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INNOVATION EXPERT CHRIS TRIMBLE OFFERS INSIGHTS AT CONVENTION'S CRACKER BREAKFAST

MAITLAND, Fla. (Sept. 21, 2010) – Author and Dartmouth business professor Chris Trimble told Florida specialty crop growers that having great breakthrough ideas for their businesses isn't enough to put them ahead. The often-forgotten "other side" of innovation involves converting those great ideas into impact for their companies.

Trimble, author of "The Other Side of Innovation: Solving the Execution Challenge," addressed the crowd of about 300 at the convention's traditional Cracker Breakfast.

A frequent speaker on the topic, Trimble has worked with many large corporations to help them infuse innovation throughout their operations. He has delivered keynote addresses at major conferences and has worked with dozens of private clients including GE, IBM, Microsoft, Thomson Reuters, Fidelity and the New York Times Company, according to his online biography.

Trimble likened innovation to a mountain-climbing team that sets out to scale a peak. Much work and planning go into the actual climb and reaching the summit; conversely, the same amount of effort rarely is put into planning the descent.

Established organizations are designed to be "performance engines," with an emphasis on ongoing operations, serving customers and being efficient and competing with competitors, Trimble said. They're not designed to incorporate innovation.

Performance engines make every process as repeatable and predictable as possible. "Those are both wonderful drivers of efficiency. You can measure performance and hold people accountable," he said. "But innovation is exactly the opposite. It's non-routine and uncertain – those are fundamental incompatibilities."

Executive innovation involves several components: a great idea, leaders, “a special kind of team, and a special kind of plan,” he told the group, outlining a blueprint of how to incorporate those components into their companies.

Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association is an agricultural organization representing Florida’s producers of fruits, vegetables and other crops.

Digital photographs are available by e-mailing Barbara.wunder@ffva.com.