

Science Communication

GRAND CHALLENGE:

To effectively communicate sound science to the general public and policy creators, ensuring the health and well-being of animals and the sustainable production of animal-sourced foods.

There is an urgent need for strategic and proactive involvement in science policy and legislation by the scientific community. Animal scientists must be viewed as credible sources of information and engage in these discussions if we are to optimize the societal benefits of animal-sourced foods. Today, the global and domestic issues associated with food production are often debated in public forums with misinterpretation and misrepresentation of science. Extremists are loud and aggressive voices of scientific misinformation and the public is confused and often accepts exaggeration, nuances, and misrepresentations as facts. Today more than ever before, animal science should be proactively communicated to the general public and policy makers by scientists.



The consequences of not advocating effectively are vast. For example, advocacy to enhance public funding for food and agricultural research, extension, and education has been a priority of nearly all agricultural stakeholders for decades. However, in the US there has been a significant lag in public investment, which is eroding research capacity and may jeopardize our ability to ensure food security for a growing global population. Communicating animal science in the development of policy that will shape the future of modern agriculture is a calling that must be met by the animal science community.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 1) What are the best methods to train students, scientists, farmers, and ranchers to effectively communicate animal science to the public and decision makers?
- 2) What is the unifying message that aligns with the needs of stakeholders?
- 3) What communication strategies, tools, and platforms are needed to build trust and share common values with the public?

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

- 1) Animal scientists are viewed as credible and trusted sources of information in science policy discussions.
- 2) Collaborative relationships exist between the general public, animal scientists, farmers, and ranchers and these relationships are used to discuss methods to produce meat, eggs, and dairy products.
- 3) Policies, laws, and regulations are deliberated and based on the best science available taking into consideration differences in emotions, values, and cultures.

