

Ag Econ News

From the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Issue 1

March | 2012

A Note from Dr. Van Tassell Department Head

Hello Ag Econ alumni and friends! My name is Larry Van Tassell and I am the Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics. I started at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in August 2010.

I came to Lincoln from the University of Idaho where I served as department head for 11 years. My B.S. (Animal Science) and M.S. (Agribusiness) are from Brigham Young University, and my Ph.D. (Ag Econ) is from Texas A&M. I have a background in ranching and most of

my teaching and research have been in production economics and finance.

My first year at Nebraska has been exciting. I have had the opportunity to meet several of you and have heard great things about the rest of you. In fact, one of the things that attracted me to Nebraska was the great support the department receives from its alumni and associates. I have not been disappointed. The interest in and support for the department has been overwhelming and I am excited to become better acquainted with each of you.

One of the things we have accomplished this year is the organization of a 12 member department advisory board. We held our first meeting October 2011. The meeting was very successful in helping strengthen our connection to Nebraska by providing a better understanding of the issues facing our constituents and insight into how we may develop stronger department programs.



Dr. Larry Van Tassell

Those of you who are alums will notice an enclosed survey and postcard. Please take a minute to complete them. The survey will provide valuable information as we increase our efforts to stay connected with each of you.

Please let us know how you are doing and what we can do as a department to better serve you. If you want to know more detail about the department, and the excellent educational, extension, and research programs we are engaged in, please check out our website at agecon.unl.edu.

Advisory Board

Don Anthony
Fred Bruning
Jasper Fanning
Stan Garbacz
Diane Travers-Gustafson
Dave Hallberg
Bryan Hibbs
Linda Halstead
Rex Nelson
Jay Rempe
Dan Rice
Dave Sands

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Undergraduate Students

2011-2012 Kick-Off

Undergraduate students and faculty gathered for the annual fall kick-off dinner sponsored by ADM. Students shared their summer activities, including internships and international study opportunities.

AEAC and NAMA

The Agricultural Economics/Agribusiness Club had a busy semester with numerous agriculture industry speakers and social activities.

The National Agri-Marketing Association Club also hosted ag marketing professionals and began preparations for April's national marketing plan competition.

Job Prospects

Two recent studies highlighted the benefit of an agriculture major. A Purdue University study found 54,400 annual openings for college graduates in food, renewable energy, and the environment between 2010 and 2015. The same study found employers prefer graduates from colleges of agriculture. Agriculture majors also experience low unemployment rates, according to a Georgetown University study. It's a great time to be an agriculture major!



AEAC Officers, left to right: Eric Miller, Lyons, NE; Kristin Witte, Scribner, NE; Johanna Nutt, Curtis, NE; Jana Cool, Arnold, NE; Matraca Meyer, Edgar, NE; Kimberly Rentschler, Atkinson, NE; Lauren Wielage, Mead, NE; Ty Schurr, Farnam, NE



NAMA Team at National Competition, left to right: Emily Pribyl, Geneva, NE; Alissa Doerr, Creighton, NE; Melissa Matulka, Thedford, NE; Blake Becker, Alliance, NE; Kallie Craig, Farnam, NE; Matraca Meyer, Edgar, NE; Back row: Lance Atwater, Ayr, NE; Kristin Witte, Scribner, NE; Regina Janousek, Clarkson, NE; Boone McAfee, Leigh, NE; Kasey Rathke, Wisner, NE; Lauren Wielage, Mead, NE; Katrina Hackel, Ord, NE; Bryce Vaughn, Alliance, NE

Know a student who might be interested in studying Agribusiness, Agricultural Economics or Natural Resources and Environmental Economics ?

Let us know at <http://agecon.unl.edu/students> or contact Rosalee Swartz at rswartz1@unl.edu or (402) 472-5235

Graduate Student Focus - Emile Salame

On August 12, 2011, Emile Salame received his Doctor of Philosophy in Agricultural Economics. Emile was advised by Dr. Dennis Conley. During his time at UNL Emile was active in student government and received the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students (NAGPS) President's Award which is "given to an organization or individual who has exemplified excellence in the graduate-professional student community."



Emile Salame and NAGPS National President

Student Activities

Tshepelayi Kabata and Kepifri Lakoh presented research papers at the European Workshop of Efficiency and Productivity Analysis at the University of Verona, Italy

Ayako Ebata presented research at the International Consortium of Agricultural Bioeconomy Research University of Rome - Tor Vergata, Rome, Italy.

Rita Abdelnour, Tshepelayi Kabata and Kepifri Lakoh presented at the Western Agricultural Economics Association annual meetings.

