



# IFEEDER NEWSLETTER

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## Changing Our Tone: Why Advancing Solutions vs. Defending Positions Will Serve Us in the Long Run

*By: Lara Moody, IFEEDER executive director*

Stepping into the role as the Institute for Feed Education and Research's executive director, I am excited to learn more about the animal food industry and its stakeholders, as well as the challenges that will yield opportunities and solutions. Experiences in a previous role leading stewardship and sustainability efforts for the fertilizer industry showed me that identifying solutions creates a pathway to owning challenges. When facing critics, the easiest posture is something a former colleague called “the 4Ds” – to duck, deny, deflect and defend. However, the harder and longer-term approach that leads to greater success is to inform, advance and implement solutions.



As the animal food industry advances solutions toward a healthy environment and clean air and water while assuring a safe and nutritious food supply, it's equally important that those solutions are assessed, communicated and utilized to achieve desired outcomes. Earlier this month, the IFEEDER Board of Trustees affirmed its support of the institute's role to fill research and knowledge gaps as well as develop tools to inform and advance sustainable actions.

Incorporating a strategy focused on advancing solutions and being a resource for the animal food industry's sustainability journey will build a foundation for future IFEEDER work. Using strategic planning insights, IFEEDER's research and education committees will develop multi-year, long-term plans as the basis for the institute.

The challenges associated with climate and the environment will dominate the field into the foreseeable future, but others linked to quality, quantity and safety will always linger. Seeking to advance solutions and making positive contributions to the complex and nuanced debate and discussion, no matter the topic, is a stronger position than a defensive posture.

I have always believed a glass is half-full, and I believe in finding or developing solutions. IFEEDER is well-positioned to serve the animal food industry and its stakeholders – it's one of the reasons I pursued the role. The challenges are many, which means the opportunities are infinite.

**What is your role in addressing the challenges? Are you acting to advance a solution?**

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## A Road Map for A Sustainable Horizon

Feed production is a significant contributor to animal protein's carbon footprint, and retailer and consumer pressures place greater demands on suppliers to explain where products come from and how they are produced. In the [2021 Food and Health Survey](#), 42% of consumers believed individual food and beverage choices have a moderate or significant impact on the environment and 53% said it would have a greater influence on decision making if the impact was easier to understand.

*Whether the animal industry is ready or not, complete supply chain transparency, including animal food production, is on the horizon.*

**Four in 10 believe their own choices about food and beverage purchases can have an impact on the environment.**

In Feed Strategy's recent [2021 Swine Feed Outlook](#), relative to animal food industry data provision, an industry expert indicated that a company's ability to respond and commit to transparency on

sustainability aspects will differentiate it from the competition and that those who cannot provide that information will be out of business.

Seeing this data challenge on the horizon, IFEEDER, in partnership with the American Feed Industry Association, is pursuing a strategy to equip member companies with tools to build or grow internal sustainability programs, respond to product transparency demands and communicate their sustainability stories to a variety of audiences. The Context Network, a global food and agribusiness consulting firm with experience in sustainability initiatives across grain commodities and animal protein production and processing, is helping IFEEDER develop its road map. This work will allow the animal food industry to align sustainability initiatives, strategies and communications at a field, farm, facility and association level.

Now is the time to pursue a sustainability strategy and develop resources for the animal food industry, especially as solutions are developed and advanced for our industry stakeholders. Recently, John Kerry, the U.S. special presidential envoy for climate, responded to a [BBC interview](#) question regarding Americans needing to be told to eat less meat. To answer, he indicated that reducing meat consumption was not necessarily the solution because “research is being done that actually reduces the amount of methane (from meat production).”

A sustainability road map to ensure necessary policies and information pathways are in place to move lifecycle data up and down the production chain is needed to ensure industry actions and performance are correctly accounted. IFEEDER is currently seeking funds to launch this important and timely project in full.

If you'd like to know more or learn how you can support this effort, please contact [Lara Moody](#), IFEEDER's executive director.

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## IFEEDER Board Working to Advance Industry's Sustainability Journey

IFEEDER recently held its annual Board of Trustees meeting to review the public charity's accomplishments over the past year, discuss strategic priorities for the upcoming fiscal year and install new trustees and Board leadership.

The Board supports incorporating a strategy focused on advancing solutions and being a resource for the animal food industry's sustainability journey. A key project this year includes

developing a road map for industry members to determine their environmental footprints, pursue climate change mitigation strategies and communicate continuous improvement efforts.

Read more from the IFEEEDER Board meeting [here](#).

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## Donate Now!

For every \$1 IFEEEDER invests in research and education projects, \$5 is leveraged from other sources. All donations go directly toward projects, as IFEEEDER's administrative costs are borne by American Feed Industry Association, so your donations go even further. Help us maximize our reach by donating today! Click the link below to make a gift. For questions, contact [Lara Moody](#), IFEEEDER executive director.

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