Rep. Jim Kolbe visits Controlled Environment Agriculture Center

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Representative Jim Kolbe visited the Controlled Environment Agriculture Center (CEAC) on Saturday, August 6th. Given that Arizona is the largest producer of tomatoes in the United States, Rep. Kolbe was impressed with the opportunities that controlled environment agriculture offers beyond plant production. Dr. Chieri Kubota explained to him the promise of her research and how in the future plants could produce pharmaceuticals.

CEAC Director Dr. Gene Giacomelli talked about building a road map between BIO5 and CEAC to further foster research and commercially viable applications. CEAC founder Merle Jensen informed Representative Kolbe that Senator Tom Harkin, who had visited CEAC earlier, was enthused with its promising applications both for Southern Arizona and Mexico.

After a rowdy 90 minutes at the Town Hall meeting beforehand (with people cussing, raising their voice and walking out), our presentation helped to put Rep. Kolbe back in a good mood. He thanked Gene, Chieri, Merle, students (Nadia) and staff (Mark Kroggel) for the "fun visit", and he thanked the International Trade Development Center (ITDC) for calling to his attention the promising work that is being done at the Controlled Environment Agriculture Center.

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