

**Written Testimony of Mike Stern, President & Chief Operating Officer
The Climate Corporation, San Francisco, California**

Thank you Chairman Conaway, Ranking Member Peterson and members of the Committee for inviting me to participate in today's hearing. Your interest in the use of grower data and farm data analysis comes at an exciting time as agricultural data technology is being made available to farmers in a way that's never been done before. We are on the cusp of a digital revolution in production agriculture, driven by the digitization of farm information, that will drive a new wave of agricultural innovation and productivity.

The mission of the Climate Corporation is to help all the world's farmers sustainably increase productivity through the use of digital tools. Accordingly, the Climate Corporation looks at the actions farmers take every day and the roughly 40 big decisions that farmers make every year on their farm. For example, what type of seeds to plant, when to plant, what is the optimal seeding population and when and how much fertilizer should be applied, to mention a few.. The use of data can provide important, fact-driven information and insights to farmers to enable them to maximize yield, optimize their use of resources, and save money.

What you might refer to as farmer data, or precision agriculture, is what I think about as digital agriculture – by using data science and software engineering we transform data into insights for growers to help them make more informed decisions about what's happening in each part of each field. Our proprietary Climate FieldView Platform™ uses real-time and historical crop and weather data to deliver customized insights that help farmers make important agronomic decisions with confidence. This information can be visualized in the cab of their tractor or in their fields to support the complex and important decisions they make throughout the season.

How do we do actually do this?

By combining publicly and privately available information on weather, soil, and land with agronomic practices and farm equipment information provided by our farmer customers, we build complex models to analyze all of this data and provide insights for farmers to help them make real time decisions that will result in greater efficiencies and increased productivity. All of this means that we are analyzing a vast amount of data for the farmer to help distill that information into usable insights. For example, we have developed our Nitrogen Advisor to monitor the movement on nitrogen based fertilizers through the field from fall application to spring planting and beyond. This digital tool will provide insights to help farmers determine whether they have sufficient fertility in the field during the growing season to meet their yield objectives. Our Field Health Advisor uses satellite imagery to provide high contrast digital maps that help farmers spot trends and potential problems in their fields before they impact yield. The end result is to provide growers with more data driven information to more sustainably increase the productivity of their operations.

As a company that will utilize our farmer customer's data in the course of developing these transformational digital tools, we take our commitment to safe-guarding that data very seriously.

In January of 2014 The Climate Corporation published our data privacy policy which is customer-focused, transparent, and makes it clear what we will and won't do with farmers' data.

Our policy states that the company will make it easy for farmers to control who can access the data they provide and for what purpose. We will only use a farmer's data to deliver and improve the services for which they are subscribing. We will ensure safeguards are in place to protect farmer information from outside parties. We will not sell customer-provided data to third parties and finally we will enable farmers to easily remove that data from our systems if they choose to no longer do business with us.

In addition, about a year ago, we endorsed a set of principles for data privacy that we and other industry participants developed with the American Farm Bureau. The purpose of this set of principles is to further assure farmers that The Climate Corporation takes their privacy and security concerns as seriously as they do. These principles give farmers a framework on how to assess privacy policies as they consider doing business with data companies. We are proud of the work that was accomplished here, and we are pleased that our collaboration with grower organizations continues as we create a system to verify to our customers that we are meeting the standards we have endorsed.

The promise of digital agriculture is to help American farmers and farmers around the world to more sustainably convert natural resources into food. It's why we are in this business. We believe that the digital ag revolution and The Climate Corporation's unique technologies will drive innovation to help achieve these important goals. Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts with you today.