

AGLINK

Spring Semester 2011

Graduate Program Ranked Among Top 10



Alicia Goheen

Craig Smith and Beth Yeager, both Ph.D. students in agricultural economics talk to David Lambert, department head. The department's Ph.D. program is ranked among the nation's best.

by David Lambert

Peers rank K-State's Department of Agricultural Economics among the top 10 in the nation, according to a report by the National Research Council (NRC).

Compared to about 50 U.S. programs, K-State's agricultural economics Ph.D. was ranked first in "student support and outcomes" based on factors such as Ph.D. graduate placement at academic institutions and time to graduation.

The NRC rankings are confirmed at graduate-school.phds.org, where K-State Agricultural Economics is listed fifth of 28 ranked schools.

A 2010 report¹ examines students' success in publishing dissertation research in professional journals using 50 years of data from 41 Ph.D.-granting agricultural economics programs. In

the latest years surveyed (2001-2005), K-State scored second in the percentage of dissertations successfully published in the peer-reviewed academic press, outperforming programs at UC Berkeley, UC Davis and Maryland.

In an Oregon State University survey of 50 top agricultural economists, K-State fared best in the areas of "Agribusiness, Marketing and Industrial Organization" (ranking third) and in "Farm Management, Finance and Production" (ranking fourth).

Finally, in a study of graduate student productivity², the median journal article output of K-State graduates is similar to students graduating from Cornell and Wisconsin. The top 25 percent of students publish more than graduates from all other programs except for Maryland.

¹Boland, M.A. and J.M. Crespi. "From Farm Management to Agricultural and Applied Economics: The Expansion of a Professional Society as Seen through a Census of Its Dissertations from 1951 to 2005." *Applied Economics Perspectives and Policy* 32, No. 3 (Autumn 2010): 456-471

²Hilmer, Christina and Michael Hilmer. "On the Relationship between Student-Advisor Match and Early Career Research Productivity for Agricultural and Resource Economists Ph.D.s." *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 89, No. 1 (February 2007):162-175.

Students Select Schurle for Award

Bryan Schurle, professor of agricultural economics, was selected as one of two fall 2010 College of Agriculture



Faculty of the Semester. Dave Nichols, professor of animal sciences and industry, received the other faculty honor.

The award is given by the College of Ag Student Council. Students within clubs and organizations nominated faculty.

Schurle teaches courses in principles of agricultural economics, agricultural finance and risk management.

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AND MORE ...



Shannon Krueger

From left, Kirby Smith, Margaret Golden-Bowker, Rebecca Lewis and Tina Terry interact during a group exercise at the Management Analysis and Strategic Thinking on-campus session.

MAST Course Concludes With 2nd On-campus Session

The second on-campus session of MAST (Management Analysis and Strategic Thinking) was held Feb. 22-23 at the K-State Alumni Center.

Presentations included Crop Economics by Michael Langemeier; Livestock Economics by Glynn Tonsor; Macroeconomic Trends and Asset Bubbles by Bryan Schurle; Farming in the Nearby Future by Kevin Dhuyvetter and Terry Kastens; Identification of Unique Resources by Michael Langemeier; and Identifying Resource Gaps by Vincent Amanor-Boadu.

2010-11 MAST participants:

