

SPEAKER BRIEFING



Rewriting the Protein Narrative: Trust, Shared Vision, and Sustainable Solutions

Wednesday, October 22, 2025 | 7:00 – 8:30 AM CDT | Iowa Event Center, Room 313

Hosted by Food Systems for the Future Institute (FSF), in collaboration with the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) and International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI)

> Objective

Reframe the protein conversation to build trust across diverse stakeholders, dismantle polarized “us vs. them” narratives, and explore how diverse animal and complementary protein sources can collectively advance nutrition, resilience, and climate goals, informing evidence-based communications, policy action, and collaborative solutions.

> Agenda

7:00 – 7:30 AM | Networking Breakfast

7:30 – 8:30 AM | Main Program

Time	Segment	Lead / Role	Details & Notes
7:30 – 7:32 AM	Welcome Remarks & Introduction of Keynote	Ambassador Ertharin Cousin, Founder & CEO, FSF	Welcome audience and partners (EDF, ILRI). Introduce event purpose and keynote speaker, Jack Bobo.
7:32 – 7:38 AM	Keynote Address	Jack Bobo, Executive Director, UCLA Rothman Family Institute for Food Studies	Call to move beyond polarization toward shared action and diversity of solutions
7:38 – 7:39 AM	Introduction of Panelists	Ambassador Ertharin Cousin	Introduce panel discussion and briefly acknowledge each panelist by name, title, and affiliation.
7:39 – 8:14 AM	Panel Discussion	Moderator: Ambassador Ertharin Cousin. Panelists: Paul Newnham, Nicole Jenkins, Sam Wildman, Sheila Voss, Divine Ntiokam	Opening question: What mindset shift is most needed to build trust across systems? Follow with tailored questions per panelist. Keep responses concise (2–3 minutes). See the Question Sheet
8:14 – 8:24 AM	Audience Q&A	Moderator + All Panelists	Invite concise, solution-focused questions from the audience. Prioritize diverse voices and perspectives.
8:24 – 8:30 AM	Closing Remarks	Dr. Appolinaire Djikeng, Director General, ILRI	Reflect on panel takeaways and next steps. Highlight collaboration and the forthcoming multi-partner white paper.
8:30 AM	Event Concludes		Thank participants and invite a brief networking or photo opportunity.

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> Panelists Questions

Expected duration: ~35 minutes

1. Opening Question (for all panelists)

When we talk about rewriting the protein narrative, what does that mean to you, and what single mindset shift do we need to move from competition to collaboration across food systems?

Purpose: Frames the session; invites each panelist to signal their lens: advocacy, industry, innovation, climate, or youth.

2. Individual Framing Questions

- **Paul Newnham** – CEO, SDG2 Advocacy Hub

Paul, your work connects chefs, advocates, and global campaigns that shape how people think about food. What lessons have you learned about shifting public narratives and how can those lessons help us bridge divides between animal and alternative proteins?

Follow-up: Is there a story or campaign that you've seen truly change hearts and minds?

- **Nicole Jenkins** – Manager, Beef & Poultry Sector, EDF + Business (Environmental Defense Fund)

Nicole, EDF works closely with food companies and farmers to drive measurable climate impact. What's working and what's still missing when it comes to aligning methane reduction and protein production goals while keeping all stakeholders at the table?

Follow-up: How have you seen effective trust-building and collaboration across diverse stakeholders or unlikely allies?

- **Sam Wildman** – Director, Strategic Projects, Meat Institute

Sam, the Meat Institute and other players in this space emphasize that animal agriculture can and must be part of a sustainable future. From your vantage point, what does real collaboration look like between traditional livestock producers and innovators in the alternative protein space?

Follow-up: What misconception about animal protein sustainability do you most wish to correct today?

- **Sheila Voss** – Senior Vice President of Communications, The Good Food Institute

Sheila, you lead communications for a science-driven organization advancing alternative proteins. How can innovation be communicated in ways that invite partnership rather than provoke polarization?

Follow-up: Where have you seen shared language or values bridge what sometimes feels like opposing sides?

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➤ Panelists Questions

- **Divine Ntiokam** – *Founder & Executive Director, GCSAYN*

Divine, you've mobilized youth across more than 170 countries for climate-smart agriculture. How can young leaders and emerging markets help reframe this debate so that equity, access, and opportunity are at the center of the protein transition?

Follow-up: What message do young farmers or advocates want global decision-makers to hear most right now?

3. Integrative / Linking Question

We've heard from advocacy, science, and industry and consistent themes seems to be trust and shared vision. What practical steps can help us build that trust, not only among producers and innovators, but also with the public?

4. Closing Round (for all panelists)

If we succeed in rewriting the protein narrative, what will the food system of 2035 look like and what one action should we each commit to now to help get us there?

Purpose: End on vision, unity, and actionable optimism.

