

Water for Food Institute Q&A

How will the funds be used?

Funds will be used in the following areas:

- Hire a leading water scientist to serve as executive director
- Hire top faculty in research and policy analysis, with named professorships to attract the best candidates
- Bring in internationally respected visiting scholars
- Provide fellowships and scholarships to attract top students
- Develop a global journal on water for food
- Provide the premier educational conference annually on water for food
- Sponsor an international award on water for food
- Establish a research stimulation fund to attract additional federal and private funding
- Provide office space, equipment and support personnel
- Establish a global clearing house for information about water for food

Where will the institute be located?

The Water for Food Institute initially will be housed in the historic Whittier Building, a state-of-the-art facility that also houses other high-priority UNL research centers, including the Nebraska Center for Energy Sciences Research and the Nebraska Transportation Center. A location on the Nebraska Innovation Campus is planned for the future.

Will the institute create new jobs at the University?

Yes. In addition to three endowed professorships for leadership positions (Executive Director, Director of Research, Director of Policy Analysis) that are funded by the Daugherty gift, other positions will include technical and administrative positions in research and education programs. We expect the Institute to leverage the Daugherty investment by generating considerable external funding for research and education programs, which also will generate jobs.

Will you have new majors for students related to water for food?

We expect to create a water for food program of study that will include undergraduate and graduate courses of study, as well as endorsements and certificates in key areas, which we believe will be highly desirable. In addition, the Daugherty gift funds undergraduate and graduate fellowships. We also expect to develop strong internship and other student opportunities with our U.S. and international partners.

Do you have someone in mind to lead the institute? What qualifications will you look for?

We do not have a specific person in mind. The Executive Director will provide visionary leadership, scientific expertise and administrative experience to establish the institute as a global leader in water research and its application, and in water policy analysis. This position will be recruited from among internationally recognized experts. His or her background should bridge

water and agriculture research in both the developed and developing nations. The Executive Director will develop a premier research capability, establish the Institute and bring it visibility in the international water and food communities and establish national and international partnerships in the public and private sectors.

Will state funds be used to support the institute?

Like other university programs, the institute will be supported by a combination of state, federal (research) and private funds. State funds have long been directed to the support of the Water Center at UNL.

How many faculty will ultimately be involved? In what disciplines?

We already have 100+ faculty who have some relationship with the water center, and we expect that both new and existing faculty will participate in the work of the Institute. Several ways for faculty to participate will be explored, such as faculty affiliates, Institute faculty, collaborators in Institute research, education and policy analysis programs, and other mechanisms. Water for Food involves complex human and natural systems and will require our best minds from many disciplines. The work of the Institute will be highly inter-disciplinary and may involve faculty from nearly every college and many disciplines in the University, ranging from engineering, agriculture, sociology, and business to computer science, law, journalism, geosciences and political science.

Will this replace the Water Center at UNL?

No. The Water Center will continue to conduct research and address issues that are important to Nebraska and the Great Plains, Our expectation is that the center and the Institute will work together, with some faculty engaged with both. The creation of the institute will benefit and strengthen the Water Center by attracting great talent and expertise to Nebraska.

How will other campuses be involved?

That will be determined as we move forward with the structure and priorities of the institute. Although the institute is clearly based on historic strengths of the Lincoln campus, each campus has unique faculty expertise that could come into play, in areas such as biology, public health, nutrition, public administration and policy, drought and climate change, crop productivity and other areas. Faculty on all campuses are already involved in some aspects of teaching, research, policy and outreach relating to water.

Background

Vision

- The Global Water for Food Institute will be a multi-campus center for research, education and policy related to the efficient use of water to feed a growing world population.
- The Institute will create strong partnerships and an extensive knowledge base to develop innovative solutions to this global challenge.
- The Institute will increase water productivity in agriculture through new technologies, improved crops, innovative management practices and studies of the human dimensions of water use.
- Scientists at the Institute will develop advanced decision-making tools and knowledge delivery systems to inform and guide policy makers, managers and the public.
- The Institute will allow the University of Nebraska to serve as the global leader in the area of water for food.

Compelling Need

- Agriculture today consumes more than 70 percent of the world's available water.
- Already, more than 1 billion people around the world live in poverty and face hunger on a daily basis. By 2050, the world's population is expected to increase by 40 percent – and demand for food will double.
- This rapidly escalating need for agriculture to produce food, fuel and fiber will exert intense pressure on our water resources. Finding solutions to this global challenge is the vision of the Institute.

Why Nebraska?

- The University of Nebraska already has a long history of investment in water and agriculture research. UNL is home to the Water Center, and the university invests significantly in this arena each year. Water for food is one of six academic priorities in the University's capital campaign, announced in October 2009.
- Nebraska is home to Valmont Industries, whose legendary founder, Robert B. Daugherty, is committed to the efficient and sustainable use of water to feed a growing global population.
- Nebraska also is ideally positioned as a natural laboratory. We sit atop the High Plains aquifer, we are a leading agricultural state and the most heavily irrigated state in the nation.