balfour quoted by HRH, Prince of
Wales in his address, "The Lady Eve Balfour
Memorial Lecture," 1996

- No society should assume its agricultural abundance is assured, and the system that produces food should not be regarded as similar to a factory that, with the right inputs, can manufacture abundance at will (Blatz 1995). Food is essential to life but it comes from the land, not from money (Berry 1999). Therefore the land that produces food is essential.
- Zimdahl, p.77

- If the foundational values of the food production system do not place protection of the land, the source of agricultural abundance, as an essential part of human life and instead regard food as just another industrial commodity that can be purchased by those with money, then the ethics of the system ought to be a subject of societal concern.
- Zimdahl, p. 77

POLLUTION & JUSTICE

- Acceptance of responsibility for past environmental mistakes
- Financial contributions to environmental programs

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- IMPROVED IMAGE
- IMPROVED BRAND NAME & RECOGNITION
- INCREASED COMPETITIVENESS
- INCREASED PROFITABILITY

Why Additional Stakeholders Are Influential

- Not Limited by Jurisdictional Boundaries
- Economic Power
- Media Savvy & Image Awareness
- Subject to Influence of Their Own Stakeholders
- Often Ideologically Driven

Social Responsibility Audits

- Evaluate Corporations on Social Criteria as well as Financial Criteria
- **Accountability Standards Developed by**
 - Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)
 - London Institute of Social & Ethical Accountability
 - Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD)

Social Responsibility Auditing

- Institute for Social & Ethical Accountability (ISEA)

Note: ISEA developed Accountability (AA) 1000 standards & process model

- Coalition for Environmentally Responsive Economics (CERES)

Other Corporate Social Responsibility Evaluators

- **Fombrun** (attaches a dollar amount to the value of a corporation's reputation in relation to its stock price)
- New Economics Foundation
- **National Association of Corporate Directors**
- **Business Roundtable**
- **Smith O' Brian** (pioneered social responsibility auditing in the U.S.)
- Media (e.g. **Fortune Magazine**)
- **Kinder, Lydenberg, Domini** (social research firm)

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

Sullivan Principles

- Developed by the late civil rights leader Rev. Leon H. Sullivan
- Introduced U.N.in November 1999
- **Global Sullivan signatories agree to:**
 - Support economic ,social and political justice
 - Support human rights and equal opportunity
 - Train and promote disadvantaged workers
 - Promote greater tolerance
 - **Improve the quality of life for communities, workers, and children**
 - Treat all people with dignity and respect

U.S. Business Sullivan Signatories and/or U.N. Global Compact

- Sodexo
- Pfizer
- Hewlett-Packard
- Cisco systems
- DuPont

European Signatories

- Novartis
- BP
- Deutsche Bank
- Daimler Chrysler

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- SOCIAL INVESTORS
- CORPORATE FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Business Ethics publication

100 Best Corporate Citizens

Database provided by social research firm: Kinder, Lydenberg, Domini & Co. (KLD) (Boston, MA Company)

KLD data statistically analyzed by Boston College Professors Sandra Waddock & Samuel Graves

Social categories used:

Return to Shareholders

Community

Diversity

Environment

Customers

Employees

Smithfield Foods

- Issued its first Corporate Social Responsibility Report in 2005
- Report focuses on food safety, environment, animal welfare, employee safety, community involvement and international social responsibility.
- Fortune magazine for four years has listed Smithfield as one of America's Most Admired Companies

Visionary Companies

- Visionary Companies:
 - Based on **strong core values** and purpose
 - **Dominant driving force *is not* "Maximizing Shareholder Wealth"**
- Improved Financial Performance:
 - Achieved growth in shareholder value 15x > than general market between 1926-1990

Employees, Customers & Suppliers

- Also requiring greater corporate social responsibility
- Employees vote with their “feet”
- Almost 80% of consumers take good corporate citizenship into account when making purchases
- Corporate purchasers increasingly audit their suppliers for ethics and social responsibility
- Corporate suppliers increasingly do the same as to companies to whom they sell products

