



KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Agricultural Economics



From the desk of Dr. Allen Featherstone

As we wind down what has been the most unusual spring semester during the COVID-19 Pandemic, we still have much to celebrate. We are pleased with how our students, faculty and staff made the rapid transition to online classes and working from home for the remainder of the spring semester.

Even though we did not have Spring Commencement Ceremonies, we have welcomed nearly 100 graduates into our alumni family from our undergrad degree candidates in Agribusiness and Agricultural Economics, master of science in Agricultural Economics, master of agribusiness, and the Ph.D. programs. We look forward to following their journeys as they enter industry or pursue advanced degrees.

Our department has comfort in knowing that our graduates are going into industries with great alumni support in their networks across the country. We trust that you will welcome them if you get a chance to work with our new alumni.

In September, we will honor a new distinguished alumni member to recognize at our annual scholarship and awards banquet. We hope you will join us for the scholarship banquet Friday, September 18 and at the tailgate event in Cat Town before the Football game September 19 against Vanderbilt. We will keep you updated if these dates change for any reason.

Highlights for this e-newsletter include numerous student honors to wrap up the spring semester, a donation challenge to help create a new undergraduate student center, and updates from our department programs, events, and more!

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 Mary Bowen, our communication coordinator, at mjbowen@ksu.edu with information you would like to share with your fellow alumni.

Economics of Agriculture during the COVID-19 Pandemic

As Kansas is beginning to reopen, K-State Research and Extension faculty and staff are still on the job during closures and social distancing. Agricultural Economists have been busy providing updates and consulting on the impacts of the uncertainty and economic disruption are having on livestock markets, grain markets, land values and the overall agriculture economy. In coordination with AgManager.info, the Economics of Agriculture During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Series of Online Gatherings webinars were created.

“When the COVID-19 Pandemic started and the economy was shutting down, our Ag Econ team recognized that Kansas stakeholders would have a number of questions. We could address these questions in a webinar format,” Brian Briggeman, agricultural economist and director of the Arthur Capper Cooperative Center, said.

Marshall Primary topics of the webinar series have been updates on the macro economy, grain markets and planting intentions, effects on livestock markets, effects on land values, Kansas farm income, and a discussion of the CARES Act and Agriculture with Representative Roger Marshall and Senator Pat Roberts. Presentations on each subject were followed by the opportunity to discuss and ask questions.

“The webinar series had a primary goal of addressing questions from Kansas stakeholders. However, the last two months has been filled with unprecedented changes. There were significant needs and questions coming from every industry. A more focused response was required. Our Agricultural Economics team was up to the task by producing additional applied research, fact sheets, webinars, and interviews, all aimed at helping agricultural leaders

Economics of Agriculture During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Series of Online Gatherings *Livestock Markets*

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make better and more informed decisions,” Briggeman said.

In addition to the original webinar series, there have been a number of other videos and interviews on stimulus programs, oil and biofuels, the Federal Reserve’s response, as well as weekly updates on the IHME COVID-19 Projection Model. All of these resources are posted on the AgManager.info website.

“AgManager provided us with the necessary platform for K-State ag economists to connect with local, state, regional and national audiences,” Briggeman said.

Judging by the response, the webinars and resources are meeting the needs of producers and agribusinesses for information during the pandemic. To date there have been more than 1,700 online participants and more than 6,600 additional viewings of session recordings since the middle of March. The recorded sessions are on AgManager.info and the YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/AgManagerInfo>.

“This webinar series was developed recognizing the rapidly growing demand for economic information on multiple aspects of the agricultural sector and the fact our combined faculty have valuable expertise to help meet this demand for knowledge,” Glynn Tonsor, agricultural economist, said. “Economists are perhaps in highest-demand in times like this. The large number of attendees have expressed thanks and noted benefits of this effort in several ways.”

The webinar series has been continued with additional dates and topics being added. A list of upcoming sessions and links to previous webinars can be found on the AgManger.info website.



Cherie Hodgson receives award for academic advising

Cherie Hodgson, undergraduate academic coordinator for the agricultural economics department, was presented the January Charlie Award for Outstanding Advising by the K-State Advisor Forum.

Hodgson was nominated for the award by her colleague, Dr. Christine Wilson. As an advisor, Hodgson goes the extra mile to ensure her students and colleagues have all the resources they need.

"Hodgson is a critical member of our undergraduate program in the Department of Agricultural Economics," Wilson said in her nomination. "The support she provides to me as the program director, to our faculty in advising, and to our students is second to none. When faculty are away, Hodgson assists their students, when faculty have questions or need resources, Hodgson provides the answer."

