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Larta Institute

Ag Innovation Forum in Davis, CA Welcomes Tom Nassif as Keynote Speaker

Western Growers Assoc. CEO to Headline Event for Innovation and AgTech

LOS ANGELES, CA and DAVIS, CA - April 4, 2017 – Larta Institute and the UC Davis World Food Center are pleased to announce that Tom Nassif, Western Growers Association CEO and former U.S. ambassador, will be the keynote speaker at the Ag Innovation Showcase held May 8-9 at the University of California Davis Conference Center in Davis, CA. Nassif's strong leadership experience and notable background in government and agricultural industry offers a unique viewpoint at the showcase and particular relevance to the event's audience of early-stage innovators in the food and agriculture sectors.

Nassif's diverse career started with work in agricultural labor law at Gray Cary Ames & Frye law firm, where he represented numerous California and Arizona growers and shippers in elections, unfair labor practice hearings and more. Later, during his time as a U.S. ambassador, he took on a variety of major roles including Deputy and Acting Chief of Protocol for the White House during the Reagan administration. In 2002, he took leadership of Western Growers with an agenda to shift the fresh produce industry into a new era.

"We are honored and pleased to host Tom Nassif as our keynote speaker. His leadership and experience provides a key point of reference for the event," said Rohit Shukla, CEO of Larta Institute. "Our ability to innovate, and to continue to underscore California's leading role in agriculture depends on motivated, connected leaders. Tom and the lineup of speakers provides us with an opportunity to use the event for this broader agenda."

Larta and the UC Davis World Food Center are bringing together their respective organizations to support technology innovators with solutions for modern agricultural issues. Ag Innovation Showcase has a longstanding history of merging agriculture and innovation in an annual event in St. Louis, MO to help leverage key players and global research in crop, animal and food science. This inaugural event in Davis, the first time the event has been brought to a new farming region, builds on prior successes to address particular needs and opportunities in California.

The event will focus on topics concerning emerging technology for food and high value agriculture, with other recognized leaders in the Ag Tech space – including

growers and researchers like Victor P. Smith, Daniela Barile, David A. Mills – and more than a dozen speakers overall.

The four major showcase themes for this year include Automation & Robotics, Boosting Nutrition & Sensory Value, Innovation in the Livestock & Dairy Sectors, and Water Management. More details about the Ag Innovation Showcase will be announced soon.

For tickets and other information, visit <https://www.foodaginnovation.com>

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About Larta Institute

Larta Institute, founded in Los Angeles in 1993, is an internationally recognized technology accelerator that has helped more than 10,000 companies transform ideas into commercialized, socially-beneficial innovations in science and technology, particularly in agriculture and the life sciences. With a global network of entrepreneurs, mentors, investors, industry leaders, research institutions, government agencies and support organizations; Larta conducts commercialization assistance programs throughout the U.S. and in more than 20 countries. For additional information about Larta Institute, visit the organization's website at larta.org.

About the UC Davis World Food Center

Established in 2013, the World Food Center is elevating the impact of UC Davis research for healthier food systems, sustainable solutions and to grow the innovation economy.