Students presenting research at the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association annual meetings, July, Pittsburgh: Aziza Kibonge, Federico Trindade, Comlanvi Konou, Kepifri Lakoh, and Tshepelayi Kabata.

Recent Theses and Dissertations

Replacement Alternatives for Beef Cow Herds: An Analysis of Retaining Non-Pregnant Cows – Trenton Bohling

Agricultural Productivity Growth in Central American and the Caribbean – Ayako Ebata

Intraseasonal Management Strategies for Deficit Irrigation – Isaac Mortensen

Data Mining Application in Decision Making Process: The Case of a Financial Institution – Emile Salame

Faculty Tidbits

David Aiken has made Agricultural Law (AECN 246) and Environmental & Natural Resources Law (AECN 357) available as distance education courses.

Azzeddine Azzam, Karina Schoengold, and Gibson Nene found that increased stringency of environmental regulations contribute to the exit of small hog farms.

Gary Lynne and associates found that priming for empathy to protect the environment works better than priming for self-interest according to results from their new Experimental and Behavioral Economics Laboratory.

Gary Lynne was named an Agricultural and Applied Economics Association Institutional and Behavioral Economics Fellow.

Lilyan Fulginiti and Diego Alvarez received a grant to study the methods and costs for Nebraska generating plants to meet potential greenhouse gas regulations.

Lilyan Fulginiti and Alejandro Plastina found the internal rate of return to public investment in agricultural R&D performed by U.S. Agricultural Experiment Stations was higher than the returns of S&P 500 NASDAQ composite indexes.

Lilyan Fulginiti and others received an IANR Strategic Initiatives research award to study the sustainability of the agroecosystem along the 41st parallel through Nebraska and Iowa.

Ron Hanson was awarded the Murray Brown National Association of College Teachers of Agriculture Leadership Award and an Agriculture Future of America Partner Award.

Bruce Johnson's annual Nebraska Farm Real Estate Market Developments Survey found the state's all-land average value is at a historic high of \$1,833 per acre

Brad Lubben and colleague found climate regulations would slow economic growth and employment in the state's general economy, but would offer mixed results for agriculture.

Brad Lubben was named Communicator of the Year by the Nebraska chapter of the Association of Communication Excellence in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Human Sciences.

Dick Perrin and associate found that greenhouse gas emissions from protecting Middle East petroleum supply lanes increase the carbon footprint of gasoline by as much as 19%.

Dick Perrin and colleagues found carbon markets could contribute \$0.04/gallon to ethanol plant revenues biomass were burned instead of natural gas, but current capital costs for retrofitting are too high to be feasible.

Karina Schoengold and colleagues found drought and flood conditions contribute to the use of conservation tillage practices.

Jose and Supalla Retire

Dr. Doug Jose joined UNL in 1980 and in addition to numerous extension farm management activities was the host of the weekly agriculture program, Market Journal.



Dr. Ray Supalla came to the Department in 1976 and has focused on water resource issues, including the development of the irrigation analysis tool, Water Optimizer.



Banking and Finance Major

In 2003 Fred Bruning of the Bruning State Bank approached Dr. Ron Hanson with a problem. Nebraska banks were experiencing a shortage of trained ag lenders who understood agricultural banking.

Together the two developed the Ag Banking and Finance major in the Department of Agricultural Economics. Dr. Hanson developed the agricultural banking curriculum and recruited students. Mr. Bruning and his fellow Nebraska Bankers Association (NBA) members provided the financial support and offered student internships at their banks.

Students in the Ag Banking program are awarded scholarships for four years and must complete a summer internship at an NBA-member bank. To date, \$253,500 in scholarship funding has been provided to award a total of 252 student scholarships in the Department. Twenty-three (23) Ag banking majors have graduated from the program.



Dr. Ron Hanson, Kendall Holthouse, NBA President, Fred Bruning, Bruning State Bank

Recently this program received national attention when Dr. Hanson discussed this one-of-a-kind partnership at the 2011 National Agricultural Bankers Conference for the American Bankers Association.

Impact

\$253,500 in scholarships awarded

23 students completed program

65% of graduates work in a rural Nebraska bank



2011 Banking and Finance majors, internship sponsors, NBA and UNL representatives

Research, Teaching, and Extension

Department Focus

The Institute of Agricultural and Natural Resources (IANR) recently developed a strategic plan. To support the goals outlined in the plan the Department of Agricultural Economics has identified four areas of excellence under the overarching mission of developing "Sustainable Food and Agriculture Systems for Nebraska, the U.S. and the World." These areas of excellence also align the Department with UNL's emphasis on "food, energy, and water" and "efforts in public policy as it impacts agriculture."

