

## **Rick Tolman Awarded 2010 AgriBusiness Club 'Ag Leader of the Year'**

**Dec. 13:** The St. Louis AgriBusiness Club today presented National Corn Growers Association Chief Executive Officer Rick Tolman with its prestigious AgriBusiness Leader of the Year Award. This honor is conferred upon a person who has made a substantial contribution to the well-being of agriculture in the St. Louis area, either on a local or national scale.

Tolman was selected for this award because his service to agriculture reflects exceptional personal accomplishments and leadership that demonstrates outstanding abilities in administration, initiative in serving others, and a commitment to the improvement of agriculture, according to Stephanie Regagnon, past president of the St. Louis Agribusiness Club.

"Rick's dedication to our nation's farmers and ranchers, as evidenced by his decades of service to American agriculture and his passion and vision for the USFRA, makes us extremely proud to award him with the award," she said.

"I'm honored by this award in great part because of my respect for the Agribusiness Club's great work over the years and the terrific ag leaders we have here in St. Louis." said Tolman, who noted it was one of the organizations that helped NCGA relocate to the St. Louis area in 1984. "This award is also a testament to our staff and grower-leaders, who share the vision of a strong, vibrant and innovative ag sector."

Tolman's perseverance, patience and diplomacy served as one of the primary catalysts through which more than 50 national, regional and state U.S. farmer and rancher organizations have become affiliates of the U.S. Farmers & Ranchers Alliance, and more than a dozen major agribusinesses have become USFRA industry partners. Designed to build consumer confidence in today's farming and ranching, provides a coordinated effort that uses consistent strategies and messages to rebuild an eroding public knowledge in how our food is raised and grown.

A dedicated advocate for farmers, Tolman serves on the Board of the Waterways Council and recently finished a term on the Executive Committee of the Field to Market Sustainability Group. In addition, he chairs the USFRA CEO Advisory Council, has served on the USDA Agricultural Trade Advisory Committee for grains and oilseeds and as Chairman for the Midwest Area River Coalition. Tolman is a member of the Society of Industrial Leaders and is an expert on agriculture for the Gerson Lehrman Group Councils. Additionally, Tolman has been a guest researcher with the Japan Science and Technology Agency.

In 2008, Tolman was recognized as the Agribusiness Leader of the Year by the National Agri-Marketing Association. The award honors outstanding leaders in agribusiness, education, government service or other agribusiness related areas who exemplify excellence in agribusiness by their significant contributions to the industry.

Tolman joined NCGA, which is headquartered in St. Louis, in September 2000. He previously served as executive director for the U.S. Grains Council, a non-profit organization that promotes the use of U.S. barley, corn, sorghum and related products worldwide. Prior to his tenure with the Council, he worked as a marketing planning manager for the Advanced Harvesting Systems Group at International Harvester Company, a market research analyst for the Gehl Company, an equipment manufacturer and a graduate research assistant at Purdue University.

Tolman is a graduate of Brigham Young University and received his master's degree in agricultural economics from Purdue University. He and his wife, Linda, have five children and reside in Ballwin, MO.