

## Northeast Asia Regional Program



**Dr. Hu Yuankun** | Beijing, CHINA  
Deputy Director General,  
Department of Crop Production, Ministry of Agriculture

As Deputy Director General, Dr. Hu Yuankun focuses on the impact of natural disasters on crop production and food security; the collection and analysis of agricultural production data via an online network of 20,000 officials throughout China; improving crop yields by monitoring and improving soil quality; extending access to agricultural and water-saving technologies; and registering and administering fertilizers. On his fellowship, Dr. Hu explored American approaches to agricultural disaster monitoring, prevention, and relief as well as programs that use agriculture to promote rural economic development.

Dr. Hu visited a number of land grant universities focused on agriculture; government agencies; agricultural companies; and farms. During his meetings at Iowa State University, Michigan State University, University of California at Davis, and University of Nebraska, he focused on a wide range of crop production topics, including impact of climate change, disaster response, and economic compensation for crop loss as a result of natural disasters. Visiting Monsanto impressed upon Dr. Hu the significance of genetic crops in creating plants that are intended to resist natural disasters such as drought. His meetings with government officials at the federal, state, and local level afforded him the opportunity to understand U.S. agricultural policy.

A highlight of Dr. Hu's fellowship was his visit hosted by USA Fellow Ben Riensche at his family farm in Iowa. In addition to seeing the life of an American family – coincidentally, Ben's daughter recently returned from a trip to China – he experienced harvest time on a huge American farm. Yuankun was particularly impressed by the size of Ben's farm, which is 11,000 acres. Another highlight of his fellowship was his visit to Oklahoma hosted by USA Fellow Hope Pjesky. Ms. Pjesky put together and accompanied Dr. Hu on a very full three-day schedule of meetings with agricultural specialists in Oklahoma.

In addition to his stated fellowship goals regarding agriculture, Dr. Hu made several observations regarding relations between the U.S. and China. Through his meetings, he came to understand there is a lot of misunderstanding that Americans have about China and the Chinese have about the United States. As a result, he concluded, "that's exactly the reason why I am here and what I should do after I go back home."

He returns home with plans to arrange meetings between his ministry and several institutions he visited, including the Iowa Seed Association, U.S. Department of Agriculture, University of Maryland, and Iowa State University. He also looks forward to sharing his fellowship experience with colleagues, potential fellows, and USA Fellows visiting China. Of the fellowship overall, Dr. Hu remarked that he goes home determined to "have an open my mind, try to bring about change, be a wise leader, win more support, and make remarkable achievements."

**Leaders bettering the world around them.**