Wilson said Hodgson also cares deeply for the students.

"When new freshmen want to quit and go home, she listens, provides them encouragement, and sets up individual weekly meetings with them to help them get through the early rough patch. Her positive impact on advising is significant; her quality of work is outstanding. She is awesome, and she does an awesome job!"

Hodgson has been advising since she was in graduate school. Hodgson loves advising because she gets to work with a fun age group who have just left home and are becoming independent individuals. Advisors have a major role in student success and making their college careers filled with opportunities.

"It was nice to be recognized for my role, but it was not essential for me to love my job," said Hodgson.

The Agricultural Economics department is thankful for the role that Hodgson plays in the lives of their students. Hodgson takes advising in our department seriously, encourages others to do the same, and is always there to lend a helping hand. Congratulations Cherie!



Donation Challenge

Kansas State University students all know a spot that they love full well. For agricultural economics students that spot is Waters Hall.

Dr. Arlo Biere, Faculty Emeritus, has pledged money to create an Undergraduate Student Center that is welcoming for students and student recruits. He sees the need to move the Agricultural Economics Department forward with improved facilities and other updates. He is challenging those who've benefited from their time in the department, whether as students or faculty, to step up and contribute.

There are various opportunities to give depending on your interest:

- faculty endowments
- graduate scholarships
- facility improvements
- undergraduate scholarships

Dr. Biere chose to contribute to facility improvements, because his passion has always been for undergraduate students, and he wants to create a space that is modern and inviting.

Contact Dr. Allen Featherstone, (afeather@ksu.edu or 785-532-6702) Agricultural Economics Department Head, if you would like to visit about Departmental needs.

Please remember if you decide to donate to the Department, your employer may match your contribution dollar for dollar. You can check with either your company or Kim Schirer (kims@ksufoundation.org) at the KSU Foundation to determine if your company has a matching program, and how to make sure the Agricultural Economics Department benefits from that matching contribution.



2020 Outstanding Senior Awards

The Agricultural Economics Department has selected four students to receive the Department's Outstanding Senior Award. The award recognizes seniors in the Agricultural Economics Department for their significant contributions during their time at K-State.

"It is always a pleasure to recognize the outstanding seniors in our department. This year it was extremely difficult to choose just four students because we have so many doing exceptional things academically and serving their communities and world," Dr. Elizabeth Yeager, Associate

Professor of Agricultural Economics and Director of Undergraduate Programs, said. "This semester has been challenging for our students as they say good-bye to their time at K-State from a distance. We appreciate their resiliency, all of their contributions and wish them the best as they become alumni of the Department of Agricultural Economics."

The following students were recipients of Agricultural Economics Outstanding Senior Award:

Sara Gammon

Sara Gammon, Drexel, Missouri, completed her Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture, majoring Agricultural Economics and Global Food Systems Leadership with a minor in Statistics. Sara is a 2020 Truman Scholar, has studied abroad in Japan, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg and has interned internationally in India and Kenya. Sara completed an internship with Cargill Feed and Nutrition in Olathe, Kansas working on supply chain optimization, future contracts, and micro ingredients for feed production. She has also worked as an undergraduate research assistant and teaching assistant in the Department of Agricultural Economics. She recently co-authored a publication in the Journal of the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers. Sara will pursue a one-year Master of Philosophy in Development Studies at the University of Cambridge and a one-year Master of Science in Development Economics from SOAS University of London. Sara hopes to earn a Ph.D. in Development Studies and conduct research related to women's economic empowerment.

"It's an honor to have been chosen as one of the Ag Econ Department's Outstanding Seniors. The Department has truly shaped me into the individual I am today, and I am grateful for the support and guidance I have been given over the past three years. Here, I have found my passion and have been set on a path to success."



Jenna Goetzmann

Jenna Goetzman, Gardner, Kansas, completed her Bachelor of Science degree in Agribusiness and Global Food Systems Leadership. Jenna is a Student Fellow with the Center for Risk Management Education and Research. She completed the Cargill Fellows Program and a research project for Frontier Farm Credit. Jenna has interned with Merck Animal Health in Nebraska and created sales growth projections for her assigned territory from work with 10 veterinarian clinics, 55 cow/calf operations and feedlots. Jenna has also interned with John Deere in Olathe, Kansas. Jenna's plans include working for an agricultural company doing sales and marketing.

"I am honored to be selected by the Agricultural Economics Department for the Outstanding Senior Award in Agribusiness this year. The faculty, staff and students truly make the College of Ag and Ag Econ department so unique and special to me. It's been an amazing four years at K-State and I can't wait to see what the future holds!"