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➤ Speaker Bios

Jack Bobo

Executive Director, UCLA Rothman Family Institute for Food Studies

Jack Bobo is the Executive Director of the UCLA Rothman Family Institute for Food Studies and an honorary professor at the University of Nottingham. He previously served as Director of the Food Systems Institute at Nottingham and as Director of Global Food and Water Policy at The Nature Conservancy. Earlier, Jack was CEO of Futurity, a food foresight company, and spent over a decade as a senior advisor on global food policy at the U.S. Department of State. Named one of Scientific American's 100 most influential people in biotechnology and recipient of the Borlaug CAST Communication Award, he is the author of *Why Smart People Make Bad Food Choices*, which explores how psychology and food environments shape consumer behavior. Jack has delivered more than 1,000 speeches in over 50 countries, inspiring audiences on food security, agricultural innovation, and the future of food. Through his leadership at UCLA, consistently ranked among the very best public universities in the United States, he is advancing Nudge the Planet, an initiative to reduce polarization and build trust in food and agriculture. Jack holds a J.D., an M.S. in Environmental Science, a B.S. in Biology and a B.A. in Psychology and Chemistry, reflecting his interdisciplinary approach to reshaping food systems for a sustainable and nutritious future.



Ambassador Ertharin Cousin

Founder & CEO, Food Systems for the Future Institute

Ertharin Cousin currently serves as the Managing Director and CEO of FSF Ventures, an impact investment fund, and as the CEO of Food Systems for the Future Institute, the Fund's sister nonprofit. Each organization supports her vision of a world without hunger and malnutrition. Ambassador Cousin also serves as a Distinguished Fellow at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs; a Bosch Academy, Robert Weizsäcker Fellow; and as a Visiting Scholar at the Stanford University, Center on Food Security and Environment.

From 2012 until 2017, Cousin led the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) as Executive Director. During her tenure, the 14,000-member WFP annually provided life sustaining food assistance to over 80 million people. Under her leadership the organization began the longer-term work of identifying, championing and implementing more sustainable solutions for global hunger and malnutrition.



In 2009, Cousin was nominated and confirmed as the U.S. Ambassador to the UN Agencies for Food and Agriculture in Rome. Where she served from 2009-2012. Prior to her global hunger work, Cousin helped lead the U.S. domestic fight to end hunger, serving as the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of America's Second Harvest, now known as Feeding America. Cousin's private sector experience includes several years of corporate retail leadership with Albertsons and Jewel Food stores.

Cousin is currently a member of the Bayer AG Supervisory Board, the Mondelez International Board of Directors, Board Chair of Allwyn-North America and a Trustee of the African agriculture thinktank, Akademia2063.

Cousin is a graduate of the University of Illinois at Chicago; the University of Georgia Law School and the University of Chicago Executive Management Program in Finance for NonFinancial Executives. She has been listed numerous times on Forbes' 100 Most Powerful Women List, as Fortune's Most Powerful Woman in Food and Drink, on Time's 100 Most Influential People list and as one of the 500 Most Powerful People on the Planet by Foreign Policy magazine.

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Paul Newnham

CEO, SDG2 Advocacy Hub

Paul is a strategic innovator and executive leader with twenty five [25]+ years of expertise managing complex stakeholder relationships, designing campaign strategies and extensive knowledge of the not-for-profit sector. He possesses strong business acumen, exceptional advocacy skills and the ability to build deeply engaging relationships to influence decision makers, improve practices, drive change and deliver impactful solutions to complex problems alongside communities around the world.

A skilled communicator with a narrative that entices people to get on board, Paul starts movements that make global impact and drives change in sustainability and food systems, delivered through consistent and competitive methodologies, strong network development, innovative communications and superior client service and executive presence. Through the podcast 'Future Fork', Paul digs deep into the world of food and the decisions we can make today to create a brighter future for all with innovative thinkers in the food space.

Paul Newnham founded the SDG2 Advocacy Hub in 2016, a secretariat convened to connect NGOs, advocacy groups, civil society, private sector and United Nations agencies around Sustainable Development Goal 2: Zero Hunger. The Hub's goal is to coordinate global campaigning and advocacy to achieve food systems transformation, and it does so by facilitating multiple projects, including:

- The Food Crisis Advocacy and Campaigning Network: bringing together civil society to campaign for policy change and urgent response, together with the #HungryforAction campaign.
- The Chefs' Manifesto: a network of 1500+ chefs from over 93 countries to educate and empower food systems champions, driving progress to achieve the 2030 Agenda.
- Good Food For All: a campaign to drive Public Engagement via an engaging social media campaign supporting Good Food For All.
- Beans is How: a campaign to double the global consumption of beans (as well as peas, pulses, lentils and legumes) by 2028.

Paul was honoured to be part of the World Food Prize Foundation Top Agrifood Pioneers (TAP) List in 2024 and Personality of the Year for the We're Smart Future Awards in 2023, recognising his notable contributions to food systems transformation.



Nicole Jenkins

Manager, Beef and Poultry Sector, EDF + Business, Environmental Defense Fund

Nicole Jenkins is the US Beef and Poultry Sector lead with Environmental Defense Fund's Business team. Environmental Defense Fund is an international non-profit with the mission of building a vital earth for everyone by stabilizing the climate, strengthening the ability of people and nature to thrive, and supporting people's health.

