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Highlights from the Sixth Annual James Beard Foundation Food Conference: *Rethinking the Future of Food*

New York, NY (October 21, 2015) – The James Beard Foundation (JBF) hosted its sixth annual [James Beard Foundation Food Conference](#), *Rethinking the Future of Food* at Convene Conference Center in New York City on October 19 and 20. The sold-out conference brought together a diverse group of thought leaders and speakers, including a special keynote from Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack.

Speakers and panelists examined what lies ahead in three compelling areas: the future of health, the future of the kitchen, and the future of the farm. Among topics discussed were the changes in science, technology, and investment strategies empowering us all to make choices today that will lead to a healthier and more equitable tomorrow. Following are highlights and key quotes from the conference:

“If I had to describe the future of the farm in one word, it would be ‘diversity’ – diversity of operators and diversity of production methods. We have made an aggressive effort to engage women, people of color, and veterans in farming activities. We have invested over \$800 million in the expansion of local and regional food systems.” – **Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture** during *The Future of the Farm*

“I dream that one day, when we fly into cities, rooftops are green instead of gray.” – **Chef José Andrés, ThinkFoodGroup** during *Chefs Advocate for Agriculture*

“Fear of empty stomachs leads to revolution.” – **Rachel Laudan, Author and Historian, University of Texas at Austin** during *Keynote: Our Choices, Our Future*

“Climate change is the biggest threat to agriculture and feeding a growing planet.” – **Dr. Ellen Stofan, Chief Data Scientist, NASA** during *Keynote: The Future We Can See: What the Earth is Telling Us*

“If patients demand what they want from hospitals, that will change more than what doctors can change.” – **Dr. Geeta Maker-Clark, Department of Family Medicine, University of Chicago** during *Flavor on the Front Line of Health Education*

“Technology is a great tool – fitness trackers, food products – but we still have to make good use of the information they give us.” – **Ashley Koff, RD, Founder, Ashley Koff Approved** during *Health or Hype: Dealing with Information Overload*

“Internet is the most powerful technology in the world of food for the 21st century, like French cookbooks of years ago ... Why did French food become a symbol of high cuisine? French chefs wrote big books. People could learn. Technology lets us do that now.” – **Nathan Myhrvold, Founder, Modernist Cuisine** during *How Technology is Transforming the Way We Eat*

“The three C's of food policy advocacy: Consumers, Community, and Congress.” – **Chef Bryant Terry, Author and MoAD Chef-in-Residence** during *Cooking Up Change In and Out of the Kitchen*

“You cannot have a sustainable food system without fair labor laws. At best, their relationship is synergistic.” – **Saru Jayaraman, Co-Founder and Co-Director, ROC-United** during *Cooking Up Change In and Out of the Kitchen*

“People trust chefs, for better or worse. We need to use that platform.” – **Andrea Reusing, Owner, Lantern Restaurant** during *Chefs Advocate for Agriculture*

“Change the conversation from food security to NUTRITION security.” – **Howard-Yana Shapiro, Global Director of Plant Science and External Research, Mars Incorporated** during *From the Lab to the Field: Seeds of the Future*

“Fertile soil is a living metaphor of human beings on a healthy planet.” – **Eliot Coleman, Farmer, Author, Agricultural Researcher, and Educator** during *The Future is Good Dirt*

“There's an immense cost to cheap food.” – **Chef Duskie Estes, Co-Owner, ZAZU Kitchen + Farm and Black Pig Meat Co.** during *Sowing a Foundation for Thriving Crops and Communities*

“Crowdfunding allows the public to be the judge of what's created, launched, funded, and grown.” – **Eileen Gordon Chiarello, CEO and Founder, Barnraiser** during *Financing the Future*

“What's more God-like: to design top-down, or to design bottom-up?” – **Paola Antonelli, Senior Curator, Museum of Modern Art** during *Keynote: What is the Future We Want to Create?*

During day one of the conference, JBF president Susan Ungaro announced the release of the second annual Good Food Org Guide, which is developed by the James Beard Foundation and Food Tank, along with a prestigious advisory group of more than 70 food system experts. The definitive guide features nearly 1,000 food related nonprofit organizations that are doing exemplary work in the United States, including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam, in the areas of food and agriculture, nutrition and health, hunger and obesity, and food justice. Visit [FoodTank.com](http://goodfoodorgguide.com) for more information. Download the Good Food Org Guide here: <http://goodfoodorgguide.com>.

Day one of the conference was capped off by the fifth annual [James Beard Foundation Leadership Awards](#) dinner and ceremony at Hearst Tower, co-hosted by *Good Housekeeping* with founding support from GRACE Communications Foundation. The awards, emceed by Andrea Reusing, chef and owner of Lantern Restaurant, honored [five visionaries](#) across a broad range of backgrounds who influence how, why, and what we eat. All five of the 2015 Leadership Awards recipients —Don

Bustos, Eliot Coleman, Saru Jayaraman, Sam Kass, Bryant Terry— also participated in the conference.

Day two of the conference ended Tuesday afternoon with closing remarks from Susan Ungaro who announced the Foundation's partnership with the Future Market on a special "JBF Food Conference" edition of the Future Chronicle. The special edition will feature a number of the compelling thoughts and ideas presented at this year's Food Conference, extrapolated into possible headlines and articles of the future. JBF and the Future Market plan to release the special edition at the end of October.

For more information or to watch archived videos of panels and presentations at the sixth annual JBF Food Conference, please visit <http://www.jamesbeard.org/education/conference> or follow #JBFCONF2015 on Twitter and Instagram.

Founding support for this year's JBF Food Conference was provided by GRACE Communications Foundation, with additional support provided by Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute, the Better Burger Project and the Mushroom Council, Bon Appétit Management Company, Karen Karp & Partners, Bonterra Organic Vineyards, Salt for Life, *Good Housekeeping*, The Future Market, and the Natural Gourmet Institute.

About the James Beard Foundation (JBF)

Founded in 1986, the James Beard Foundation celebrates, nurtures, and honors America's diverse culinary heritage through programs that educate and inspire. A cookbook author and teacher with an encyclopedic knowledge about food, the late James Beard was a champion of American cuisine. He helped educate and mentor generations of professional chefs and food enthusiasts, instilling in them the value of wholesome, healthful, and delicious food. Today JBF continues in the same spirit by administering a number of diverse programs that include educational initiatives, food industry awards, scholarships for culinary students, publications, chef advocacy training, and thought-leader convening. The Foundation also maintains the historic James Beard House in New York City's Greenwich Village as a "performance space" for visiting chefs. For more information, please visit jamesbeard.org. Get food news, recipes, and more at the James Beard Foundation's [blog](#). Follow the James Beard Foundation on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).