- Adam Baldwin, *Baldwin Farms, McPherson, KS*
- Tanner Brown, *Solomon Creek Farms, Colby, KS*
- Ben Bunger, *LeDi Farms, Kearney, NE*
- Bill Came, *Came Farms Inc., Salina, KS*
- Andrew Carlson, *Wood Farm Inc., Viola, KS*
- Richard Golden, *Golden Wheat Ranch, Lenexa, KS*
- Margaret Golden-Bowker, *Golden Wheat Ranch, Lake Quivira, KS*
- Gennifer House, *Golden Wheat Ranch, Goodland, KS*
- Jonie James, *Harvey County Extension Council, Newton, KS*
- Kevin Keller, *Ogallah, KS*
- Brad Klaassen, *Pine Tree Feeders, Goessel, KS*
- Derik Klaassen, *Pine Tree Feeders, Goessel, KS*
- Martin Lager, *Grinnell, KS*
- Rebecca Lewis, *Hawk High, Owner/Operator, Baldwin City, KS*
- Rodney Lierz, *Powhattan, KS*
- Albert Lobmeyer, *Lobmeyer Enterprises Inc., President, Leoti, KS*
- John Maurer, *The Commerce Trust Company, Wichita, KS*
- Joel McClenahan, *Langenegger Ag LLC, Newton, KS*
- Austin Nokes, *Nokes Hay Service, Albert, KS*
- Kirby Smith, *Citizens State Bank, Goessel, KS*
- Jackie Springer-Chandler, *Springer Family Foods & Dale Springer Farms, Neodesha, KS*
- Cynthia Steeples, *JC Steeples, Palco, KS*
- Tina Terry, *Krafft Family Farm, Glade, KS*
- Lynel Unrau, *Unrau Farms, Newton, KS*
- Doreen Waechter, *Waechter Farms, Emporia, KS*
- Spencer West, *Sauder West Farms Inc, Neosho Falls, KS*
- David Wood, *Wood Farm Inc., Solomon, KS*

Graduate Students Present Research

Biofuels: Food vs. Fuel



Bryon Parman

Bryon Parman, Ph.D. student in agricultural economics, presented at the International Conference on Environmental,

Cultural, Social and Economic Sustainability at New Zealand's University of Waikato.

He studied if and how algae biodiesel may affect food commodity prices in "Third Generation Biofuels and the Food vs. Fuel Debate."

Parman's co-authors include Vincent Amanor-Boadu, associate professor of agribusiness economics and management, and Peter H. Pfromm, professor of chemical engineering. The article has been submitted to the International Journal of Environmental, Cultural, Social and Economic Sustainability.

Cloned Meat Perceptions



Shonda Anderson

Shonda Anderson, master's student in agricultural economics, was selected as one of 10 finalists

to present research during a poster presentation session at the 8th annual Capitol Graduate Research Summit at the state capitol in Topeka on Feb. 17.

She conducted a comparative study of consumer acceptance of animal cloning in the United States, France, Ireland, Honduras and China. Her advisor is Sean Fox, professor of agricultural economics.



Student Studio

Agricultural economics undergraduate students take a break while doing homework in the newly renovated student computer studio in Waters 336.

Agricultural economics and agribusiness students started the spring semester with a new computer studio made possible by a gift from an anonymous donor.

The student computer studio received a complete makeover during the holiday break, including new carpet, fresh paint, colorful acoustic panels and large dry-erase whiteboards. Students can even plug in their laptops or portable USB drives to display their projects and presentations on the 60-inch professional flatscreen monitor at the front of the room.

“It’s amazing,” said Katelynn Wilms, senior in agribusiness. “It creates an excellent study environment.”

In addition to the cheerful colors through paint and acoustic panels, the computer studio features canvas gallery-style prints of Flint Hills scenes by photographers Dave Leiker of Emporia and Edward Sturr of Manhattan.

“We really like the pictures and the bright colors help motivate me to study even when it’s dreary outside,” Wilms said.

The student computer studio provides a welcoming space for studying, meetings and class projects. Students can access the departmental computer cloud wirelessly through their laptops or work on one of the desktop computer stations. They also can send projects to print on the room’s network printer.

A couch and two swiveling armchairs are popular hangouts for students taking a break to study or socialize between classes. In addition, modular tables make it simple to reorganize into classroom and roundtable settings.

“We really want to say thank you,” Wilms said, as the students seated next to her nodded in agreement. “This is awesome.”



The computer studio provides a welcoming space for students to study.



A 60-inch flat panel monitor provides clarity during group presentations.

KFMA Introduces New Area Economists

Marc Allison, South Central



Marc Allison

Marc Allison grew up on a farm in Greenfield, Mo. His family raises crossbred beef cattle, corn, wheat, and soybeans.

Allison's father farms full time and his mother is a third-grade teacher. His younger brother and sister both attend Missouri State University.