In her role, Nicole leverages EDF's economic, scientific, and political expertise to support food and agriculture companies, particularly those in the animal agriculture space, in driving positive climate outcomes by identifying critical opportunities for impact and innovation, increasing transparency, and supporting supplier and farmer implementation. She helps to identify the win-win opportunities that address emissions in this hard to abate sector and deliver key co-benefits across the landscape and the value chain.



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Nicole represents EDF in multistakeholder spaces such as the US Roundtable for Sustainable Poultry & Egg and the US Roundtable for Sustainable Beef, among others, sharing EDF's rigorous science and pragmatic approach in key industry spaces.

She holds an M.S. in Agriculture, Food, and Environment from the Tufts University Friedman School with an emphasis on corporate sustainability and a bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies from the University of California Santa Barbara. Her background is in food sector consulting and environmental non-profit work intent on creating a more sustainable and resilient food system.

Sam Wildman

Director, Strategic Projects, Meat Institute

Sam Wildman is committed to making animal agriculture part of a sustainable future. He helps connect people and projects that highlight the positive role of animal proteins. As Director of Strategic Projects at the Meat Institute, Sam draws on his deep roots—he's the eighth generation raised on his family's farm—and a decade of hands-on experience improving sustainability across food supply chains. His past work includes leading projects at The Context Network, a global food and ag consulting firm, and was a livestock systems subject matter expert at World Wildlife Fund.



Sheila Voss

Senior Vice President of Communications, The Good Food Institute

Sheila Voss currently serves as the senior vice president of communications for the Good Food Institute, a science-driven nonprofit organization and international network focused on advancing alternative proteins to create a vastly more sustainable, secure and just global food system. An award-winning produce, environmental educator, coalition-builder and community campaigner, she has worked on behalf of science- and biodiversity-driven organizations for the past 25 years, from world-renowned botanic gardens, zoos and nature reserves to non-profits advancing sustainable agriculture, urban forestry and global habitat protection. In the critical years leading up to 2030, her energies are focused on transforming food and agriculture in ways that increase food security, help achieve global climate goals, reconnect urban and rural communities, contribute to greater public and personal health and enable healthy forests, fresh water and marine habitats.



Sheila holds a BA in English from Pennsylvania State University and a MS in Environmental Science, Public Administration and Policy from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. A native Floridian, Sheila has lived in the St. Louis region since 1996, currently residing in Edwardsville, IL. From 2016-18, she served on the U.N. Convention on Biological Diversity's Advisory Committee for Communications, Education and Public Awareness. She served on the board of Forest ReLeaf of Missouri for over a decade and currently chairs the policy committee of one of her favorite local nonprofits, the Nature Preserve Foundation. She revels in reading, writing, hiking nature-sketching, bird-watching, gardening and taking photos of cool caterpillars. She loves black dogs, bird song, river mist and facts.

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Divine Ntiokam

Founder and Executive Director, Climate Smart Agriculture Youth network Global (GCSAYN)

Mr. Divine Ntiokam is the Founder and Executive Director of the Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network Global (GCSAYN), a pioneering organization driving youth engagement in sustainable agriculture and climate action, with active chapters in over 176 countries.

A recognized advocate for inclusive and youth-led food systems transformation, Divine was appointed as one of the UN Food Systems Champions, contributing to the 18-month planning process for this landmark global summit. He previously served as the Global Youth Digital Advocate for the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the MY World 2015 Global Survey; the framework that helped shape the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Divine also spearheaded the localization of the Global Goals by initiating their translation into 60 local languages before their official adoption on September 25, 2015. He has served as Vice President of the African Youth in Livestock, Fisheries and Aquaculture Incubation Network (AYL-FAIN), a pan-African initiative supporting young agripreneurs, and currently acts as an International Ambassador for the Food and Land Use (FOLU) Coalition.

He is a core member of the Africa-Europe Foundation's Strategy Group, a contributor to the World Food Prize Foundation and an active member of both the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication (CEC) and the Climate Crisis Commission (CCC).



Appolinaire Djikeng

Director General, International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI)

Appolinaire Djikeng is the 4th Director General of the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) and Senior Director for the Livestock-based systems of the CGIAR. Prior to ILRI and the CGIAR, Djikeng was Director of the Centre for Tropical Livestock Genetics and Health (CTLGH) and based at the Roslin Institute and Professor and Chair for Tropical Agriculture and Sustainable Development at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, UK. Professor Djikeng has over 20 years' research, research management and institutional development experience in academia and in international not for profit research institutions in Africa, Europe and the USA.



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> Contact

For questions about this session, please contact:

Cedric Habiyaremye at cedric@fsfinstitute.net

> Social Media

We invite you to share the event with your networks. Below is an example post you can use or adapt for your own channels.

Excited to be part of the @World Food Prize Foundation Borlaug Dialogues for:
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 Room 313, Iowa Events Center

Hosted by @Food Systems for the Future (FSF) with @Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) and @International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), this session will explore how we can move beyond polarized debates and build trust across the protein landscape.

🔥 Seats are limited — register through the 2025 Norman E. Borlaug International Dialogue portal and search “Rewriting the Protein Narrative.” <https://www.accelevents.com/e/2025-norman-e-borlaug-international-dialogue?aff=LinkedIn521>

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