

AGLINK

Summer 2011

> FROM THE DEPARTMENT HEAD

by David Lambert

This has been a year of rebuilding in the Department. We have completed one faculty search, are near a decision on a second after interviewing four candidates, begin on-campus interviews on Thursday, April 28th, for another open position, and will commence screening of candidates for a fourth position on May 1st.

The first position will add a new faculty member with expertise in sustainable agricultural production and natural resource economics. As competition for water, energy, and land intensify, the challenges of continued food production adequate to satisfy the 9 billion inhabitants of the globe forecast for 2050 become critical. Nathan Hendricks, hired to fill this new position, will join us this summer after completing his Ph.D. at the University of California at Davis. The position was created by students accepting a tax on their tuition with the clear directive that the increased funds would go to improving teaching at K-State. Given his considerable research skills and wide interests, Nathan will challenge our undergraduate and graduate students in the classes he will be teaching.

Our currently concluding search will add an Extension economist as a partial replacement for the three Extension faculty who have left the Department over the past three years. Current faculty have done a wonderful job in keeping our research-based outreach programs strong. The addition of this new faculty member, funded with the remaining funds from the Department's recent Extension resignations and funds from the central Extension

budget, will increase our ability to address Kansas agricultural issues.

David Barton, one of the founding members and long-time Director of the Arthur Capper Cooperative Center, will retire after the successful conclusion of the latest search for a replacement, though he intends to remain active in continuing some of the educational programs of the ACCC. We are bringing three highly qualified people to campus for interviews. In addition to administration of the



David Lambert

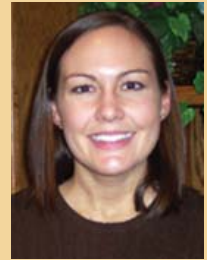
Center, position responsibilities include conducting the research necessary to enhance the value of the Cooperatives and agribusiness information underlying the Center's programs. A teaching component has been added to the position to increase the interaction of the Center's activities with our students so we can continue to provide future agribusiness and Cooperative leaders.

The final search will be for a replacement for Mike Boland, who left the Department last summer for an endowed chair position at the University of Minnesota. Refilling this position is taking longer than anticipated. However, Mike had a tremendous program in undergraduate teaching and advising, easily engaged industry in our teaching and research programs, and had established a well-deserved international reputation for his understanding of agribusiness education. We are seeking an individual with Mike's passion who will complement our current faculty working in agricultural economics and in agribusiness.

The plan is for all four new faculty members to be a part of the Department by the end of this coming summer.

Yeager Earns Teaching Award

Beth Yeager, Ph.D. student in agricultural economics, received the 2011 Richard Elmore Brown Outstanding



Beth Yeager

College of Agriculture Graduate Student Teaching Award in April.

Yeager was recognized for her work as an instructor for AGECE 515: Food and Agribusiness Marketing during the Spring 2011 semester. In addition, she has served as a graduate teaching assistant for AGECE 525, a grader for AGECE 710, and a substitute teacher in AGECE 500, AGECE 525, AGECE 598 and AGECE 823.

> IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 NAMA Takes 3rd in Agri-Marketing Competition
- 4 Spriggs Wins Student Body President Election
- 6 Graduate Pursues Country Music Dream
- 7 Ag Econ Degrees Offer Salary Benefits

AND MORE ...

NAMA Takes 3rd Place in National Agri-Marketing Competition

By Nellie Hill
K-State Collegian

After a year of preparation and practice, the final placing of the National Agri-Marketing Association Student Marketing Competition was announced to a packed hall on April 15.

This year, the annual Agri-Marketing Conference, hosted by NAMA professionals, was held April 13-15 in Kansas City, Mo.

The K-State NAMA team placed 3rd overall in the competition of the 30 top agricultural universities in the country, including Ohio State University and Texas A&M, both of which K-State placed ahead of in the final round.

For the competition, each team develops an agricultural product and creates a marketing plan that establishes clear need, target market, financials and public relations, as well as monitoring and measurement of product success. This is presented in a written executive summary and a formal presentation to judges at the conference.

K-State's product this year was VitaGold, a supplement for bees that halts Colony Collapse Disorder. Each year, 32 percent of the United States bee population dies due to CCD, costing the agricultural industry \$15 billion annually, according to the United States Department of Agriculture.

VitaGold isolates, treats and prevents the disease Nosema in bees, thus ending colony destruction.

After arriving at the Agri-Marketing Conference, universities are split into five heats, each of which is composed of six teams. The top two from the first round move on to semi-finals to compete against three other teams. To move onto the final round, teams must be in the top two of their semi-final heat. Judges for each round are leaders in agricultural business and communications.