He received his bachelor's degree from Missouri State University in agricultural business (Finance and Management) and master's degree from Texas A&M University in agricultural economics. His hobbies include watching sports, specifically the St. Louis Cardinals and Kansas City Chiefs, and collecting farm toys.

Will Feldkamp, North Central



Will Feldkamp

Will Feldkamp grew up on a ranch in Sylvan Grove, Kan., on a purebred Red Angus operation.

His father and mother are both K-State alumni and retired veterinarians. Feldkamp's

father and brother currently farm together.

Feldkamp received a bachelor's degree in agribusiness from K-State in 2003. He worked for four years as the agricultural loan officer at Thunder Bank in Sylvan Grove prior to joining KFMA as an area economist.

His hobbies include farming, watching hockey, hunting and playing any kind of sports.

Cole Miller, South Central



Cole Miller

Cole Miller grew up on a wheat farm in Cheney, Kan. He completed his bachelor's degree in agribusiness in 2007 and master's degree in agricultural economics in 2008, both

at K-State. As a student, he worked with Michael Langemeier, professor of agricultural economics, researching cost efficiency of labor and its impact on Kansas farms.

Miller worked for two years as a loan pricing analyst at US AgBank in Wichita, Kan. Miller and his wife, Jenny, live in Cheney. His hobbies include hunting, golfing, softball, basketball and spending time with family.

Smart Sense: Reducing Cost, Enhancing Competitiveness Through Training

Despite its importance in the knowledge economy, training is still not a strategic issue for some agriculture, agribusiness and agri-food companies. They are so focused on the bottom line that they lose sight of their top-line enhancing opportunities presented by investing in training and capacity development.

A recent study conducted in the Animal Health Corridor — the region bordered on the east by Columbia, Mo., the north by St. Joseph, Mo., and on the west by Manhattan, Kan. — revealed employee concerns about the rapid obsolescence of knowledge and skills and its effect on their firms' competitiveness.

The study, conducted by Vincent Amanor-Boadu, associate professor of agribusiness economics and management, showed that this rapid

obsolescence of knowledge and skills is emanating from rapid introduction of new technologies, increasing customer knowledge and swiftly changing and globalizing marketplace.

According to the study's results, employees are willing to address this problem by investing time and effort, but indicated a need for financial support from their employers.

Employers may look at employee training support as investments. When made right, these investments can lead to significant reductions in costs and/or enhancements in top-line numbers.

For example, providing training in decision-making and strategic thinking can augment employees' opportunity-scoping capabilities, allowing them to discover new revenue sources or cost savings. Similarly, investing in risk prevention training, such as the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA)

Employees FIRST initiative, helps food industry employees increase their food defense awareness and reduce associated remediation costs.

The Department of Agricultural Economics at K-State has a number of outreach programs to help animal and health food industry companies achieve their training objectives. It also is working with industry stakeholders and K-State Olathe partners to develop new programs that address specific needs, from sharpening employees' financial management skills to developing competitiveness in international trade environments.

Industry stakeholders interested in discussing how they can participate in these program development initiatives should contact Dr. Vincent Amanor-Boadu at vincent@ksu.edu or (785) 532-3520 for more information.

Commissions Fund Data System Upgrades

Data collection and handling systems at the K-MAR-105 Association and Kansas Farm Management Association are getting a major upgrade thanks to funding from three commodity commissions.

The Kansas Wheat Commission and the Kansas Soybean Commission are each providing three years of funding, and the Kansas Corn Commission is providing two years of funding to transition to the KFMA relationship-based database.

“The new system will allow the economists in the field to update client information and run reports without being connected to K-MAR,” said Koren Elder, KFMA director of systems and programming. “They will synchronize their data once they have a connection again.”

The first phase of the project is focused on replacing the whole farm analysis portion of the current system. The next phase will be focused on replacing existing data entry systems.

Faculty Michael Langemeier, Bryan Schurle, and Kevin Herbel are working with Mark Dikeman and Elder to combine input from KFMA economists.

The KFMA program began serving Kansas farm families in 1931. The K-MAR-105 Association was organized in 1968 to manage KFMA data. The database has been computerized at KMAR since 1973. KFMA includes 21 economists across the state working with 2,340 members and more than 3,100 farm families.

