

**For Immediate Release:
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FERTILIZER INDUSTRY ENDOWS PROFESSORSHIP TO EXPLORE LINK BETWEEN FERTILIZER AND FOOD NUTRITION

Nutrients for Life Foundation, The Fertilizer Institute, and the International Plant Nutrition Institute Receive \$750,000 Following their \$250,000 Donation to Create a \$1 Million Endowed Professorship at Oklahoma State University

Washington, D.C. – The Nutrients for Life Foundation Professor of Soil and Food Crop Nutrition has been created at Oklahoma State University (OSU). The professorship, which is being funded in-part by the Nutrients for Life Foundation, The Fertilizer Institute (TFI) and the International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI), will explore the linkages between fertilizer use and the nutritional quality of food.

“It is our hope that this professorship will encourage the expansion of an untapped and important area in academic research,” said Foundation Executive Director Harriet Wegmeyer. “If, as predicted, a correlation between fertilizer and healthier foods is established, imagine the impact. An increasingly health-conscious public will finally regard fertilizers for what they truly are...nutritious—for both plants and, in turn, people. We are pleased to be working with OSU on this exciting initiative.”

The industry pooled its resources to donate \$250,000 to Oklahoma State University. Through a rare matching program made available from oil and gas executive and OSU alum T. Boone Pickens and the state of Oklahoma, the fertilizer industry’s \$250,000 will translate to \$1 million to fund a professorship in perpetuity. This position brings the strengths of three organizations together to address fertilizer’s affect on food nutritional quality.

“Presently, the global food crisis is top of people’s minds and appropriate application of fertilizer is key to the solution. Not only is fertilizer responsible for 40 to 60 percent of food production, but we hope to show through research at OSU its importance on food nutrition as well,” said TFI President Ford B. West.

The gift will create the Nutrients for Life Foundation Professor of Soil and Food Nutrition located within the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. The cross-disciplinary position will work closely with the college’s plant and soil sciences department and the Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center. OSU hopes to have the position filled in 2009.

“The quality of the food we eat is directly related to the fertility of the soil where the crop was grown.

The nutrients in food crops all originate from the soil, but soils do not have an unlimited supply of nutrients and may not supply plant nutrients in the proper balance ... hence the need for fertilizer nutrients,” said Terry Roberts, President of the International Plant Nutrition Institute. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to manage food crop nutrition without understanding how to manage the fertility of agricultural soils.”

“The response from our alumni and friends has exceeded our wildest expectations,” said OSU President Burns Hargis. “Inspired by Boone Pickens’ astounding generosity, donors answered the call to make a lasting difference and open a new and exciting chapter at OSU. We sincerely appreciate what The Fertilizer Institute, International Plant Nutrition Institute and the Nutrients for Life Foundation are doing for OSU academics and research.”

Endowed professorships and chairs are academic designations which provide support for faculty salary, graduate assistantships, equipment and research needs, as well as other support. These endowed faculty positions allow a university to attract and retain the best and the brightest academic minds in the world.

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***Nutrients for Life Foundation** is a not-for-profit foundation committed to educating the industry, media and the public on the important contributions fertilizers make to society.*

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***The Fertilizer Institute** represents the nation’s fertilizer industry. Producers, importers, retailers, wholesalers and companies that provide services to the fertilizer industry which comprise its membership are served by a full time Washington, D.C., staff in various legislative, educational and technical areas as well as with information and public relations programs. **Contact:** Kathy Mathers (202) 515-2703 or kmathers@tfi.org.*

***International Plant Nutrition Institute** is a not-for-profit, scientific organization dedicated to responsible management of plant nutrients — N, P, K, secondary nutrients, and micronutrients — for the benefit of the human family. With established programs in Latin America, North America, China, India, Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and planned expansion in other areas of the world, IPNI is a global organization ready to respond to the world’s demand for food, fuel, feed, and fiber.*

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