



Distinction



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FROM THE DEPARTMENTAL CHAIR

2008, An Exciting Year

What an exciting year for agricultural economists! All time record high prices for corn at over \$7 and soybeans over \$14. The bad news was input costs climbed right along. I expected my stock market portfolio to reach new highs right along with the price of gas at the pump. \$5 a gallon for gas and 15,000 Dow or \$1.50 gas and 7,500 Dow? I suspect the closer one is to retirement, the more obvious the preferred choice. I will tell on myself that I advised one of our students to sell corn and beans in February. Fortunately, he didn't listen and I hope held on for those record highs.

In April, the department conducted a program review as part of our strategic planning process. Rob Hauser, department chair at Illinois, Eluned Jones from Texas A&M, Chris Peterson from Michigan State, and Mark Ryan from MU's School of Natural Resources served as the review team. The department found their insights and suggestions extremely useful as we develop our strategic plan. 2008 also saw two highly successful Breimeyer seminars. The spring seminar focused on nutrient management and manure utilization, while the fall seminar addressed upcoming farm policy and legislation. Both had fantastic attendance to go with outstanding presentations. More information is available in the FAPRI and extension articles in this newsletter.



Michael Monson

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News & Events

Ag Econ Social Gathering

Each year the Department of Agricultural Economics graduates some of the best students at the University of Missouri. Past alumni have gone on to achieve great success as entrepreneurs, leaders, farmers, government employees, and skilled professionals.

In the past we have made an internal activity of wishing off our graduating senior class. Starting with the Spring 2008 and Fall 2009 class, we expanded the Department's senior send-off by inviting central Missouri Agricultural Economics Alumni to a send-off celebration. Alumni were invited to stop by Mumford Hall to view the newly constructed Bullock Student Center, refurbished entryway, classroom improvements and to grab their favorite faculty member before heading to the Heidelberg for socializing and meeting the Spring 2008 and Fall 2009 graduating seniors.

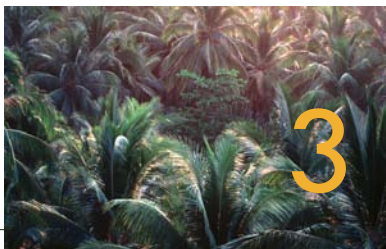
We had a great turnout of faculty, staff, graduating seniors and alumni for the gathering. Graduating seniors were able to make contacts, speak with alumni about current jobs and reminisce with alumni about alum memories in Mumford Hall.

We would like to invite you to the 2009 Ag Econ Social Gathering so please mark your calendar. Again this year it will be held at the Heidelberg in the side room on Thursday, April 30, 2009 from 4:00-7:00 p.m. We are again inviting graduating seniors, faculty, staff and alumni. We want to invite all of our alumni to attend the 2009 Social Gathering, but we realize time and travel constraints may limit your chance to attend.

This event will be come and go as you please, no RSVP required. We will be providing munchies during happy hour. We hope you can attend this wonderful opportunity to meet and greet students and alumni and if you have any questions please contact Jill Fleischmann at fleischmannj@missouri.edu. A reminder will be sent out to you during the Spring 2009 semester.



The Patio at the Heidelberg in Columbia.



Student Activities

Agricultural Economics-Agribusiness Club

The Agricultural Economics – Agribusiness Management Club at the University of Missouri – Columbia is open to any student who has an interest in agricultural economics, agribusiness, farm management, or agriculture in general. While most of our members are Agricultural Economics or Agribusiness Management majors, we also have members majoring Biochemistry, Animal Science, Agriculture Education, Plant Science and Finance.

The purpose of the Agricultural Economics – Agribusiness Management Club is:

- Broaden the Ag Econ students' knowledge and understanding of their field of study
- Stimulate interest and enthusiasm for learning beyond the scope of the classroom
- Promote student-faculty relations
- Promote scholarship, fellowship and leadership
- Provide an opportunity for wider acquaintance among students and professional workers in the agricultural social sciences

We participate in a wide variety of activities throughout the school year. Some of these include:

- Community Service activities include donating items to Mid-Missouri Food Bank and Ronald McDonald House.
- Each fall we take an Agribusiness Trip. This road trip allows us to visit agricultural companies throughout the Midwest. The club has visited places such as Informa in Memphis, Tennessee, Riceland in New Madrid, Missouri, Chicago Board of Trade, Mercantile Exchange and Anheuser Busch headquarters in St. Louis, Missouri.
- We also take an Agribusiness Trip within Mid-Missouri. In spring 2007 we visited businesses in Columbia and Mexico including MFA Oil Company, Sydenstricker Implement and Gold Crest Distributing.
- Social Activities include hayride, bowling, BBQ and softball game.