During each round, the team makes a presentation on their marketing plan to the judges with the challenge to establish need, proper market analysis, strategy,



Front Row: Jesus Manriquez, Ariane Briscoe, Ashton McIntyre, Candace Weeda, Kerri Bates (holding plaque), Kelsey Dertzbaugh (holding plaque), Laura Nigro, Brook Abitz, Dawnelle Proctor.
Back Row: Nellie Hill, Brian Juenemann, Bobbie Jo Manikowski, Renee Stoneman, Garrett Lister, Kyle Kennedy, adviser David Lehman

action plan, and follow-up monitoring and measurement to product launch.

"This team was successful because of talent, hard work, practice and team chemistry," said David Lehman, team advisor and marketing instructor. "We had a diverse team of talented students who worked hard to be one of the best agri-marketing teams in the nation."

Students and professionals alike gain valuable contacts, experience, and skills through involvement in NAMA.

"(NAMA) provides leadership, focus, business relationships and professional improvement," said Barry E. Nelson, public relations manager for the John Deere Ag Marketing Center.

NAMA at K-State welcomes students from all colleges. Laura Nigro, senior in marketing and team member, encourages students to get involved.

"It gives your real life experience building a business plan and working with

people from diverse backgrounds. Plus, it's great for networking," Nigro said.

"K-State students should get involved in NAMA to learn how to create a marketing plan, apply what they have learned in many different classes to a real-world marketing situation and have a positive experience working as part of

a team," Lehman said.

"Also, students have a great opportunity for networking with professional NAMA members to learn about careers and make connections that will help them get internships and jobs after graduation."

Such a successful year has established a momentum that the team will use to fuel next year's competition preparation. Lehman has nothing but a positive attitude about the team and its future.

"This is our best placing since winning back-to-back national championships in 2006 and 2007," Lehman said. "I want us to win the championship again next year."

"We had a diverse team of talented students who worked hard to be one of the best agri-marketing teams in the nation."

– David Lehman, team adviser and marketing instructor



Courtesy/John Tobin

The Ag Econ/Ag Business Club traveled to St. Louis, Mo., for their spring trip in April, where they toured Monsanto, an ADM barge facility and Anheuser Busch.

Smith Named Graduate Research Assistant of the Year

Craig Smith, Ph.D. student in agricultural economics, received the Graduate Research Assistant of the Year award in May. Dr. John Leatherman, professor of agricultural economics, nominated Smith for the award, which is given by the Golden Key International Honour Society of Kansas State University.

“This is the first time I have nominated a student as GRA of the Year,” Leatherman noted. “It’s not that I haven’t worked with many fine students

in the past, many of whom have gone on to successful careers for which I feel some sense of contribution. It’s just that Craig has so surpassed the threshold of high expectation that I felt compelled to seek this recognition on his behalf.”

Leatherman noted that Smith not only has a stellar academic record and an impressive record of productivity, but he also has distinguished himself by elevating the level of performance of others around him.

“For no group has this been truer than for the faculty in our department who clamor for the opportunity to work with Craig,” Leatherman said. “They



Courtesy/Craig Smith

From left: John Leatherman, professor of agricultural economics, award recipient Craig Smith, Ph.D. student in agricultural economics, and Smith’s wife, Cari.

have routinely reported to me that Craig is unlike other graduate students with whom they work. Craig is always a co-equal collaborator bringing ideas and energy to the table. He is always a partner in problem solving and has the capacity and energy to move the project forward.”

Leatherman and Smith have worked together for nearly 10 years, through two advanced degrees and as partners in Leatherman’s extension outreach program. This summer, Smith is moving on to Hays, Kan., where he will be an assistant professor of agribusiness at Fort Hays State University.

Ph.D. Students Honored for Sustainable Energy Research

Jason Fewell and Bryon Parman, both Ph.D. students in agricultural economics, recently earned awards for their exceptional posters



Jason Fewell

on sustainable energy research during the Bioenergy Symposium Poster Presentations Apr. 27-28. The program is presented by the Kansas State University Center for Sustainable Energy (CSE).

“We were very impressed with the level of research accomplishment achieved this past year,” wrote the center’s co-directors Mary Rezac and Ron Madl. “The outstanding quality of the posters and presentations given at the symposium made selection of the poster awards all the more challenging.”



Bryon Parman

Fewell earned a \$750 award for his poster. His advisor is Jason Bergtold, assistant professor of agricultural economics.