Investors

- Over \$1.2 trillion invested in equities in U.S. are socially screened
- Screen-out companies harming society
- Screen-in companies “doing good” for society

- Values-Based Investing
 - Investor's values
 - Company's values
- Examples of Screening Organizations
 - Trillium (investment house)
 - Calvert (investment house)
 - Interfaith Center of Corporate Responsibility (ICCR)
 - Investor Responsibility Research Center (IRRC)

Institutional Investors

- Focus on Corporate Governance
- Increasingly Focus on Recognized Global Practices
 - **Accountability** (companies must assume responsibility for the impacts of their practices, policies and processes)
 - Transparency in making decision
 - **Equity in allocation of resources**)
 - Voting Fairness
 - Adoption and implementation of ethics codes
 - Long-term vision
 - **ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES**

Examples of Major Institutional Investors That Use SRA

- California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)
- Teachers Insurance & Annuity Association/College Retirement Equities Fund (TIAA-CREF)
- Council of Institutional Investors

Activists Investors

- Large, socially concerned investors
- Stakeholder Activists (“Nuns at the Door”)
 - Purchase limited number of corporate shares
 - Submit resolutions on corporate governance and corporate practices
 - Attempt to speak at stockholder meetings
 - Sometimes stage protests
- Almost 70% of investors take good corporate citizenship into account (Harris Interactive 2001)

Activists Investors

- In 2005, some Monsanto shareholders presented a resolution asking Monsanto to report on impacts of the company's genetically engineered products.
- **Activist shareholders contended that GMOs environmental impacts were untested and underreported.**
- Resolution's co-filers were part of the InterFaith center on Corporate Responsibility.

“The measure of a successful company is no longer simply what is found at the bottom line of the annual report. A truly successful company achieves financial success while operating in a socially responsible manner.”

Michel Landel
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etm[®]

ETHICS & THE 21ST CENTURY FOOD SYSTEM (Water Resources)

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In the beginning GOD created...

- And GOD said, " Let the waters beneath the sky be gathered into one place so dry ground may appear." And so it was. GOD named the dry ground "land" and the water "seas". And GOD saw that it was good. Genesis 1:9-10
- But water came up out of the ground and watered all the land. Genesis 2:6

Man is a complex
being; he makes
deserts bloom - and
lakes die.

Gil Stern

A Growing Crisis

- Will this massive outcry about pollution continue long enough to have effective results?....Will people be concerned long enough to pay the bill through higher prices?....I think so, but it won't be as easy as the present outcry and political oratory suggest. Malcolm Forbes(1970)

A Growing Crisis

- In nature there are neither rewards are punishments; there are consequences. Robert G. Ingersol
- Nature is a hanging judge.
Anonymous

Global Water Trends

Predicted In 2000

- One-third of world's population lives in countries with moderate to high water stress
- By 2025, one out of three persons on Earth will live in water-stressed conditions
- Humans currently use more than one-half of world's available fresh water
- By 2025, humans will use 90% of all available fresh water
- Source: United Nations' reports and International Monetary Fund

Global Water Trends 2006

Future Is Already Here !

- One-third of world's populace is already enduring water scarcity
- One-fourth of world's population live in areas where water is **physically scarce**
- Another one billion live where water is **economically scarce**
- Comprehensive Assessment of Water Management in Agriculture, September 2006

Agriculture's Use Of Water

- Agriculture uses up to 70 times more water to produce food than is used in drinking and other domestic purposes, including cooking, washing and bathing
- Difficult choices must be made entailing tradeoffs between city and agricultural users, between food production and the environment, and between fishers and farmers

Agriculture's Use Of Water

- " To feed the growing population and reduce malnourishment, the world has three choices: expand irrigation by diverting more water to agriculture and building more dams, at a major cost to the environment;

Agriculture's Use Of Water

- Expand the area under rain-fed agriculture at the expense of natural areas through massive deforestation and other habitat destruction;
- Or do more with the water we already use." David Molden, leader of Comprehensive Assessment