Each of our activities provides excellent opportunities to meet other individuals with common interests and to build life-long friendships.

Throughout the year we host a Labor Sale Fundraiser where faculty and staff of the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources has the opportunity to “buy” a few members of the club to assist them with lawn care, house work or other odd and end jobs. The proceeds help minimize the costs of our trips: the Agribusiness Trip and American Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA) National Convention. In the Spring, we take great pride in our annual BBQ fundraiser benefiting the Jerry West Memorial Scholarship for Agribusiness and Ag Econ majors. The BBQ is a great way for students to interact and have fun! This year, we extended the BBQ to CAFNR Week as well.

Meetings are held every second and fourth Tuesday of the month in 217 Mumford Hall at 7:00PM. We generally have a speaker from the industry come and speak once a month. These speakers allow members to expand on networks and to gain insight on internship/career opportunities.



FAPRI in the Forefront

Unpacking the Farm Bill

On September 3, 2008 the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute (FAPRI) at the University of Missouri–Columbia (MU), in association with the Department of Agricultural Economics, produced the second Breimyer Seminar of 2008 “Unpacking the 2008 Farm Bill”.

Brent Carpenter, FAPRI–MU’s Missouri Farms Research Associate coordinated the agenda. Over 200 people attended to hear 18 speakers and panel member’s breakdown the 2008 farm bill, formally called the Food, Conservation and Energy Act (FCEA) of 2008. Attendees were from around the nation with a large percentage representing Missouri. They audience was comprised of farmers, policymakers, legislators, government agency representatives and agriculture industry officials. Several attendees were MU alumni and regional extension faculty.

The goal of the seminar was to sift through some of the provisions of the new bill that would be of most consequence. Even though they are written in long, tedious language, the speakers were able to provide expert analysis of the policies and explain the potential implications. Of most significance, this farm bill offers producers a choice of participating in a new revenue-based program in exchange for a reduction in guaranteed support.

Dr. Thomas L. Payne, Vice Chancellor and Dean of the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (CAFNR) gave the opening speech after his introduction by Dr. Ron Plain, D. Howard Doane Professor and Professor of Agricultural Economics.

Dr. Patrick Westhoff, Codirector of FAPRI–MU, provided an overview of the FCEA. Next, Dr. D. Scott Brown, Associate Director at FAPRI–MU, spoke about specific livestock and dairy provisions set forth in the new bill. Carpenter later presented an overview of major new conservation provisions.

About mid-morning, Dr. Joe Outlaw, Codirector of the Agricultural & Food Policy Center at Texas A&M, explained payment limits and the Southern Crop provisions. Dr. Chad Hart, Assistant Professor at Iowa State University, explained the permanent disaster assistance and crop insurance programs. All of the morning speakers participated in a round table discussion providing the opportunity for questions from the audience.

Lori Wilcox, FAPRI–MU Program Director for Research & Operations introduced the keynote speaker, Mr. James R. Wiesemeyer. Wiesemeyer is Vice-President of the Washington Bureau of Informa Economics. His presentation depicted how the new





FAPRI in the Forefront

FCEA came to be, explaining the process the bill took for approval. Meagan Perry, Senator Kit Bond's legislative assistant, and Nichole Distefano, Senator Claire McCaskill's legislative counsel, comprised the next discussion panel afterwards.



The afternoon session provided an opportunity to delve into more specific details of crop related policies and specific implications for Missouri agriculture. Dr. William H. Meyers, Codirector of FAPRI–MU, again welcomed Westhoff for his second presentation. This one was on the forthcoming Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program.

