

## Winter 2010

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# AgLink

## AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

### K-State Agricultural Economics Ph.D. Dissertation Rate Among Highest in the Nation



The decline in funding across the nation of agricultural economics graduate programs has been a topic of discussion for many years, but a recent study by K-State Agricultural Economics professors, Dr. Michael Bolland and Dr. John Crespi, “What do Our Ph.D. Dissertations Tell Us about Our Profession and Our graduate Programs? A Census of Dissertations in Agricultural Economics from 1951 to 2005” is the first to offer a comprehensive study of the history and current state of the profession’s highest degree.

The study shows even as nationwide the number of PhDs in agricultural economics has trended downward; K-State is second in the nation in dissertation publication rates, far above the national average. Between the years 2001-2005, only 28 percent of agricultural economics dissertations were published in at least one national or regional association journal or other select professional journals. During that same time period, K-State had a 63 percent dissertation publication rate.

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### Alumna Leads National Association of Wheat Growers

Dana Peterson will assume leadership of the National Association of Wheat Growers as chief executive officer on Jan. 20, 2010. As the Association’s chief staff officer, Peterson will be responsible for implementing policy created by the NAWG Board of Directors and directing advocacy before Congress and federal agencies on topics ranging from federal farm policy to environmental regulation, biotechnology, transportation and taxes. Peterson will be responsible for all managerial aspects of the organization, as well as the activities of its affiliated nonprofit foundation and political action committee

and management of a building on Capitol Hill owned by the NAWG Foundation.

Peterson came to NAWG from Kansas Wheat, where she worked on policy and membership for almost nine years. Before coming to Kansas Wheat, Peterson spent a short time on the staff of the Kansas Farm Bureau working on environmental programs.

As producer policy specialist at Kansas Wheat, Peterson has been intimately involved in key issues on the national and state levels for nearly a decade. Her experience includes participation in the last

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*Kelsey Pope, M.S. '09, checks her Twitter account updates at the Nebraska Corn Board*

## Alumna Tweets Her Way to Success

In her new position as Ag Promotion Coordinator for the Nebraska Corn Board, Kelsey Pope, M.S. '09, is responsible to stay on the cutting edge of social media and help farmers arrive there as well. Even though her main responsibility is working with Nebraska's livestock industry, she truly enjoys the interaction of social media and how she can use it to advocate for agriculture.

The growth of social media sites is unprecedented. Among the most popular are YouTube, Twitter and Facebook. Founded in February 2004, Facebook is a social website that helps people communicate more efficiently with their friends, family and coworkers. The company develops technologies that facilitate the sharing of information through social connections. Currently, Facebook has more than 350 million active users, up from 150 million active users in January 2009.

Pope is capitalizing on this growth and turning it into a full-scale effort to utilize Web 2.0 technologies to promote the Board's activities throughout Nebraska.

"When I arrived, Nebraska Corn Board already had a blog, but I've pushed for using other social media outlets to fulfill our role as educators, promoters and researchers of corn throughout Nebraska," Pope said.

Now the Board not only blogs, but is LinkedIn, regularly tweets through Twitter, and has a following on Facebook.

"We're excited for the opportunity to have Kelsey on staff," said Don Hutchens, executive director of the Nebraska Corn Board. "The livestock sector is critical to Nebraska and is the best way to add value to corn and distillers grains, which is produced by corn ethanol plants. In this position, Kelsey works on several livestock initiatives and other outreach efforts, helping to maintain and grow an important sector of our economy. By developing new avenues of communication, she also helps us to reach out to farmers in more ways, encourage communication between farmers and help explain farming and agriculture to those who are interested in food production."

Pope has also endeavored to educate producers

on the value of social media for their individual businesses.

In August 2009, the Corn Farmers Coalition conducted three focus groups in Denver, Indianapolis, and New York City. The results were good, showing ninety percent of those surveyed held a positive view of farmers. It also conveyed where consumers get their information is just as important.