Agriculture's Use Of Water

- Areas hit hard by water issues: Middle East, North Africa, China, India, Australia and the Western United States
- Country in best position to profit from the "blue gold" of water: Brazil which has 11 percent of the world's available freshwater

Industry's Use of Water

- On the average, industry accounts for 23% of all fresh water use worldwide
- Water costs \$\$\$, directly and indirectly
- Wise water use is good business

THE WATER CRISIS

- "Water may be the single most critical element of life-it is the largest and most complex habitat on Earth...."
- "...[W]hat looked like an endless supply of water when...aqueducts,dams,and water diversions become were first devised...eight thousand years ago-has an unbalanced supply- and- demand equation."
- Jeffrey Rothfeder, EVERY DROP FOR SALE, p7.

Water crisis

- "This widening inequity is already beginning to destabilize certain regions...."
- "With tension over water escalating...international security is vitally ...linked to the environment."
- "...[T]he world's water crisis is at a serious stage...region after region struggles to provide enough clean water for its residents...agriculture...industry."
- Rothfeder, pp. 10, 11

ENVIRONMENT & TRADITIONAL VIEW

Morality, Money & Motor Cars

1. Business does not have an obligation to protect environment beyond what law requires
2. Business does have an obligation to avoid interfering with passage of environmental legislation
3. Business has an obligation to educate consumers

Norman Bowie

The Economic Common Sense of Pollution

1. Pollution is an economic problem (not technological, political, legal or ethical)
2. Goal is to find acceptable level of pollution
3. Put a price on pollution
4. Because self interest is involved, companies will reduce pollution up to the point further reduction exceeds the price

Environmental Pollution & the Law

Advocates Mixed Approach to Solving Environmental Problems:

1. Common Law

- tort
- contract

2. Criminal Prosecutions

3. Regulatory & Administrative

Boonin

Environmental Pollution & the Law

4. Incentives for Voluntary Pollution Control

- subsidies
- tax credits
- charges on pollution activities
- “Optimum level of pollution”
- Boonin

ENVIRONMENT & NON- TRADITIONAL VIEW

Business & Environmental Ethics

1. Corporations have special knowledge, experience & resources to address environmental crisis.
2. Future cannot be staked on what we do as consumers - is too shortsighted
3. "Doing Well by Doing Good" is shortsighted business philosophy
4. Advocates "Biocentric Environmental Ethic"

Michael Hoffman

Shrine of Our Lady of Fátima

1. Economic decisions about environmental policy focus only on the consumer's values
2. Thus are only based on market price

Sageff

Shrine of Our Lady of Fátima

3. Like worker safety, **environmental quality is more than a mere commodity**
4. Not all preferences (values) are equal (contrary to Economists' views & cost-benefit analysis)
5. Economic analysis cannot replace moral function

Sageff

NGOs

- SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AUDITORS
- WATER or ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIFIC “WATCHDOG ORGANIZATIONS”

ENVIRONMENTAL WATCHDOGS

- Water Keepers Alliance
- Environmental Defense Fund
- American Rivers Organization
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- Trout Unlimited
- Nature Conservancy
- Sierra Club
- World Wildlife Federation

Conagra Foods & The Coca-Cola Company's Water Sustainability Work Group

- Report published in June 2002
- Business benefits from proactive water-conservation and protection strategies:

Reduced Costs

- Mitsubishi Semiconductor America, Inc. increased productivity by 30%, while reducing water use by 70% and wastewater output by 75% (Durham, N.C. plant).

Increased Innovation

- Anheuser-Busch developed a bio-energy recovery system that treats waste water from its St. Louis brewery. System supplies 15% of plant's energy requirements and saves \$40 million annually.
- Bristol-Myers Squibb developed new production process that eliminated need for use of solvent

Improved Resource Utilization

- Same inputs of water used multiple times
- Rainwater captured and used at facilities
- Nike's European headquarters new Amsterdam collects water in roof cisterns for use in toilets and landscape irrigation. Nike saves 35 million liters of potable water a year.