Dr. Gary Adams, Vice-President for Economics and Policy Analysis at the National Cotton Council, gave his perspective on new farm policy coming down the pike.

The third and final open discussion panel was headed up by Don Copenhaver, President and CEO of MFA, Inc., Ashley McCarty, Director of Public Policy, Missouri Corn and Jeff Windett, Executive Vice-President for the Missouri Cattlemen's Association.

The Breimyer Seminars operate from an endowment fund and partially support 'in-service' education for extension personnel. FAPRI analysis of the commodity provisions is widely sought after in order to make informed decisions.

FAPRI–MU is part of the College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (CAFNR) and works closely with its affiliate unit, located at Iowa State University. Other research partners in the FAPRI consortium are at the Arizona State University, University of Arkansas, the University of Nevada–Reno, Texas A&M University, Texas Tech University and the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

If you would like to see the original presentations from "Unpacking the 2008 Farm Bill", you can do so at www.fapri.missouri.edu.



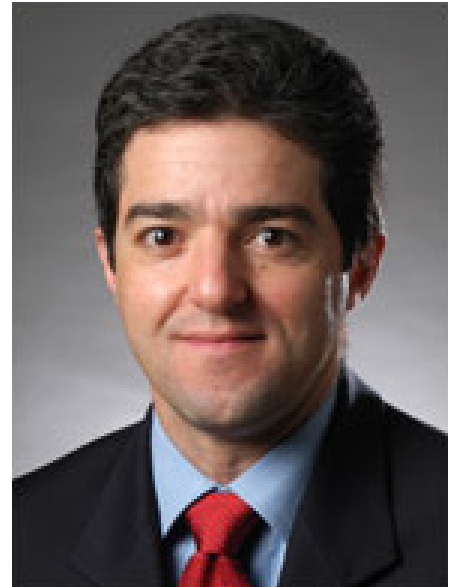


Focus on the Faculty

Fabio Chaddad

Fabio Chaddad is assistant professor of agricultural economics at the Division of Applied Social Sciences, University of Missouri. Fabio joined the Agricultural Economics department in January 2008. He currently teaches agribusiness management and organizational economics at the undergraduate and graduate levels. His research activities focus on the economics and management of user-owned and controlled organizations and inter-firm collaborative arrangements in agrifood systems.

Fabio is not new to the University of Missouri. He joined the department in August 1996 as a graduate student and research assistant. He graduated with a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics in 2001. His doctoral dissertation received the Edwin G. Nourse Award from the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives. Subsequently he joined the faculty of the School of Economic Sciences at Washington State University as an assistant professor in agribusiness economics. In 2004 he moved back to his country of origin, Brazil, as a professor at Ibmec Business School in Sao Paulo. In both WSU and Ibmec, Fabio received awards for excellence in teaching.



His research efforts focus on the general issue of “linking farmers to markets,” i.e., analyzing governance mechanisms and value added strategies to facilitate farmers’ access to markets and increase their incomes. He is particularly interested in exploring the link between alternative contractual mechanisms and performance. Recent work includes the following topics: dairy producer partnerships in pasture based systems, corporate governance mechanisms and non-traditional capital acquisition methods in agricultural cooperatives and producer networks in grain production and processing.



Beyond the Classroom

CAFNR Students Czech It Out

Dr. Ray Massey, Extension Professor of Agricultural Economics, accompanied 18 CAFNR students on a six-week study abroad experience in the Czech Republic. The activities ranged from first class education to first class tours and relationships with Czech students.

Each week of the program the students usually spent about four days in classroom instruction and one day in educational tours. The instruction was done by Czech faculty who had lived during the Soviet rule and the transition into a free economy. The lessons gave insight into the challenges associated with each type of market.

Each week at least one day was spent touring the Czech economy and countryside. Tours of the businesses such as the Skoda car factory, Budweiser brewery and a cooperative farm gave insight into distinctively Czech businesses. Touring castles, spas and national parks allowed the students to relax and enjoy Czech national treasures.

All participants augmented the organized tours with tours of their own – frequently to other European countries. Tours of the Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland, German cities and Budapest (Hungary)

hotbaths show the range of informal tours that occurred. MU Students also accompanied Czech students to their homes for a weekend where they experienced normal Czech family activities.