“The research shows that 95 percent of consumers believe that farmers are a trustworthy source of information about agriculture, even above doctors and professional trade organizations. So to have farmers share the facts, like our dedication to the environment and our ability to produce more corn on fewer acres, means we’re more effective in helping promote agriculture,” Pope said.

“People in agriculture need to be there to engage consumers, to be a credible source. By doing this, we’ll make new friends. Advocates for agriculture. Consumers want to hear from farmers about where food comes from, and social media allows the best venue for farmers to reach them with the truth,” she said.

With this motivation, Pope frequently presents information on how the Nebraska Corn Board is using social media and then goes a step further to help individuals set up their own blogs, Facebook profiles, or Twitter accounts.

“I’m visiting industry conferences, tradeshow, 4-H meetings, FFA events, and the state fair to share



*Pope at a promotional event*

with producers how we’re sharing information and encouraging them to do the same. If someone wants assistance from me afterwards, to create their own, I have my computer and smart phone there ready to help them,” Pope said.

Much to her delight the power of social media has taken her message across Nebraska and into other parts of the United States and the world. Individuals from Russia, United Kingdom, France, Israel, and Japan regularly seek out information provided by the Board.

“We’re just at the beginning, but social media is taking our activities and promotion of agriculture in Nebraska further than I imagined,” she said.

## Dissertation Publication Rate continued

“The pronounced growth of K-State’s publication rate is especially important in light of the fact that the overall publication rate today for all schools (28%) is not much higher than it was in the 1950s (24%),” Boland said.

Crespi suggests the high dissertation publication rate is reflective of K-State’s emphasis on high quality students.

“Our class sizes are smaller due to the high standard we require of PhD students, but it’s well worth it when you see the quality research they produce,” he said.

Another reason Crespi suggests for high publication rates is the specialized training the department provides to our PhD students.

“Our instructors and courses encourage the writing of papers and the submission of manuscripts to

conferences. We have three or four classes in the PhD program alone where a quality paper is required. This helps in the publication process. But, most of all, we have an outstanding faculty that encourages graduate students to write excellent, publishable dissertations and guides them through the process,” he said.

The research also finds although K-State’s PhD students focus on a broad range of areas in their research, the most common areas are production economics, agricultural marketing and development.

Crespi believes this emphasis speaks to the strengths of our department in those core areas.

“If someone wants to focus their studies in the area of production economics, for example, I can honestly think of no better school to do that than Kansas State.”

# Rising Above the Rest

The 2008-2009 recipient of the Honor Society of Agriculture Gamma Sigma Delta International Foundation Scholarship is Ms. Kristen Schulte, a graduating senior in Agricultural Business at KSU. Kristen was initiated into Gamma Sigma Delta in November 2008. In addition to Gamma Sigma Delta, Kristen was also selected for membership in Phi Kappa Phi and Alpha Zeta.

Kristen expanded her educational experience by participating in the Czech University of Agriculture – Prague Study Abroad program. She was an active member of the KSU Dairy Science Club and received regional and national honors in Dairy Cattle Judging events in the last two years. Other learning activities included serving as a student board member for Frontier Farm Credit. Student board members formulated a solution to a case study and created a twenty minute presentation for the Board of Directors.

Kristen has also been interning at a local bank in Kansas. While working there she has completed a number of banking school courses, including the 2008 School of Agricultural Lending from the Kansas/Nebraska Schools of Banking and the Agriculture Lending online course offered by the American Banker's Association.

Kristen has been actively engaged in leadership roles while at KSU. She was an Agriculture Ambassador for the College, serving as the Vice President for Administration and as the Recruitment and Events Coordinator for the group. Kristen was a member of the Agriculture Council and President and Secretary of the Dairy Science Club. She also chaired the Fundraising and Registration Committee for an American Dairy Science Association regional meeting, in addition to participating on judging teams.

Kristen will be entering the Master of Science program in Agricultural Economics at Kansas State this fall. The International Executive Committee of Gamma Sigma Delta is honored to recognize the accomplishments of Kristen Schulte.