To enhance our expertise, the department is recruiting a cluster of positions in the risk management area. The three tenure-track positions will focus on grain, oilseeds, and biofuels; livestock production; and agriculture firm and commodity risk management.

Areas of Excellence

Food, Energy, and Resource Policy

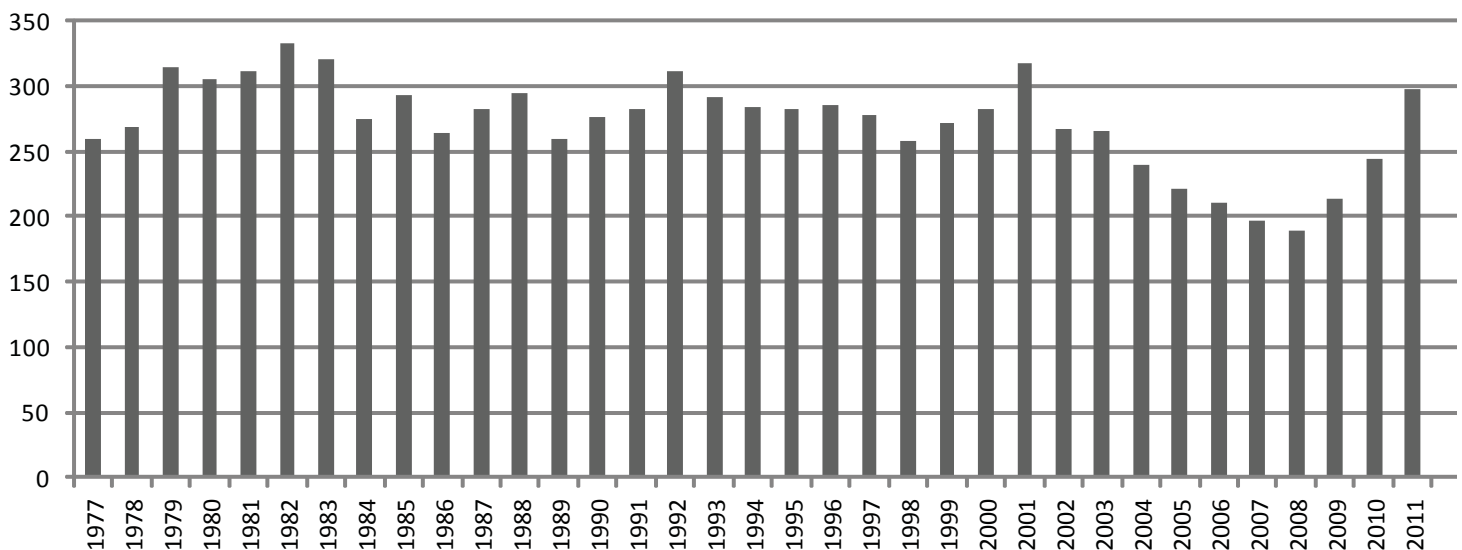
Economics for Agriculture Firm Profitability and Sustainability

Rural Innovation and Development

Industrial Organization of the Agri-Food System

Undergraduate Enrollment

In recent years undergraduate enrollment has been steadily increasing. Total enrollment this year is 297. Of that total, 189 are Agribusiness majors, 93 are Agricultural Economics majors and 15 are Natural Resources and Environmental Economics majors. To learn more about undergraduate programs visit: <http://agecon.unl.edu/students>.





The University of Nebraska Ag Economics Program is excellent. But we need your help to keep it that way.

Year after year the Agricultural Economics Department receives high marks for being one of the finest in the country.

But every year that success comes with a higher price tag and the department is asking for contributions to its excellence fund to remain, well, excellent. Contributions to the fund go to students and faculty, travel expenses to attend programs, competitions and seminars, as well as department development.

Please consider making a gift – large or small, all contribute to the success of our program. To give, go to nufoundation.org/agecon. To learn more, contact Ann Bruntz, abruntz@nufoundation.org, 402-458-1176.

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Hoegemeyer Scholarship

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) and the Hoegemeyer family have a long history. In 1937 Leonard Hoegemeyer brought home seed from UNL. Leonard and his father, H. Chris Hoegemeyer, planted 11 acres of that seed and began what would become Hoegemeyer Hybrids. Leonard's son Tom and daughter-in-law Linda later attended UNL. Leonard's grandsons Chris and Erik studied at UNL in the Agricultural Economics Department. Now the Hoegemeyers are giving back to UNL. Recently the family created a scholarship for UNL Agricultural Economics students. The \$3,500 scholarships are the largest single award to Department students.

The Hoegemeyer Family, left to right: Chris, Tom, Linda, Erik



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