ACCC Scholarship Process Underway

The 2011-2012 Arthur Capper Cooperative Center (ACCC) has pre-qualified and invited 94 students to apply for cooperative scholarships. The ACCC, in conjunction with the College of Agriculture, the Department of Agricultural Economics and cooperative community leaders, will award 17 scholarships totaling approximately \$45,500. The ACCC has awarded \$355,400 in scholarships on behalf of the cooperative community since 1985.

Risk & Profit CONFERENCE



Hosted by K-State Agricultural Economics

Aug. 18-19
Manhattan, KS

Interact with faculty and other key decision makers on contemporary agricultural management topics.

Topics include:

- Grain and Livestock Marketing
- Biofuels
- Machinery
- Farm Programs
- Global Agriculture
- Crop Insurance
- Farm Management

More information:

Rich Llewelyn
(785) 532-1504
rvl@ksu.edu
www.AgManager.info

15 Ag Econ Students Selected as Ambassadors

Congratulations to the 15 students from the Department of Agricultural Economics who were selected to serve as 2011-12 College of Agriculture Ambassadors. Only 36 new ambassadors were selected to join the team, and we're proud that our students make up nearly half the new additions to the group.

Ambassadors represent K-State Ag during prospective student visits and recruit students at events across the state and nation. They teach orientation classes for new freshmen and network with alumni and industry leaders. Ambassadors also assist with career fairs, scholarship fundraising and open house activities.

To become an Ambassador, students must complete a semester-long College of Agriculture Training (CAT) program, which exposes them to all majors and departments while building networks with peers and professionals. Students fill out an application and participate in a competitive interview process during Ambassador selection process.

Ambassadors From the Department of Agricultural Economics

- **Jamie Briscoe**, junior in agribusiness, *Lincoln, Kan.*
- **Logan Britton**, sophomore in agricultural economics and agricultural communications and journalism, *Bartlett, Kan.*
- **Brock Burnick**, sophomore in agricultural economics and pre-law, *Mulberry, Kan.*
- **Jeff Cather**, freshman in agribusiness, *Anthony, Kan.*
- **Heather Gibson**, junior in agribusiness, *Copeland, Kan.*
- **Michelle Hill**, sophomore in agricultural economics, *Wichita, Kan.*
- **Shelby Hill**, junior in agricultural economics, *Satanta, Kan.*
- **Reagan Kays**, freshman in agribusiness, *Weir, Kan.*
- **Garrett Lister**, junior in agricultural economics, *Marysville, Kan.*
- **Leanne Milleret**, freshman in agricultural economics, *Lawrence, Kan.*
- **Boone Ott**, junior in agribusiness, *Coffeyville, Kan.*
- **Ashley Rector**, freshman in agribusiness, *Lawrence, Kan.*
- **Bret Schneller**, freshman in agribusiness, *Overland Park, Kan.*
- **Nate Spriggs**, junior in agricultural economics, *Manhattan, Kan.*
- **Candace Weeda**, junior in agricultural economics, *Creston, Ia.*

Interdisciplinary Research Teams Study Sustainable Bioenergy

by Keith Rutlin, K-State I-STAR Bioenergy

K-State's Integrating the Socioeconomic, Technical and Agricultural aspects of Renewable Bioenergy (I-STAR) program offers a unique interdisciplinary research team approach for Ph.D. research projects and is supported by funding from the National Science Foundation Integrated Graduate Education Research Traineeship (IGERT) program.

"Training graduate students in the key issues of sustainable biorefining requires they have an understanding of the role of agriculture, technology and social science in the integrated process design," said Mary Rezac, I-STAR project director, ConocoPhillips professor of sustainable energy and professor of chemical engineering at K-State.

"In this program, we will leverage our prior success at integrating students and faculty from across the supply chain in creation of core research teams to address key questions. Each team will advance the science, technology and policy of a specific technological subject," she said.

I-STAR trainees and faculty collaborate on interdisciplinary bioenergy issue teams for their research projects. Each trainee on a team shares the same core faculty of his or her thesis committee to guarantee crossdisciplinary impact.

