

The Goldberg Charitable Corporation

to Improve the Food System

A Proposal to Establish the Ray A. Goldberg Professorship of the Global Food System Harvard University-Wide Chair

Harvard University has long enjoyed an international reputation as a thought leader on the world food system, in no small part due to the groundbreaking work of Professor Ray A. Goldberg during his research and teaching career at Harvard Business School, Harvard Kennedy School and his work inspiring the next generation through seminars at Harvard College. In addition, Ray has also been a pioneer in bringing together and harnessing the expertise and resources of the many schools of the University and their alumni to work together on research impacting the global food system. In order to continue and expand the important global contributions that have defined Ray's lifework at Harvard University, we are establishing an endowed University-wide Chair of the Global Food System.

The Professorship

The purpose of establishing this professorship is to promote teaching, scholarship, and public/private deliberation on the management and governance of the global food system. In filling this professorship, the University will appoint a candidate with a distinguished record of scholarship or engagement in the design and implementation of arrangements that are needed to cope with the national and international challenges of food production, consumption, and security, together with related issues.

Why a University-Wide Chair?

A University-wide Chair helps to ensure that Harvard continues its leadership role as a worldwide center for multidisciplinary efforts. Spread across multiple parts of the institution, Harvard's programs link deep knowledge with practical response to the growing challenges linked to food on our ever more interconnected planet. While Ray has helped to establish many of the efforts across the University and has encouraged many more, Harvard's individual components are not a permanent University-wide strategy. The funding of an endowed University-wide Chair, under the control of the University Provost, centered on the world food system, and the appointment of a senior individual to fill that chair, is what the University now needs to bring together in a more formal and permanent way its many leadership components across the University into a functioning system. Such a system would:

- Provide, through its various graduate school programs, a pipeline of trained leaders for business and policy-making in the world food enterprise.
- Provide, through its executive education seminars, on-going opportunities for emerging industry leaders to explore issues facing them and their companies and institutions.
- Provide, through programs such as the Private and Public, Scientific, Academic, and Consumer Food Policy Group (PAPSAC), a worldwide forum for discussion of emerging critical issues and the building of long-term relationships across all components of the food system.
- Provide the introduction to the food system and the inspiration to become a part of it to future generations of potential members and leaders through novel undergraduate programs.
- Solidify Harvard's role in working with other academic institutions around the world.

Furthermore, the establishment of a University-wide Chair will ensure that support for the entire program will come from the University President and the Provost, and have permanency rather than be a discretionary item and subject to alteration by a single Dean of one part of Harvard at any time.

Why Harvard?

Harvard University has both an obligation and an opportunity to make a serious contribution to meeting the global food challenge. That challenge can no longer be relegated to the sole attention of specialized agriculture schools—however distinguished—any more than energy challenges can be relegated to polytechnic universities or health challenges to medical schools. Instead, the multi-disciplinary perspectives and methods characteristic of leading research universities are badly needed. **Harvard, as the home of “agribusiness”, has a proven track record of providing a systemic, synergistic approach to the problems and opportunities of the global food system that is unique among academic institutions, and the University-wide Chair helps to ensure the continuation of this effort.**

Why Now?

Food has reemerged as a central issue on global and national agendas, part of the twenty-first century’s “perfect storm” that is forming at the nexus of interacting energy, water, food, and environmental challenges. A growing and wealthier global population will call upon the world agricultural system to increase production by 50 to 100 percent before the year 2050. Productivity increases from current production methods are slowing for a variety of agronomic and policy reasons, even as scientists and engineers are innovating new foods, production methods, and food safety technologies that are independent of farming.

At the same time, food consumption patterns are evolving toward a perversely new kind of malnutrition: a world that is simultaneously “stuffed and starved.” Unhealthy nutrition and under-nutrition combined are now responsible for 14 percent of the world’s burden of disability adjusted life years (DALYs)—twice the size of the next highest major risk factor. Safety concerns are soaring with the globalization of the food system. The livelihoods of more than 1.3 billion of the poorest people around the world depend directly on their activities as agricultural producers, making agricultural policy a key component of strategies for poverty alleviation. Finally, food insecurity—whether induced by climate change, disease, market disruptions, or war—is increasingly seen as a global security concern because of its capacity to lead to civil unrest, state failure, and large-scale migration. In short, food issues are joining energy issues as the great global cross-cutting challenges of the coming decades.

The Honoree

It is fitting that the new University-wide Chair honors in perpetuity the man who pioneered the field of agribusiness and catalyzed interactions among the many existing food-related efforts at the University.

Professor Emeritus Ray A. Goldberg revolutionized the global food industry with his vision and ability to lead change. Over the past 50 years, Ray’s agribusiness systems approach led to new frameworks for global supply management, information sharing, food safety, risk management, sustainability, and education. It created a paradigm shift. The thinking of input providers, growers, handlers, processors, distributors, brand owners, retailers, financial institutions, government regulators, educators, and other stakeholders focused on working together, to better define the industry, and to create new levers for strategy and policy changes. This shift laid the foundation for local, regional, national, and global players in the food system to take a holistic and long-term approach built on trust and the appreciation of interdependence.

“How the Global Food System was shaped and more importantly how we determine its future form has profound implications on our ability to feed 9 billion people”

Professor Ray A. Goldberg