The International Foundation Scholarship Award was created in 2006 to recognize the academic accomplishments and leadership contributions of undergraduate student members of Gamma Sigma Delta. The \$500 scholarship is funded through the International Gamma Sigma Delta Foundation. A call for nominations for the 2010 scholarship will be sent to chapters in spring 2010.





### **Faculty Member Presents at 7th Annual K-State Teaching Retreat**

Dr. Bob Burton presented at the 7th annual K-State Teaching Retreat, “Meeting Students Where They Are”.

Dr. Robert Burton shared, “Using DRA to Fund a Teaching Shop”. His goal was to stimulate discussion on how undergraduate teaching shops could be analogous to productive research programs. Burton believes teaching shops have a potential to mitigate decreasing funding for undergraduate teaching.

Teaching approximately 200 students per year, Burton thinks teaching retreats allow for rejuvenation of ideas and practices.

“As a faculty member, too often we’re so busy with our schedules and class content, we don’t pause to think about mechanics unless we take time at a retreat like this one,” Burton said.

With 26 years of teaching experience, a Burton says a teaching retreat provides an opportunity to share ideas and learn from others, something he’s always willing to do.

“I want my classes to relay information in fresh and innovative ways,” Burton said.

### **Alumna Leads National Wheat Growers Association continued**

two farm bill debates; the push to increase research funding and give wheat producers access to biotechnology; and the industry’s look at new uses and expanded markets for wheat and wheat by-products, including cellulosic ethanol.

During her time at Kansas Wheat, Peterson also spent significant time managing federal and state grants for producer risk management education and participating in the budgeting process for a \$4 million award from the Kansas Bioscience Authority.

Peterson is a double graduate of Kansas State University, having obtained bachelor’s and master’s degrees in agricultural economics there.

She has been an active member of American Agri-Women through the state affiliate Kansas Agri-Women, which provided her first visits to Capitol Hill, as well as the Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom and the Kansas Agricultural and Rural Leadership program. During college she studied the costs of federal regulation on small and medium-sized meat packing plants after traveling extensively through the Great Plains on the K-State Meats Judging Team.

Peterson was raised on a wheat farm near Smith Center, Kan., where her family produces primarily wheat, grain sorghum and cattle. Her family first homesteaded the ground two of her four brothers now farm in 1871.

Outside of the office, Peterson is active in her church and with her family, and enjoys hobbies like reading, running and gardening.



## Woolverton Retires from K-State

Dr. Michael Woolverton, Professor and Grain Marketing Extension Specialist retired from K-State Agricultural Economics in December after four years of service.

“It was a joy for me to end my academic career in the Kansas State University Department of Agricultural Economics. Not only was it a return to my alma mater, but it gave me the opportunity to work as a traditional agricultural economist. Most of my career was spent doing other things; the majority of time working in business school-type environments. The faculty and staff in the department, the college, and at IGP were a pleasure to work with, but even more pleasurable for me was meeting and talking with the hundreds of farmers, ranchers, ag-bankers, and others across Kansas as I participated in various activities and traveled the State,” Woolverton said.

Woolverton received his Ph.D. from the University of Missouri. After serving on the faculties of

The Ohio State University and Arizona State University, he became the Continental Grain Professor of Agribusiness at the American Graduate School of International Management, where he now has emeritus status. While Woolverton was Professor and Extension specialist at Kansas State University, his responsibilities included grain market analysis and outlook and international trade policy analysis.

Over his career he wrote five textbooks, the most recent of which was *Agribusiness Marketing: The Management Perspective*, and was the founder and long-time Managing Editor of *Agribusiness: An International Journal*. He was a member of the founding board of directors of the International Agribusiness Management Association, now called the International Food and Agribusiness Management Association. Woolverton was named an Association Fellow in 2003.

Woolverton’s research interests included structure and performance of the grain and oilseed marketing system, overseas commodity market development, risk management in marketing and purchasing grain and oilseed commodities, agribusiness marketing management, and strategic leadership. He had extensive international experience including long-term assignments in Europe and Asia and short-term executive education programs in Europe, Eastern Europe, Southeast Asia, Central Asia, and North Africa.

