Agreement boosts Nebraska's agri-business opportunities

A new University of Nebraska-Lincoln office in Beijing will open up new possibilities for joint research and faculty and student exchanges between the United States and China.

UNL's Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources officially opened June 11 an office at China's State Administration of Grain (SAG), a national administrative agency with the mandate for all issues in post-harvest grain management, including responsibility for control of national grain distribution, providing guidelines for development of the grain industry and administering national grain reserves.

A Nebraska delegation that included representatives from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the Nebraska Department of Agriculture visited Beijing twice in the past year to negotiate the opening of the office.

In addition to potential research opportunities with the State Administration of Grain, IANR's new office and collaborative agreement with SAG will provide access to a network of leading Chinese university and state partners for student and faculty exchanges as well as for joint research efforts in areas where UNL is strong, including agricultural biosciences, food science and technology, engineering and water sciences, to help solve significant challenges ahead for food and natural resource security.

The agreement also will allow the State of Nebraska to seek out Chinese agri-business opportunities for Nebraska companies and individuals who need assistance with building relationships in China.

Those from Nebraska attending the opening were: Ronnie D. Green, NU vice president for agriculture and natural resources and Harlan vice chancellor of IANR; Greg Ibach, director of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture; and Stan Garbacz, agricultural trade representative for the Nebraska Department of Agriculture.

“We are tremendously excited to be launching what we believe to be a unique and unprecedented relationship with the SAG and the greater Chinese agricultural system,” Green said in remarks prepared for the ceremony. “This will provide a platform to work together on important agricultural problems in a coordinated and synergistic way with multiple collaborating groups in China, adding to our already significant relationships with China Agricultural University, Northwest A&F University, and Xi’an Jiaotong University.”

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture hopes to expand opportunities for businesses with current relationships and work to identify new prospects for expansion of business and commercial ventures in the world’s most populous nation.

“We have a vision of working side by side with the university to boost relationships for Nebraska companies. The synergy between research and investment could be a very exciting new scheme for Nebraska in China,” Ibach said.