Krivoklat Castle in the Czech Republic.



MU Extension

Ag Economics Extension Program in 2008

"Woe is us! We'll all be roon'd."

This is from a very old poem about farming that Norlin Hein used to quote. Apparently it is timeless. This year's wide swings in commodity prices, unusually high input costs, rising land values and rents, bad weather and the national financial crisis generated similar sentiments from Missourians who rely on agriculture for their livelihood.

Our campus extension faculty were especially busy in 2008 responding to our Regional AgBusiness Specialists' concerns and assisting with locally organized activities. Campus faculty also conducted several statewide activities to help Missourians understand the current situation and identify opportunities.

One of these activities was the annual Breimyer Seminar, an endowment-supported series for the discussion of current economic topics. This year's unusual economic conditions merited two seminars. Laura McCann conducted the first seminar in May on the potential economic value of livestock manure titled "Manure Entrepreneurship – Turning Brown to Green." The seminar's broad agenda (12 presentations) attracted a wide and enthusiastic audience. The second seminar, held in September, provided an overview of the newly enacted 2008 farm bill and attracted a record audience. (See FAPRI article in this newsletter.)

High grain prices and the national subprime mortgage crisis created concern among Missouri farmers and lenders about the potential impact on this state's farm real estate values. In July, ag economics extension conducted its annual statewide survey of farmland values and also a special survey of current farm rental rates. The surveys showed moderate increases over the previous 12 months. The rental rate survey showed that average rates had not risen as much as some had thought and remained in line with the land values in Missouri's diverse farming areas.

However, the wide swings in grain prices and high input prices during 2008





MU Extension

coupled with Missouri's record wet spring and summer, caused much consternation regarding profitability of crop and livestock enterprises and biofuel production. Risk management was a serious issue, generating special in-service education sessions for Regional Extension Specialists. Our campus extension marketing faculty – Ron Plain, livestock, and Melvin Brees, grain – as well as our Commercial Agriculture faculty – Ray Massey, crops and swine, and Joe Horner, beef and dairy – discussed the impact of various management options. Web conferences were also held in January, April and October to update regional extension specialists on current developments and outlook. In November, a statewide conference for swine producers was conducted by the Commercial Agriculture swine team entitled "Weathering the Storm, Monitoring and Managing Costs."

The annual series of Agricultural Lender Seminars was held at 12 locations over the state in November and December. These continued to be very well received, giving lenders and extension personnel the opportunity to discuss local conditions and next year's prospects for agriculture. A set of projected cost and return budgets for major farm enterprises prepared by ag economics extension faculty is a very popular feature of these seminars, although projections for 2009 required some particularly difficult assumptions. These budgets are available as interactive spreadsheets on the AgEBB website.

The 18 Regional AgBusiness Extension Specialists continue to be an important link between the ag economics department and Missouri's agricultural industry. Again this year they organized a statewide series of Business/Farm Tax Schools for income tax preparers and continued the series of risk management programs for women (Annie's program) under grants from the USDA Risk Management Agency.



Other activities of note:
Computers on the Farm Users Group annual conference organized by John Travlos.
Improvements to the HorizonPoint weather and management information network via AgEBB by John Travlos et al. State Beef Tour organized by Joe Horner and the Commercial Agriculture beef team. Bankers School for newly hired ag lenders organized by Joe Horner. Ray Massey's participation in meetings of the North Central Farm Management Extension Committee.



From the Director

Continued from page 1

2008, An Exciting Year

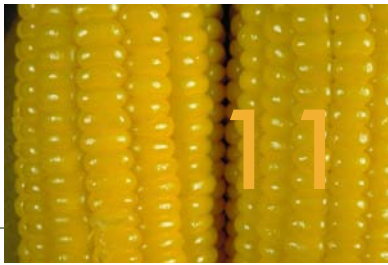
The department is excited to welcome Randy Westgren as the new McQuinn Chair for Entrepreneurial Leadership. Randy comes to us from Illinois with an extensive background in teaching and research in agribusiness and entrepreneurship. He will jump right in teaching the undergraduate entrepreneurship class in the spring semester. Anticipate a focus on Randy in next year's newsletter.