Parman received \$500 with his poster award. His advisor is Vincent Amanor-Boadu, associate professor of agricultural economics.

The CSE receives funding from ConocoPhillips to grant the CSE poster awards.

Spriggs Wins Student Body President Election

By Katie Reilley
K-State Collegian

After months of campaigning, Nate Spriggs and Kate Bormann, better known by their campaign slogan "Nate & Kate", won the positions of student body president and vice president, respectively.

Spriggs, a junior in agricultural economics, and Bormann, a senior in agricultural communications and journalism, won the election with 2,667 votes compared to their opponents' 2,113 votes.

One of the campaign's promises includes a new entertainment program, in which students will be able to buy an iCAT-type of ticket for entertainment events up front instead of paying for each individual event.

"The entertainment program we want to have up and running by orientation this August so that freshman will be able to buy their tickets then," Spriggs said.



Courtesy Nate Spriggs

Nate Spriggs, junior in agricultural economics, and Kate Bormann, senior in agricultural communications, were elected in March to lead as student body president and vice president.

Ag Econ/Ag Business Club Elects 2011-12 Officers

Congratulations to the newly elected officers of the Ag Economics and Agribusiness Club for 2011-12.

- **President:** Logan Hedlund, senior in agribusiness, Montezuma, Kan.
- **Vice President:** Heather Gibson, junior in agribusiness, Copeland, Kan.
- **Secretary:** Brock Burnick, sophomore in agricultural economics, Mulberry, Kan.
- **Treasurer:** Shelby Hill, junior in agricultural economics, Satanta, Kan.
- **Membership Co-Chairs:** Rena Berrett, junior in agribusiness, Manhattan, Kan., and Mollie Roths, senior in agribusiness
- **Ag Council Representative:** Alisa Wendelburg, sophomore in agribusiness, Stafford, Kan.
- **Social Co-Chairs:** Ashley Rector, freshman in agribusiness, Lawrence, Kan., and Leanne Milleret, freshman in agricultural economics, Lawrence, Kan.

Students Elected to Campus Leadership Positions

In addition to Nate Spriggs' election to the office of Student Body President, several students from the Department of Agricultural Economics have been elected to serve in leadership positions across campus for 2011-12.

College of Ag Council

- **President:** Andrew Strasburg, junior in agribusiness
- **Public Relations:** Logan Britton, sophomore in agricultural economics and agricultural communications and journalism

College of Ag Student Senate

- Garret Lister, junior in agricultural economics
- Hannah Miller, sophomore in agricultural economics
- Reagan Kays, freshman in agribusiness
- Brandon West, junior in agricultural economics

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Graduate Becomes Ag Policy Adviser

by K-State News Services

One agribusiness graduate is moving up the ranks as a Congressional staff member.

Wayne Stoskopf, a May 2010 graduate in agribusiness, formerly of Hoisington, served as an intern in summer 2009 for Jerry Moran, then the state's 1st District congressman. During Moran's campaign for the U.S. Senate in 2010, Stoskopf was a field director in central Kansas. He has since transitioned into a new role as a staff assistant for Rep. Lynn Jenkins, who represents Kansas' 2nd District. In addition to constituent services, Stoskopf advises Jenkins on agricultural policy. This role is especially important given that Jenkins is a member of the House trade subcommittee.



Wayne Stoskopf

"It allows her to be a strong advocate for Kansas agriculture," Stoskopf said. "I'm excited about continuing to assist her as she works to open more trade markets for agriculture producers. As a K-State College of Agriculture graduate, this is a perfect fit."

He credits leadership experiences at K-State as good preparation for working in Washington, D.C. Stoskopf served as student body vice president in 2009-2010. He also was a member of Blue Key, the senior leadership honorary, and other student organizations.

New Web Feature Highlights Research

The Department of Agricultural Economics recently launched a new video feature on www.ageconomics.ksu.edu. Research Highlights showcase the research efforts of faculty. Videos can be found under the News section of the website or on the department's YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/kstateagecon.

In the first video, Timothy Dalton, associate professor of agricultural economics, and Lutta Muhammad, principal research officer for the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute, discuss their work studying the willingness of agricultural producers in southern Africa to adopt drought-tolerant maize varieties.



Research by Timothy Dalton, associate professor of agricultural economics, and his Kenyan research partner, Lutta Muhammad, is featured in the department's first research highlight.

Team Researches Chinese Beef Demand

A team of researchers has published an overview of Chinese beef demand, shifting consumer preferences, and the opportunities within future beef demand growth.

