

Fortune 500 investors visit Gothenburg

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
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Monsanto Learning Center hosts summer field event.

Chandler Mazour and Monsanto Water Utilization Learning Center team members pulled weeds from corn and soybean rows in broiling heat last week.

“I hadn’t done that since I was a child,” said the learning center manager with a laugh.

The team was readying the learning center for a visit from investors in the Fortune 500 company and top Monsanto officials last Wednesday and Thursday.

In all, about 180 investors and company officials traveled to the learning center for the 2010 Whistle Stop Tour.

Included in the entourage of Monsanto officials was Hugh Grant, chief executive officer, who is also a principal investor.

All of the polishing, question answering and touring must have paid off, Mazour said, since feedback was positive.

Mazour said the Gothenburg learning center was Monsanto’s sixth summer field event for investors at a location the farthest west it’s ever been.

The primary reasons for the gathering, he said, was to build investor confidence and to show

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what the learning center does to improve agriculture in the high plains.

“It’s all about the farmer and how Monsanto products can add value on the farm,” Mazour said.

In addition, the group saw firsthand how Monsanto’s biotech drought gene fared at the learning center when compared to the same hybrid without the gene.

“The biotech gene has more kernels per ear and less barren ears,” Mazour said about the drought-tolerant biotech gene which is expected to go on the market in 2012 pending regulatory approval.

One peak of the visit for Mazour was exposing investors to some of the challenges farmers face on the high plains.

During a dinner at Feather River Vineyards in North Platte. He said investors learned that producers in the area deal with many challenges in the field as well as in pastures and feedlots since many farmers are also ranchers.

“It’s important that investors are aware of these things because they control a lot of resources,” he said. “Monsanto is investing in our farmers here so it’s fulfilling and humbling to see them sharing in that vision.”

Another highlight was working with local Monsanto employees in preparing for the tour.

“This is the best team I’ve ever worked with,” he said. “Everyone cares deeply about our mission and that shows.”

The investor group toured demonstration plots in

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