Soil and Water Sciences Department UF Invited Speaker Seminar

Speaker: Dr. Pedro Sanchez  
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Title: New Breakthroughs in Brazilian Tropical Agriculture

Date: Monday, October 1st

Time: 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Location: McCarty Hall A, Room G186

The Cerrado of Brazil is an immense (200 million ha; 500 million acre) tropical savanna, dominated by acid infertile Oxisols (pH 4.5, 1 ppm available P), but through research has been “tamed”, and since the 1980s became a major world food producer, with soybean yields equal to those of Midwestern US where the soils (Mollisols) are considered the best of the world. It is almost completely under conservation tillage and in places center-pivot irrigation during the 6-month-dry season. In spite of science-based technology, many annual crop rotations and permanent pastures degrade after a few years, resulting in soil degradation. Embrapa scientists decided to combine both cropping and grazed pastures in ways crop yields remained high and beef cattle gained weight after 5 months without rain and no irrigation. I saw it myself 10 years ago, and at that time it was being adopted in 150,000 hectares. In a recent 2,000 km tour through the State of Goiás, we saw a new technique without irrigation called integração lavoura-pecuária-floresta (crop-livestock-forestry integration) that included eucalyptus, and covering 14 million hectares, twice the area of Florida. Farmers with center-pivot irrigation grow a wide variety of crops during the dry season (potatoes, cotton, sorghum, millets, sweet corn, carrots and even garlic), along with rainfed soybeans and corn during the rainy season. Soil degradation has been largely exterminated because both systems have the soil covered throughout the year.

For our off-campus students, off-campus faculty, and on-campus students who cannot attend, this seminar can be viewed via live or watched at a later date via this link: Dr. Pedro Sanchez. In addition, all seminars are archived for viewing on our SWSD Seminar Page.