Departmental faculty continue to be recognized for their achievements. Pat Westhoff and Julian Binfield were co-authors with two others on an article named best article in *Agrekon* (South Africa) and Seth Meyer was a co-author of an article named top journal article of the year by the Agricultural Economics Society of Japan. Jan Dauve was named outstanding faculty advisor across the campus and Chris Boessen was recognized by the Ag Econ club as their Outstanding Agricultural Economics Educator. Tom Johnson was a co-recipient of the USDA Agriculture Secretary's Award for Excellence.

I am also excited by alumni gifts to the department! As part of a larger contribution, Steven and Jill Newcom of Lisle, Ill., have pledged a major portion to the department. Steven (MS, Ag Econ, 1971) has been actively involved in helping the Ag Econ Club with their annual trip to the Chicago Board of Trade. In addition, Justin Roberts (BS, Ag Econ, 2003) of Columbia, Mo., has also pledged a gift to the department to support student travel for similar experiences. Joe Roetheli (BS, 1970, PhD 1979) provided funding for an Entrepreneurship Book Club that allowed 15 students (and potential entrepreneurs) to read and discuss Jim Collins' book, *Good to Great*. Gifts to the Ag Econ Development Gifts Fund were also received in memory of Thomas White, Jr. (BS 1943), Mrs. Christine Cochran (BS 1998) of Washington, DC, Alan Hecht (BS 1971) of Sellersburg, Indiana, Value Ag LLC of Columbia, and Joe Parcell, Peter Klein and Dave Maupin of our own faculty and staff.

We are extremely pleased to receive these gifts. I would encourage those of you thinking about giving back to the University to remember those experiences you found most valuable while you were here. If you would like to give to a specific program, the College's development staff would be more than willing to help you do that. You could help support Ag Econ Club trips like Steven and Justin, or you could pick another activity that you greatly enjoyed. Let me know if you have specific interests, and I will pass those on.

We are hoping that a senior get-together just prior to graduation in May becomes a tradition. This past year, our May grads got together with area alumni at the 'Berg for a late afternoon social. Much thanks to Joe Parcell, Chris Boessen, and Jill Fleischmann for organizing and coordinating. This is an activity that could use support from your gifts. It gives our soon-to-be alums a chance to begin that networking process. You can find details for the 2009 event on page 2. We thank those of you who returned to the classroom with presentations last year. We continue to provide a list (on page 13 this year) and don't hesitate to let me know about your visit if it was overlooked or if you have insights you wish to share with our students.



Focus on the Faculty

Maria E. Rodriguez-Alcalá

Maria Rodriguez-Alcalá joined the department of Agricultural Economics in January 2008. She was hired to teach and advise for the undergraduate program as part of the department's goal to maintain its current outstanding level.



Maria is originally from Asuncion, Paraguay. She first moved to the U.S. to obtain her B.S. degree in Agricultural Economics from Texas A&M University and later joined University of Missouri where she completed her M.S. degree in the same field.

Since earning her M.S., Maria first worked for Washington State University as an academic coordinator for the undergraduate program in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics. There, she worked mainly in recruiting students for agribusiness and the environmental and resource economics degrees. She also worked closely with the faculty in identifying ways to improve the undergraduate degrees through internships and study abroad opportunities. While at WSU, she was part of a campus team of staff and faculty who prepared a strategic plan for the university's president, which aimed to increase student diversity for the university.

From WSU she moved to Sao Paulo, Brazil before later joining MU. In Sao Paulo she worked for the Institute for International Trade and Negotiations. In addition to doing applied research in international trade and sustainable agriculture, she helped negotiate several projects with different partner institutions such as the World Bank. Her main role in the Institute was to coordinate two regional projects; the first with the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SADC), which included all Latin American countries in South America.

The second project she managed, in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), was very significant for the southern cone region of South America. In this last project she served as the national coordinator for Brazil as well as the regional director for the first program of its kind involving the agricultural private sector in Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.