Agricultural economics graduate students Shonda Anderson, 2011 master's graduate, Casey Bieroth, 2010 master's graduate, and Grace Tucker, master's student, collaborated with Ted Schroeder, professor of agricultural economics, to write, "Chinese Beef Consumption Trends: Implications for Future Trading Partners."

The publication is available online at AgManager.info. Anderson, Tucker and

Schroeder were interviewed in April on *Agriculture Today*, the official radio program of K-State Research and Extension.

In 2010, the United States exported more than \$4 billion worth of beef to its trading partners around the world. Export sales accounted for approximately 9 percent of total U.S. beef production. Developing, regaining and expanding access to global trading partners is crucial to expanding demand for U.S. beef. China represents an important U.S. trading partner for many reasons including population and income growth, shifting consumer preferences, and changing political and regulatory environments.

Ag Econ Graduate Pursues Country Music Dream

By Ron Wilson, director of the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development at Kansas State University.

How did you spend spring break? Some college students went to a sunny beach, a family trip or just caught up on their sleep. One student spent his spring break going to Nashville – not just to listen to country music singers, but to identify a studio where he could sing himself. This is an up-and-coming country western singer with deep roots in rural Kansas.

Rusty Rierson, a native of El Dorado, grew up on the family farm near Leon in Butler County.

“I was really shy growing up,” Rusty said. “I wouldn’t even sing in front of my mom and dad.” But he did enjoy singing, and he started out singing along with the radio on the tractor while working in the field. “That’s where I learned to harmonize,” Rusty said.

At age 14, he started singing in church. At age 16, his dad got him a guitar and suggested they take guitar lessons together.

“I suspect this was all Dad’s strategy to get me started on the guitar, and sure enough it worked,” he said. He found he loved playing the guitar and singing.

Meanwhile, he went on to K-State and got a degree in agricultural economics. In spring 2011, he will complete a master’s degree in animal science. But at the same time, his music career has blossomed.

In 2005, he went to the Kansas Farm Bureau Young Farmer and Rancher Talent Find and won the contest. He got to play at the state fair and has been invited back since. In 2007 Rusty won the “Colgate Country Showdown” at the state level and placed in the top 15 nationally. Now he is actively traveling and touring.



Courtesy Rusty Rierson

Rusty has played in Kansas, Missouri, Las Vegas, Texas, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and California. He played in Mexico while on a church mission trip and in Central America while on a K-State study abroad program. Traveling with the Better Horses radio network, he has played rodeos, barrel races and horse events all over the Midwest, including at the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas in 2009.

Rusty has produced three albums, with more than 20,000 copies now in print. In 2009 he released “Good Morning Glory,” a patriotic single and tribute to veterans that also includes a song written for legendary bull rider Lane Frost.

While Rusty is writing and performing songs for the modern country-music market, he enjoys gospel and the old-time cowboy singing as well.

“My mom and dad loved Don Williams, Conway Twitty and Merle Haggard, so we got to listen to the older style of music,” Rusty said. “I know lots of songs that were popular 20 years before I was born.”

During spring break, Rusty visited Nashville to select a studio to produce his new album. It happens that the producer he selected is Dolly Parton’s cousin. More importantly, the producer generates high quality production and helps market the album once it is produced.

“It was awesome. I had never been exposed to that quality of professional musicians before,” Rusty said.

For more information on his upcoming album, his upcoming performance schedule and more, visit rustyrierson.com.

Rusty Rierson, 2008 graduate in agricultural economics, has three country music albums.

Team Leads Review of USDA’s Agricultural Resource Management Survey

Two faculty members are helping lead a nationwide team of researchers in a review of the USDA’s Agricultural Resource Management Survey, which annually measures the financial health of farms and ranches.

Allen Featherstone, professor of agricultural economics, and Christine Wilson, assistant dean of the College of Agriculture, have teamed up with Chuck Moss, professor of food and resource economics at the University of Florida, to lead the year-long review. Their task is to review the survey and make recommendations for improvements.

“Basically when the USDA constructs income statements and balance sheets, we want to make sure that they’re measuring what they should be measuring,” he said.

So far, the team has found that changes to depreciation methods might need to be considered, as the survey has historically used tax depreciation which tends to overstate expenses, Featherstone said.

The team began reviewing the survey in September 2010 and expects to complete their review by this fall, Featherstone said.

Ag Economics, Agribusiness Degrees Offer Salary Benefits

By David Lambert

Department Head, Agricultural Economics

New data available from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey permits comparisons of earnings by college graduates based on major.

