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**PRESS RELEASE
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LEADING IOWA SCIENTISTS: Climate Change Threatens Iowa Farms

(Des Moines) Our state has long held a proud tradition of helping to “feed the world.” Our ability to do so is now increasingly threatened by adverse weather conditions, according to a statewide group of Iowa scientists.

“Our climate has disrupted agricultural production during the past two years and is projected to become even more harmful in coming decades as our climate continues to warm and change,” said Gene Takle, Director of the ISU Climate Science Program at Iowa State University. “Iowa’s soils and agriculture remain our most important economic resources, but these resources are threatened by climate change,”

The Iowa Climate Statement 2013: A Rising Challenge to Iowa Agriculture was released today by **155** science faculty and research staff from **36** Iowa colleges and universities. “The strong support for the statement represents the growing consensus among Iowa science faculty and research staff that action is needed now to reduce heat trapping gases and implement both adaptation and mitigation strategies,” stated Dave Courard-Hauri, Chair, Environmental Science and Policy Program, Drake University.

“We have confidence in recent findings that climate change is real and having an impact on Iowa agriculture and on our natural resources,” said Jerry Schnoor, Co-Director, Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research at the University of Iowa.

Swings from one extreme to another have characterized Iowa’s 2013 weather patterns. Iowa started the year under the widespread drought but the spring of 2013 was the wettest in the 140 years of record-keeping. By mid-August, very dry conditions had returned to Iowa, subjecting many of the state’s croplands to moderate drought.

“Intense rain events, the most notable evidence of climate change in Iowa, dramatically increase soil erosion, which degrades the future of agricultural production,” stated Christopher Anderson, Research Assistant Professor at Iowa State University. “As Iowa farmers continue to adjust to more intense rain events, they must also manage the negative effects of hot and dry weather.”

“Weather events this year are bringing climate change home to the many Iowans who also work the land on a small scale, visit the Farmer’s Market, or simply love Iowa’s sweet corn and tomatoes,” said Greg Carmichael, Co-director, UI Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research.

“The climate likely will continue to warm due to increasing global emissions and accumulation of heat trapping gases,” stated Neil Bernstein, Chair, Department of Natural and Applied Sciences, Mount Mercy University. There is solid evidence that extreme high temperatures are occurring disproportionately more than extreme low temperatures.”

“It is time for all Iowans to work together to limit future climate change and make Iowa more resilient to extreme weather. Doing so will allow us to pass on to future generations our proud tradition of helping to feed the world,” said Laura Jackson, Director, Tallgrass Prairie Center, Professor of Biology at the University of Northern Iowa.

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The lead authors of the **Iowa Climate Statement 2013: A Rising Challenge to Iowa Agriculture** include:

Gene Takle, Director, Climate Science Program, Professor of Agronomy, Professor of Geological and Atmospheric Sciences, Iowa State University.

Jerald Schnoor, Co-Director, Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research, University of Iowa.

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Laura Jackson, Director, Tallgrass Prairie Center, Professor of Biology, University of Northern Iowa.

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The 36 Colleges and Universities of statement endorsers:

Buena Vista University; Central College; Clarke University; Coe College; Cornell College; Des Moines Area Community College; Dordt College; Drake University; Eastern Iowa Community College; Ellsworth Community College; Grinnell College; Indian Hills Community College; Iowa Central Community College; Iowa Lakes Community College; Iowa State University; Iowa Valley Community College ; Iowa Western Community College; Kirkwood Community College; Loras College; Luther College; Maharishi University of Management; Marshalltown Community College; Morningside College; Mount Mercy University; Northeast Iowa Community College; Scott Community College; Simpson College; Southeastern Community College; Southwestern Community College; Saint Ambrose University; University of Iowa; University of Northern Iowa; Upper Iowa University; Waldorf College; Wartburg College; Western Iowa Tech Community College, William Penn University.

Endorser affiliations are for identification purposes only and do not reflect views of their academic institutions.

The statement can be found at www.cgrer.uiowa.edu/