The IGERT core research team is developing a new ammonia synthesis process using water, air, sunlight and biomass. Ammonia is widely used as a fertilizer and the demand will increase with dedicated



Keith Rutlin

Left to right: Vincent Amanor-Boadu, associate professor of agribusiness economics and management; Peter Pfromm, professor of chemical engineering; IGERT trainees, Bryon Parman, Ph.D. student in agricultural economics, and Ronny Michalsky, Ph.D. student in chemical engineering.

energy crop production due to the world's increasing need for food. The team hopes to provide an economical ammonia production process at atmospheric pressure, without the massive use of fossil fuels characterizing the conventional process.

I-STAR trainee dissertation projects are conducted with an integrated, concurrent approach which overlaps faculty supervisory committee memberships, regular joint meetings of the teams, and student and faculty submission of dissertation chapters and publications addressing the collaborative research issues and results.

All I-STAR trainees are working on projects that integrate considerations of at least two of the three system components — agriculture, technology and social science. This integration is not achieved through traditional graduate education and is the cornerstone of preparing I-STAR trainees for success in addressing complex interdisciplinary issues of the future.

For more information on the K-State NSF I-STAR IGERT program, contact Keith Rutlin, educational programs administrator, at (785) 532-2029 or rutlin@ksu.edu, or go to <http://igert.ksu.edu/home>.

Department Welcomes Visiting Scholar From China

The Department of Agricultural Economics welcomed a visiting scholar from China at the beginning of the spring semester.

Dr. Guixia Wang of Jilin Agricultural University recently began her one-year sabbatical in the



Guixia Wang

department. Wang is cooperating with faculty to research livestock marketing. She is collaborating with John Crespi, Ted Shroeder and Sean Fox, all professors of agricultural economics, and Tian Xia, assistant professor of agricultural economics.

Wang earned her Ph.D. at China Agricultural University and M.S. at Shenyang Agricultural University. She holds a B.S. from Jilin Agricultural University, where she is a professor of economics and management.

Wang also has been a visiting scholar at Wageningen University in the Netherlands.

Ag Finance Students Analyze KFMA Data

Students in the fall Agricultural Finance class applied their newly acquired financial analysis skills with real data during a unique case study project.

Lee Schulz, Ph.D. student in agricultural economics, developed a course project for his students in AGECE 513 using data from the Kansas Farm Management Association (KFMA).

“Being able to work with real financial data is invaluable in that, it’s a fact of life that real-world data is very complex and it takes an incredible amount of time and effort to analyze it,” Schulz said. “The process can be very difficult but it’s important that the students see the reality.”

Students were provided with a Profit-Link Business Analysis for a fictional case farm developed using real data from KFMA farms. Their project was to use financial analysis to determine the strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for improvement for the case farm. They summarized their recommendations in a paper.



Lee Schulz

Students also relied on data from www.AgManager.info for benchmark comparisons and trend analysis.

“After completing the project, students should feel confident in discussing financial analysis in the context of a firm’s business strategy and the broader

market conditions,” Schulz said. “I think the project helped prepare students for jobs in agricultural finance because many of the skills utilized are expected for many entry-level positions. Learning by doing will allow students entering the agricultural finance sector to hit the ground running after they graduate.”

The project helped emphasize that students learn financial analysis most effectively by performing the analysis on actual firms, Schulz added.

“Students did a great job integrating concepts from finance, economics, business strategy, and accounting,” he said. “This was evident in the student’s ability to tie together the information from the several analytical tools to tell a complete story about a firm’s financial condition.”

Ag Management and Economics Graduate Fellowships Offered

K-State Agricultural Economics will offer new graduate fellowships next year in agricultural management and economics with emphasis on resource economics and alternative energy.

The fellowships are funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) National Needs Graduate Fellowship Program.

Paid assistantships will be awarded to outstanding students entering the M.S. and Ph.D. programs during Fall 2011 or Fall 2012. Each will have two positions.

These unique fellowships will prepare graduates to work effectively in interdisciplinary teams addressing the production of biofuels and other renewable energy from



Fellowships in agricultural economics emphasizing resource economics and alternative energy will be available for Fall 2011 or Fall 2012.

agricultural feedstocks and its interface with the environment and rural economy.

