The Association of Nepalese Agricultural Professionals of Americas (NAPA) hosted its 4th Biennial International Scientific Conference in Baltimore, Maryland, USA, on May 24-26, 2024. The conference theme, "Climate-Smart and Innovative Agriculture," reflected the importance of addressing the challenges of our changing environment while ensuring food security for all. This 4th conference provided a scientific platform (virtual and in-person) for students, faculty, researchers, academicians, planners, policymakers, and professionals of agricultural and allied sciences.

NAPA received 224 abstracts for oral and poster presentations from 18 countries (Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, China, Ecuador, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Laos, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Philippines, Thailand, USA, and Vietnam). Moreover, this conference brought together 443 scholars as authors and co-authors, representing 137 institutions. In addition, 17 essays were submitted by undergraduate and graduate students for a writing contest. The diverse pool of submissions demonstrates the importance of creating opportunities for global collaboration and knowledge exchange in agriculture and allied disciplines. Furthermore, the conference featured keynote speeches and invited speakers from numerous universities and State and Federal agencies.

Dr. Moses T. Kairo (Dean of the School of Agricultural and Natural Sciences at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, and Director of Land-Grant Programs and 1890 Universities Center of Excellence for Global Food Security and Defense) and Dr. Teferi Tsegaye (National Program Leader for Water Resources, Office of National Programs at the USDA-ARS) delivered keynote speeches. Hans Schmidt (Assistant Secretary, Maryland Department of Agriculture), Prem Raja Mahat (Honorary Consul General of the government of Nepal to the U.S. for Maryland and Pennsylvania States), Dr. Harry Bhandari (Delegate, Health and Government Operations Committee, The Maryland House of Delegates), Dr. Puneet Srivastava (Professor and Associate Dean for Research, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Maryland), Dr. Richard C. Rhodes III (Executive Director, Northeastern Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors, University of Rhode Island), Dr. Chris B. Watkins (Professor, School of Integrative Plant Science, Cornell University), Dr. Stephen J. Goetz (Professor of Agricultural and Regional Economics and Director of Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, Pennsylvania State University), Dr. Teresa E. Leslie (Director, Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education, University of Vermont), Dr. Srinivasa R. Mentreddy (Professor of Crop Science, Alabama A & M University), Paul Goeringer (Faculty and Legal Specialist, University of Maryland, College Park), and Margaret (Megan) Todd (Faculty and Senior Legal Specialist, University of Maryland, Baltimore) were invited speakers at the conference.
This broad representation reflects NAPA’s commitment to facilitating collaboration within North America and internationally. The conference provided a unique gathering for young researchers and emerging leaders, ensured broader exposure to their work, and nurtured their intellectual and professional growth. Future leaders in agriculture and allied sciences took on various roles and responsibilities to conclude the conference successfully and participated in competitive oral and poster presentations, essay writing, and agri-poem recitation. Conference participants attended workshops and panel discussions on the overarching issues of agriculture and natural resources vis-à-vis food security through advancement in agriculture. With a focus on climate-smart and innovative agriculture, the conference laid the groundwork for future partnerships to achieve global food security and sustainability through agricultural transformation.

NAPA gratefully acknowledges the financial support from various donors, including business enterprises and individuals. This event would not have been possible without the hard work, commitment, and perseverance of various committees and sub-committees, moderators, judges, and the outstanding support of our IT team. We extend our sincere gratitude to all participants from around the world who contributed to making this conference a resounding success! The Association of Nepalese Agricultural Professionals of Americas (NAPA) was established in 2016 and is a non-profit, non-governmental, non-religious, and non-political professional organization dedicated to serving mankind through educational, scientific, and developmental initiatives.

Best regards,

Lila B. Karki, Ph.D. Pradeep Wagle, Ph.D.
Chair, Conference Organizing Committee President (2022-2024), NAPA