

The E-Newsletter of the Department of Agricultural Economics • June 2018

Heading into summer, I'd like to take the time to inform you of the outstanding achievements of our faculty and students and look ahead to our summer programs and fall events.



We visit with Blue Key Honor Society student, Sarah Niederee to talk about her leadership and experiences. Recently, the Chicago Mercantile and Exchange hosted a global trading event and our students placed second in a field of over 500. A team of our graduate students won top honors at the recent Southern Agricultural Economics Association conference.

Our successes are directly related to the continued support of our alumni and corporate sponsorships amid the continued budget struggles. This support helps us provide our students and outreach programs the proper foundation to continue our tradition of excellence. If you have interest in investing in our programs, let me know. Please take time to learn more about the activities of our department.

We also encourage you to share your career and family developments so we can keep your fellow alumni informed. Please email me at afeather@ksu.edu or Thomas Reust, at tom-reust@ksu.edu with information you would like to share with your fellow alumni.

Dr. Allen Featherstone
Department Head, Professor, Master of Agribusiness Program Director



Blue Key Success



Sarah Niederee, junior agricultural economics, was a business major her freshman year. She joined Quest, a freshman honor society through which she was assigned a mentor from the Blue Key Honor Society. This mentor helped her realize agricultural economics was the major for her, mentored her on course selection each semester and advised her on internships. Even now, almost a senior, this mentor is one of her first phone calls when making important decisions. Niederee was selected to join the Blue Key Honor Society, a national organization that recognizes college students for their exemplary leadership and academic achievement, and Niederee will have the same opportunity to mentor a freshman the way she was mentored.

“It’s crazy how through college, you can grow so much, and I’ll be in a position where I can mentor students to have that same journey,” Niederee said.

Sarah Niederee

Her switch to the College of Agriculture and the mentoring from Logan Britton, an alumni of the department, has lead her to numerous leadership and internship opportunities. Currently, she works for the Kansas Department of Agriculture in the Office of the Secretary where she shadows committee members in Topeka and meets Kansas agricultural leaders, many of whom attended K-State. Last summer, she interned at Michael Torrey Associates, LLC.

Blue Key Honor Society works with various groups including Quest, Catalyst and DiscoverU to help underclassmen and high school students gain leadership experience and help acclimate them to college life. It is organizations like these that helped Niederee get a jump start on her leadership experience throughout her college career.

She is an ambassador for the College of Agriculture and recently served as the privilege fee committee chair, administrating over \$16 million in student fees for clubs and organizations on campus. Given the extra time commitment of the honor society, Niederee has decided not to run for privilege fee committee chair again but will stay on as a senator.

Her experience in Student Government Association has lead Niederee to the position of vice president for the K-State chapter of Blue Key Honor Society. She will be largely in charge of the organizational and the financial side of the honor society, which is where her strengths lie, she said. This will allow her to have an impact in the organization instead of just being a “figurehead.” She is ready to “get down to the work and do things that will affect people.”

CRMER team places high

An intensive four-week competition by the Chicago Mercantile and Exchange wrapped up recently, and a team from Kansas State University's Center for Risk Management Education and Research (CRMER) took second place in a global field of over 500 teams from 37 countries.

Team leader Del Adcock, now a senior in agricultural economics, Nils Bergstein, senior in agribusiness, Trenton Covington, senior in agribusiness, and Kyle Rogers, senior in finance made up the team as they took on graduate and undergraduate students in an intense trading competition played out on a global scale. For second place, each student took home a \$1,000 prize.

Adcock says the competition was intense, "Crude oil and live cattle- those were the two contracts I traded, just because their volatility allowed for more price movement and therefore more ability to capture dollar value. With that, we were trading the CQG platform, which is the professional trading platform."

The electronic trading team competition was developed to challenge students with real world situations faced by professional trading in a simulated environment. Using tools like the integrated client software and mobile platforms, the teams traded futures in six categories: agriculture, energy, metals, equity index, interest rates, and foreign exchange. Accounts were set for \$250,000 for the final round of trading, and each team could execute multiple trades per day. However, if a team lost 20% of their account in a single day the account was promptly locked for trading for that day.



Trenton Covington, Del Adcock, Nils Bergsten, and Kyle Rogers

Adcock credits CRMER with providing yet another great opportunity to directly engage with industry, and use skills imparted by the Department of Agricultural Economics, "They get you into the program and give you exposure to the industry. We took a tour of the D.C. area in May. We'll go to Chicago, and complete a research project in the fall."

The team will compete again next year, and Adcock plans on participating again even though he won't be able to win the prize money. He's also leveraging the experience and plans on using it during his internship with Bartlett Grain in Great Bend over the summer.

Adcock says CRMER activities will be a large part of the plan going forward as well, "It's fun. It's good to just go and listen to people in industry and do a little traveling and such. That opportunity will evolve. It will look different this time next year."

2018 Outstanding Seniors

The Department of Agricultural Economics recognized two students as our outstanding seniors for the Spring of 2018.