Reduced Risk of Business Interruptions & **Liability Exposure**

- Local governments have revoked water use licenses of several multinational beverage companies' bottling plants due to concerns over falling water tables
- Some companies now audit their own water use and that of suppliers as means of self-protection
- **Liability exposure includes corporate & individual; national & international**

Public Issue Life Cycle

Phase I:

- Awareness & sensitivity to issue

Phase II:

- Politicization of the issue & public evolution

Phase III:

- Governmental action develops

Phase IV:

- Implementation of new policy

CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS

- EPA & DOJ have signaled their intention to prosecute individual corporate officers
- Continued expansion of “responsible corporate officer doctrine”
- Corporate officers held personally liable for illegal actions of employees-EVEN IF OFFICER KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THEM

CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS & WATER QUALITY PROTECTION

- For purposes of establishing criminal liability, CWA defines person to include "any responsible corporate officer"
- Criminal liability can be imputed to an officer by virtue of his position of responsibility
- See U.S. v. Britain, 931 F.2d 1413 (10th Cir. 1991) & U.S. v. Iverson, 162 F.2d 1015 (9th Cir. 1998)

Examples of Other Commendable Corporate Water-Related Programs

Starbucks

- Rewards coffee growers that meet environmental criteria by paying them more and with preferred supplier status
- Collaborates with growers in improving water systems

Starbucks

- Developed its environmental sustainability program with assistance of Conservation International's Center For Environmental Leadership in Business
- Publishes a Corporate Social Responsibility Annual Report verified by an outside auditor

DuPont

- Has reduced its environmental footprint by 60% in recent years
- During same period of time, shareholder value increased by 340%

Baxter International

- Conducted study on its phosphorous discharges in cooperation with community groups and developed new discharge plan
- Leased 185 acres of its campus to commercial landscape nursery whose stock is irrigated with Baxter's treated, but nutrient rich, waste water
- Has reduced water use in some facilities by 40,000 gallons per day
- Decreased use of chlorine by 60%, saving \$80,000 annually
- In 4 years, decreased overall water use by 7% with net savings of \$500,000

Intel Corporation

- Established the Corporate Industrial Water Management Group to develop and implement programs to improve water use efficiency
- Set a goal to offset at least 25% of its total incoming fresh water supply with reclaimed water by 2003
- Exceeded its offset goal by achieving a 35% offset in 2002
- In its Jerusalem Facility, Intel replaced a water-cooled transducer with an air-cooled model with total water savings of over 2.5 million gallons per year

Fetzer Vineyards

- Sixth largest premium winery in U.S.
- Created a natural filtration system for handling winery wastewater
- Converted wastewater ponds into a natural system employing gravel and sand filters and a planted reed bed
- Treated water used on winery's organically farmed grapes and landscaping

Novartis AG

- Invested \$3 million in a **reverse osmosis water recycling unit**
- New recycling unit increased production from 17 to 26 production lines
- The recycling unit decreased effluent discharge from 130,000 to 73,000 gallons per day
- **The unit reduced water demands by 64%, or approx. 266,000 gallons per day**

United Technologies Corporation (UTC)

- In April 2003, UTC announced it surpassed its goal to reduce energy and water use by 25% four years ahead of schedule
- Water use reduction was 34%
- UTC set a new overall goal of 40% by 2007
- UTC's water consumption at its Shanghai Factories reduced by \$10 million gallons a year
- Company estimates that every \$1,000 invested in water conservation saves \$11,000 per year in associated water costs

Tyson Foods, Inc.

- Environmental awards given annually to growers that practice environmental stewardship
- Growers and their technical advisors receive awards
- Donations made in winning growers' names to conservation organizations selected by winners

- U.S. Poultry Association launched a similar awards program modeled on Tyson's program

Proctor & Gamble

- Developed low cost, at home, technology that enables people in developing countries to clean and disinfect water

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Agriculture's Response To Water Scarcity

- Limited response thus far
- Many in agriculture are selling their water rights to thirsty cities and suburbs
- Irrigated farmlands in the Western U.S. are rapidly disappearing

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