Researchers at Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce have collected and analyzed earnings data from the ACS. The full report can be downloaded at the Georgetown site: <http://cew.georgetown.edu/whatsitworth>.

The sample contains information on 171 college majors in 15 major categories. The total sample has earnings data for nearly 34 million Americans.

Students receiving undergraduate degrees in business compose the largest group (25.0 percent). Students majoring in agriculture and natural resources comprise 1.6 percent of the sample. Agricultural economics majors comprise 6 percent (32,427 graduates) of the students graduating within the agriculture and natural resource category.

The unique feature of the report is the characterization of earnings' distributions by major. Instead of such frequently reported figures as average earnings of a college graduate are 84 percent higher than individuals with just a high school diploma, lifetime earnings from individual majors are reported.

For example, lifetime earnings for students majoring in engineering are \$1,090,000. Education majors earn on average \$241,000 over their working lifetimes. Correlated with these lifetime earnings estimates are median incomes by major. Median income for individuals with a bachelor's degree in petroleum engineering is \$120,000 per year.

Median income for individuals with a bachelor's degree in counseling/psychology, the lowest reported median income, is \$29,000 per year. The income figures are for all full-time workers regardless of graduation date, and thus do not represent starting salaries.



New research indicates that agricultural economics graduates are tied in second place with forestry graduates as the second highest earners in the agricultural and natural resource industry.

Within the agriculture and natural resource category, the highest median income is earned by people with degrees in Food Science (\$65,000). Agricultural economics graduates are tied in second place (with Forestry), with a median income of \$60,000 per year. Earnings at the 25 percent (75 percent) percentile for agricultural economics graduates are \$39,000 (\$92,000).

This initial report suffers from many of the problems of preliminary analyses, such as failing to account for time in the workplace, current occupations, and other conditioning factors. However, these failings aside, the report provides preliminary estimates of the value of a graduate (i.e., post-B.S.) degree (40 percent salary boost), and gender and racial characteristics of agricultural economics graduates. Unfortunately, sample sizes were too small to determine income gaps due to gender and race. On a positive note, 98 percent of the respondents with undergraduate degrees in agricultural economics are employed, tied for first among the agriculture and natural resource majors.

Although these results might persuade a high school student to focus

on university studies in petroleum engineering, the report strengthens the argument for studying agricultural economics (and, by extension, agribusiness). The earnings distribution is high relative to all agriculture and natural resource fields. Median incomes also compare favorably with those reported for business majors. Employment prospects are good.

These findings just support the conclusion that 350 K-State students choosing to major in agricultural economics (and agribusiness) have already exhibited fantastic critical thinking and decision making skills!

CLASS NOTES

Tell us what's happening in your life! Send your news, including your class year and major, to shannon@agecon.ksu.edu.

Schulte Featured on Market Journal TV Program

Kristen Schulte, master's student in agricultural economics, spoke with Doug Jose, host of Market Journal, about financial farm management on Friday, Apr. 15, in Lincoln, Neb. Market Journal is a television program produced for agricultural producers by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension.

Schulte says producer peer groups of 8 to 10 operators is an effective method to benchmark the financial position of the farm and monitor its progress. To watch the full interview, visit <http://marketjournal.unl.edu/april15> and scroll down to find Schulte's interview.



Kristen Schulte, master's student in agricultural economics, was interviewed on financial farm management during the Market Journal TV program that aired Friday, Apr. 15. The program is produced by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension.

Department Hosts Visiting Scholar From India

Kondapi Srinivas spent the month of April collaborating with K-State faculty as a visiting scholar in the Department of Agricultural Economics.



Kondapi Srinivas

Srinivas is a professor and principal scientist of Agricultural Economics at the National Academy of Agricultural Research Management in Rajendranagar, Hyderabad, India. His areas of expertise include rural livelihoods analysis, agricultural finance, microfinance, rural extension, agri-marketing, project evaluation and monitoring, hill farming systems and agribusiness management.

During his visit, Srinivas presented a seminar entitled "Microfinance in India."

Staff Members Celebrate 25 Years at K-State

Two employees from the Department of Agricultural Economics are celebrating 25 years of service at Kansas State University.



Carla Woodyard

Carla Kay Woodyard, senior administrative assistant, and Deana Foster, administrative assistant, have each served 25 years as employees at K-State.



Deana Foster

Woodyard and Foster were honored at a recognition ceremony Apr. 27. The program recognized employees who have reached the milestones of 5, 15, 25, 35 and 45 years of service during 2010.

AGLINK

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