For further information contact Jeff Williams at jwilliam@agecon.ksu.edu. Jeff Peterson, associate professor, Jason Bergtold, assistant professor, and Michael Langemeier, professor, all of agricultural economics, were also instrumental in obtaining funding.

Club Plans Spring Activities

The Ag Econ/Ag Business Club has a busy spring calendar.

The club concluded the fall semester with a trip to Bern, Kan., where members visited the local cooperative and farms.

“It was a blast and we ate lunch at the local cafe, which was a first for some of us,” said Katie Samples, vice president for the club and senior in agribusiness from Winsor, Colo.

At the club’s Christmas party, Bryan Schurle, professor of agricultural economics, won the “tacky sweater” contest. One member also became the proud owner of a goldfish during the gift exchange, Samples said. The group also enjoyed fried chicken and potluck dishes from members.

The club plans to participate in co-rec basketball and is coordinating a spring trip to Oklahoma City or St. Louis after spring break.

MAB International Ag Tour Planned

The fifth Master of Agribusiness international agribusiness tour is tentatively scheduled for August 1-13, 2012. Travel will include Europe and tour France and Italy, with possible stops in Switzerland.

The trip is open to anyone with an interest in international agribusiness and will include sightseeing in Paris and Rome and visits to farming operations and agribusinesses. For more information, contact Mary Bowen at mjbowen@ksu.edu or (785) 532-4435. Also, look for updates at www.mab.ksu.edu.

“Options Strategies” in Africa



Kevin Dhuyvetter

The KSU Option Strategies spreadsheet developed by Kevin Dhuyvetter, professor of agricultural economics, appears on the Grain SA website at www.grainsa.co.za

translated into Afrikaans language. Grain SA provides strategic support to grain producers in South Africa to promote sustainable production and profitability. Dhuyvetter’s spreadsheet is designed to compare alternative marketing strategies using futures and options markets. It also was the most downloaded spreadsheet from AgManager.info in 2010. Find it under the Tools tab.

Crespi Serves as Panelist



John Crespi

John Crespi, professor of agricultural economics and director of graduate studies, was a panelist in the December 2010 U.S. Department of Agriculture/U.S.

Department of Justice Joint Public Workshop on Competition Issues in the Agriculture Industry in Washington, D.C.

Barnaby Speaks on Marketing



Art Barnaby

Art Barnaby, professor of agricultural economics, presented the Risk Assessed Marketing Workshop at the Texas A&M Master Marketer Program in January. He

spoke about integrated marketing/production management combining government programs, crop insurance and alternative marketing techniques.

Bergtold to Lead Grant Research



Jason Bergtold

Jason Bergtold, assistant professor of agricultural economics, will serve as principal investigator on a grant researching carbon offsets and conservation crop

production. The grant is part of the USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

The team includes co-principal investigator Jeff Peterson, associate professor of agricultural economics, Jeff Williams and Michael Langemeier, both professors of agricultural economics, and Scott Staggenborg, professor of agronomy.

CLASS NOTES

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

Steven R. Sawyer AGBUS '98

has completed all requirements for certification as a Certified Safety Professional (CSP). This highly respected certification is awarded to individuals who meet academic standards, satisfy professional safety experience requirements and have passed rigorous examinations. The examinations cover engineering and management aspects of safety, applied sciences, legal and regulatory matters, professional affairs, and other safety related topics. Since 1969 almost 20,000 individuals have achieved the CSP certification through the Board of Certified Safety Professionals. Sawyer works at a Field Service Representative for KFSA in Hutchinson, Kan.

Rebecca Muller AGBUS '09

begin the Study Abroad Office’s new Study Abroad Advisor in January. Muller is a current K-State Graduate student working toward an Academic Advising Graduate Certificate, and an Adult, Occupational, and Continuing Education Graduate Degree. During her time at K-State she has participated on many College of Agriculture study abroad programs, and has even assisted in leading one of the short-term study abroad programs. She also was a Peer Advisor in the Study Abroad Office since spring 2009.

AGLINK

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