Carlee Overturf-

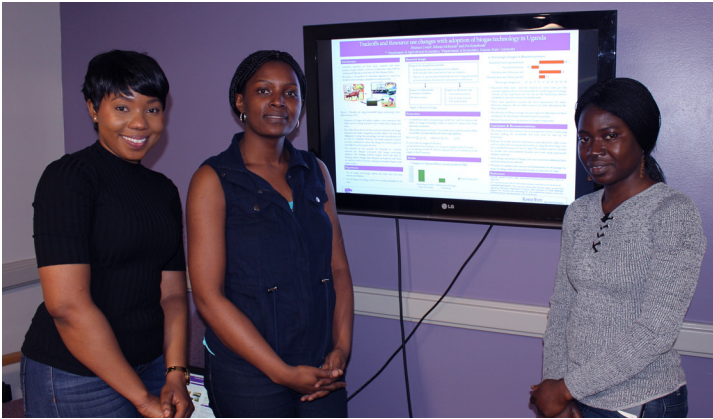
Carlee Overturf is from Johnson, Kansas, and completed her Bachelor of Science degree in Agribusiness in May. Overturf has worked as an undergraduate research assistant in Plant Pathology performing DNA analysis. She has also interned at American AgCredit and Skyland Grain LLC. She has been active in the Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness Club, Collegiate Cattlewomen and completed a study abroad trip to India. Overturf will start a career as a grain merchandiser with Ag Partners Cooperative in Hiawatha, Kansas, after graduation.



Jeffrey Hadachek-

Jeffrey Hadachek is from Cuba, Kansas, and completed his Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Economics with minors in Statistics and International Agriculture. Hadachek's collegiate experience includes an internship at the Kansas Department of Agriculture where he performed economic research. He has also interned at Koch Industries, Mid Kansas Coop and Michael Torrey Associates, LLC. He has been active in Farm House Fraternity, College of Agriculture Ambassadors and College of Agriculture Student Council. He is a Student Fellow of the Center for Risk Management Education and Research. After graduation, Hadachek will continue his education by pursuing a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics at the University of California-Davis. Hadachek recently received the 2017-2018 College of Agriculture Student of the Year award.

Graduate Students Receive Research Award



Sidonia McKenzie, Florence Lwiza, and Eva Kyereboah

Three Kansas State graduate students presented their poster on biogas technologies being adopted in rural Uganda at the Southern Agricultural Economics Association conference that took place in Jacksonville Florida in February 2018. Florence Lwiza, graduate student in Agricultural Economics, Eva Kyereboah, graduate student in Agricultural Economics, and Sidonia McKenzie, graduate student in Economics, placed third in the outstanding poster category at the conference. Their poster, “Trade-offs and Resource Use Changes with Biogas Technology Adoption,” was based on a paper they had collaborated on for a class project last spring.

“We took a class in optimization techniques in Agricultural Economics taught by Dr. Bergtold, where we were required to work together on a project. However, we wanted this to be more than a class project and therefore decided to develop it into a publishable paper and also present it as a poster,” Lwiza said.

Their research looks at the adoption of biogas technologies by cattle farmers in Uganda as well as the time and resources that it takes to maintain them. Often, promoters of farm technologies talk about the benefits of adoption but do not always consider the possible effects in resource use and reallocations within the farming system. “Our research provides empirical evidence on how adoption of biogas technology affects the allocations of water, land, male labor time and female labor time”, said McKenzie.

Lwiza said that although use of biogas technology provides an alternative source of energy for cooking and lighting and also provides manure, its use is not easy to sustain. Use of a small family size biogas digester requires at least 40 liters of water per day. Farmers and family members, usually women and children, have to walk several miles to collect water for household use and for the livestock and production of biogas. Extra manpower is also needed to gather the animal waste and household waste products to make the feedstock that then must have water added to anaerobically digest to produce the biogas. Their results showed the household water requirement, labor time for the female household head and labor time for male household head significantly increased with the adoption of biogas technology whereas the construction of biogas technology components reduced land available for farm or household use.

Kyereboah said that their research includes recommendations that promoters and users of the technology could consider to sustain the use of the technology. One of the recommendations is to promote investment and research into water transportation, harvesting, storage and recycling technologies so as to ease the water and labor burden. Lwiza, Kyereboah and McKenzie hope that their findings will inform decision making by farmers who may wish to take up the technology. They also hope that their findings will interest other researchers and also inform policies and programs formulated to promote use of alternative technologies by resource poor farmers. The three graduate students worked side-by-side throughout the whole process of developing the research idea, researching the literature, constructing the economic models, analyzing the data and presenting the results. They hope to continue working together with their professors to improve upon their paper and have their work published.

Upcoming Events

For more information visit AgManager.info

Kansas State University/Washburn University School of Law Agribusiness Symposium

August 15, 2018

Manhattan, KS

Risk and Profit Conference

August 16 - 17, 2018

Manhattan, KS

Ag Lenders Conference

October 9, 2018

Garden City, KS

Ag Lenders Conference

October 10, 2018

Manhattan, KS