12 The Last Word

Ag Econ - Agribusiness Management Study Abroad 2007-08

CAFNR Programs	Country	Time Period	Name
Czech Republic - Prague	Czech Republic	Summer Semester 2008	Danielle Bellis
Czech Republic - Prague	Czech Republic	Summer Semester 2008	Alan Brandt
Czech Republic - Prague	Czech Republic	Summer Semester 2008	Rebecca Bunton
Czech Republic - Prague	Czech Republic	Summer Semester 2008	Kyle Ferguson
Czech Republic - Prague	Czech Republic	Summer Semester 2008	Tanner Michael
France - Toulouse	France	Summer Semester 2008	Stacie Seaman
Germany - Food Science	Germany	Summer Semester 2008	Jenna Harden
Ireland - Ag and Nat Resources	Ireland	Summer Semester 2008	Kesha McLaren
Ireland - Ag and Nat Resources	Ireland	Summer Semester 2008	Katie Jarboe
Intro to Ag and Nat Resources	New Zealand	Winter Break 2007-2008	Kylee Francis
Intro to Ag and Nat Resources	New Zealand	Winter Break 2007-2008	Mallory Greenwell
Intro to Ag and Nat Resources	New Zealand	Winter Break 2007-2008	Adam Keene
Intro to Ag and Nat Resources	New Zealand	Winter Break 2007-2008	Alex Peterson
Intro to Ag and Nat Resources	New Zealand	Winter Break 2007-2008	Grant Schwader
Biodiversity and Conservation	Thailand	Winter Break 2007-2008	Krista Bock
Biodiversity and Conservation	Thailand	Winter Break 2007-2008	Brent McCauley
University of Reading	United Kingdom	Fall Semester 2007	Annette Bruch
University of Reading	United Kingdom	Spring Semester 2008	Jacob Woolston



2008 Guest Speakers

Speaker	Class	Topic Description
Sarah Hirshinger	AgEc 4971	Barlett Grain Co.
Joel English	AgEc 4971	Strategic planning and implementation at John Deere
Becky Couture	AgEc 2183	CHS recruit
Marvin Hayenga	AgEc 2183	Law and ag econ
Joe Horner	AgEc 2183	Dairy marketing
Nick Paulson	AgEc 2183	Futures markets
Kirk Bellis	AgEc 2223	Effective working techniques
Nancy Giddens	AgEc 2223	Marketing techniques and personality styles
Jack Miller	AgEc 2223	How to find the Customer's Pain
Bohuslava Bouckova	AgEc 3272	Agricultural and trade policies in the Czech Republic
Rieva Lesonsky	AgEc 3283	Entrepreneurship Magazine
Claire Schneeberger	AgEc 3283	CEO of Monarch Media, -E-Learning Company
Steve Barr	AgEc 3283	CEO of Osborn Barr
Glenn Jourdon	AgEc 3283	Medical Malpractice Insurance Company
Joe Roetheli	AgEc 3286	Entrepreneurship and new product development
Nathan White	AgEc 4990	Lending specialist, FCS Financial
Aaron Baker	AgEc 4990	Chief of Staff, Senator Bill Stouffer
Josh Putnam	AgEc 4990	Guidance and accountability in implementing financial plans
Melinda Hemmelgarn	AgEc 4301	Obesity and the food system
Dan Kuebler	AgEc 4301	Columbia Farmer's Market
Rusty Lee	AgEc 4301	Infrastructure of community food
Maria Minniti	AgEc 3283	Professor of Entrepreneurship at SMU
Landon Albertson	AgEc 3283	Serial Entrepreneur in financial services and real estate
Joe and Judy Roetheli	AgEc 3283	Entrepreneurial ventures
Ian "Blue" Read	AgEc 4972	Governing New Zealand's Cooperatives
Shirley Read	AgEc 8610	Governing Global Farms
Gene Whitney	AgEc 3257	Communicating Environmental Science to Policy Makers
Sander Sowers	AgEc 3257	Everyday Practice of Law
Peggy Horner	AgEc 4356	Endangered Species Coordinator, MDC
Kurt Schaefer	AgEc 4356	Environmental law
Darrick Steen	AgEc 4356	Environmental Engineer
Dr. Russ Smeda	AgEc 3256	GMO Crops and Superweed Control Strategies
Dr. Harvey James	AgEc 3256	Biotechnology and Ethical Issues