



## NEWS RELEASE

Tri-State Development Summit  
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### **Leaders from Panama Canal Authority, Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Soybean Export Council to Speak at Summit**

Summit officials have announced that Roldofo Sabonge, the Vice President of Market Research and Analysis of the Panama Canal Authority will be a featured speaker at the 9<sup>th</sup> Tri-State Development Summit to be held October 5th in Quincy, Illinois.

Mr. Sabonge will be joined by Jim Sutter, CEO of the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) and Alvin B. Lee, Regional Business Director, Mississippi Valley Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Mississippi River Commission in addition to previously announced speakers, Iowa Governor Terry Branstad, Damon Porter, Director of MoBroadbandNow and Mike Steenhoek, Executive Director of the Soy Transportation Coalition.

“The addition of Mr. Sabonge to our list of well-regarded experts presenting at this year’s Summit is just awesome,” said Steering Committee Member Jim Mentesti, president of the Great River Economic Development Foundation in Quincy, Illinois. “We’re very pleased with the caliber of all of our speakers and the messages we anticipate they will deliver to Summit attendees including our tri-state business and government leaders.”

As Vice President of Market Research and Analysis of the Panama Canal Authority, Rodolfo Sabonge is responsible for competitive intelligence, Canal pricing, and customer relations. He has been with the Panama Canal since 1986. Until 1993, he held several positions in Canal operations and later he was transferred to the Office of Executive Planning where he led the Office of Transition Planning and was responsible for coordinating all actions necessary to ensure the orderly and successful transfer of the Panama Canal to the Republic of Panama. In 1999 he was appointed Director of Marketing and Corporate Planning. Since 1993 he has participated in the development and implementation of Panama’s Maritime Strategy.

Jim Sutter is the CEO of the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), a dynamic partnership of key stakeholders representing soybean producers, commodity shippers, identity preserved value-added merchandisers, allied agribusinesses and agricultural organizations. Through its global network of international offices, activities are carried out that will create and sustain demand for U.S. soybeans and soybean products. Before taking on his role at the USSEC, Sutter was Vice-

President of Cargill's Grain and Oilseed Supply Chain Business Unit with day-to-day responsibility for Cargill's Iowa Soybean Processing business. Sutter joined Cargill's Flax and Sunflower Processing Division as a merchant trainee in Fargo, N.D. in 1980. He was named a Vice-President of Cargill's North American Oilseed business in 1998.

Colonel (retired) Alvin Lee is the newly appointed Regional Business Director for the Mississippi Valley Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Mississippi River Commission. Mr. Lee is one of the newest members of the Federal Government's Senior Executive Service. In his position, COL Lee serves as the principal advisor to the Commander, MVD, and President, MRC, on directing and managing the engineering, construction, operations and real estate activities for flood control, navigation, water supply and environmental restoration projects in the Mississippi Valley Division.

Additional presentations will include a Transportation Task Force Update given by Thomas A. Oakley, publisher of The Quincy Herald-Whig newspaper and past president and CEO of Quincy Newspapers, Inc., parent company of The Herald-Whig. Oakley also serves as a director and treasurer of the QNI board of directors. He has been a long-time advocate of regional economic development and transportation infrastructure and continues to advance those efforts as a member of the Transportation Task Force of the Tri-State Development Summit.

The mission of the Tri-State Summit is to bring together leaders in Southeast Iowa, Northeast Missouri and Western Illinois to define common issues; to develop an on-going dialogue to effectively address those issues; and to improve the quality of life of the entire tri-state region through economic development activities.

The 2011 Summit will take place on Wednesday, October 5<sup>th</sup> in the Quincy Community Theatre which is located in the Oakley-Lindsay Center in downtown Quincy. The location for the bi-annual Summit rotates among all three states. The Summit consists of a four-hour agenda from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The deadline to register is Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup> and seating is limited.

2011 marks the 15<sup>th</sup> year of bringing tri-state leaders together. The Summit area consists of 35 counties. For more information about the 9<sup>th</sup> Tri-State Development Summit and to register online or download a mail-in registration form, visit the new [www.tristateofmind.org](http://www.tristateofmind.org) or call 217.223.4313.