Dr. Art Barnaby, professor, describes Woolverton as the quintessential gentleman and consummate professional.

“Mike will be sorely missed in the department. He brought not only academic experience, but also industry experience which is so hard to come by. Many people across the nation were attracted to his work on ethanol and how it fit into the fuel vs. food debate,” Barnaby said.

Mike and his wife plan to treat the first year of retirement as a sabbatical.

“We will do some traveling in the U.S.; there is a possibility that we will go overseas on one or more short term assignments; I am currently teaching in the MAB program; and I will continue to conduct macroeconomic and agricultural outlook analysis. After this first year, we will firm up long term plans,” he said.

## AWARDS



Dr. Art "G.A." Barnaby, Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities, 2009 National Award for Excellence in Extension



Dr. Michael Boland, Kansas State University, 2009 International Educator Award



Dr. Ted C. Schroeder, US Meat Export Federation, 2009 Eric Choon Memorial Research Award

## POSITIONS TAKEN BY RECENT GRADUATES



Dr. Kelly Chen, Assistant Professor, Chung Hsing University, Taiwan

Not pictured:

- Amin Mugera, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, University of Western Australia
- Janet Schlosser, M.S., Economist, California Air Resources Board
- Kelsey "Frasier" Pope, M.S., Livestock Promotions Coordinator, Nebraska Corn Board
- Sreedhar Upendram, Economist, Missouri Department of Economic Development
- Kelsey Holste, M.S., District Representative, Congressman Jerry Moran

## SABBTICAL



Dr. John Crespi, University of California Berkeley, January – June 2010.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## 2010 SURE Webinar:

February 19, 2010, 12:00 noon.

www.agmanager.info for information

## Ag Profitability Conferences:

Date	Sponsor/Location
January 25, 2010	Marshall County South 40 Room, Wagon Wheel Cafe 703 Broadway Marysville, KS
January 26, 2010	Ford County, Gray County, Hodgman County, Edwards County, Pawnee County Ford County Fair Building 901 West Park Street Dodge City, KS
February 2, 2010	Smith County, Post Rock Extension District #1 St. Mary's Catholic Parrish Hall 403 W. Hwy. 36 Smith Center, KS
February 3, 2010	Thomas County, Sunflower Extension District #6 Colby, KS
February 11, 2010	Brown County, Meadowlark Extension District #7, Doniphan County, Atchison County Fisher Community Center 201 E. Iowa Street Hiawatha, KS
February 18, 2010	Central Kansas Extension District #3, Dickinson County 4-H Building, Kenwood Park Kenwood Park Drive Salina, KS
February 23, 2010	Scott County, Finney County, Kearny County, Wichita County Wm. Carpenter 4-H Building Scott City, KS
February 24, 2010	Greenwood County Matt Samuels Community Building (Next to Fairgrounds) N. Jefferson & River St. Eureka, KS

## RAM II Workshops (Risk-Assessed Marketing):

THURSDAY, February 18, 2010 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

MCPHERSON, KS

### CONTACT:

DALE LADD

McPherson County Extension

620.241.1523

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MONDAY, February 22, 2010 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

BOWLING GREEN, OH

### CONTACT:

ALAN SUNDEMEIER

Wood County, OH

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419-354-9050 sundermeier.5@osu.edu

TUESDAY, February 23, 2010, 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

COSHOCTON, OH

### CONTACT:

HOWARD SIEGRIST

Licking County, OH

740-670-5315

siegrist1@cfaes.osu.edu

THURSDAY,, February 25, 2010, 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

IMPERIAL, NE

### CONTACT:

RUTH GERDES

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TUESDAY,, March 2, 2010 , 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

BELOIT, KS

### CONTACT:

SCOTT CHAPMAN

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THURSDAY,, March 4, 2010 ,8:30 am - 3:30 pm

GOODLAND, KS

### CONTACT:

CLINT MILLIMAN

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FRIDAY,, March 5, 2010, 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

GARDEN CITY, KS

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