Julia Maddock

Julia Maddock, Paola, Kansas, completed her Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture, majoring Agricultural Economics with a specialty in Finance, minor in Statistics and a Certificate in Integrated Risk Management. Julia is a Student Fellow with the Center for Risk Management Education and Research and completed internships with Consolidated Grain and Barge in Tulsa, Oklahoma and ProAg Crop Insurance in Lenexa, Kansas. She has worked in the Department of Agricultural Economics analyzing and modeling data, assisting in learning management for freshman orientation classes, creating marketing and information graphics for department electronic displays and mailings, and using Microsoft Excel to create and maintain student records. Most recently, she has been assisting with research and analysis of the IHME COVID-19 model. Julia will be working for Cerner in Kansas City as a Business Analysis following graduation.

"I am honored to have been selected, and appreciative of the many opportunities I have been able to experience as a student within the department."



Clara Wicoff

Clara Wicoff, Lola, Kansas, completed her Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture, majoring Agricultural Economics and Global Food Systems Leadership with a minor in Entomology. She is a 2019 Truman Scholar and a 2020 Marshall Scholar. Clara has held internships with Cargill, Kansas Grain and Feed Association, Kansas Department of Agriculture and Food Safety and Lodging Program, United States Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, Kansas State Legislature and Kansas State University. She has also studied abroad in India. Clara has served as Co-Director of the Catalyst self-development program at K-State where she spent a semester co-developing the curriculum before delivering it as part of the Blue Key Senior Honorary to approximately 90 freshman and sophomore students. Following graduation, Clara will be continuing her education in the United Kingdom. She is currently working with the Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission to determine which university she will be attending in the fall.

"I am so grateful to have been a student in the K-State Department of Agricultural Economics for the past four years. The faculty and staff in this department are truly second to none. They have not only supported my academic growth as an undergraduate student, but have also empowered me to continue my education abroad after I graduate from K-State. The K-State Department of Agricultural Economics has a history of producing students who compete well in nationally competitive scholarships, which is a reflection of the incredible faculty, staff, and students who make up this department. I am honored to have been selected as a recipient of this amazing department's Outstanding Senior Award!"



Class of
2020

Congratulations to all of our
graduating Seniors, M.S., Master of
Agribusiness and Ph.D. Students!



Kansas Women in Agriculture 2020

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Robin Reid, K-State extension associate, and LaVell Winsor, K-State farm analyst, delivered the keynote address on farm financial risk management education to nearly 500 women across five states for Washington State University's Women in Agriculture Conference. That presentation sparked the idea to do something similar closer to home and the Farm Financial Skills for Kansas Women in Agriculture series was developed.

"The model of having webinar components mixed with local activities to reach a wider range of farm women was a wonderful idea for farm financial risk management education here in Kansas," Reid said.

In January and February, K-State Research and Extension hosted a four-part series of workshops focused on helping women sharpen their farm financial management skills during this time of struggling farm economy. The sessions were offered in 32 locations around Kansas through a combination of broadcasted keynote and local speakers.

Robin Reid and LaVell Winsor "Women in agriculture were specifically targeted for these workshops," said Reid, a farm economist for K-State Research and Extension. "They tend to be an underserved demographic, but many times are doing the books or recordkeeping for the operation. By teaching them skills necessary to turn farm records into financial statements, and then using those statements to

make management decisions, farm women can increase the profitability and sustainability of their operations."

Session topics included principles of recordkeeping to develop a balance sheet, income statement and a cash flow statement. Participants worked with a case farm to assess performance and understand how these statements can be used to make management decisions. Other special topics addressed were managing family living expenses, coping with mental stress and developing a whole-farm financial management plan.

"The downturn in the farm economy has highlighted a need for more education in farm financial management, specifically focusing on debt to asset relationships, cash flow management, financial analysis and benchmarking," said Winsor, a farm analyst for K-State Research and Extension and farm wife.

Nearly 700 people across the state participated in the workshops along with 75 K-State Research and Extension agents that facilitated local programming.

Given the success of the four-part series, a fifth session was added to address the COVID-19 situation in April. The goals for the webinar was to provide context around what's impacting the agriculture markets. Ideas for practical items that producers should focus on were discussed to put some control back into their hands. There were about 250



to make changes," Winsor said. "These challenges are weighing on people and the goal was to give participants strategies for how to address the financial stress they are facing."

The sessions were well received by attendees. Comments from participants were positive.

"Thanks for putting together. Probably the best series ever offered by KSU Extension for Women in Ag."

"Getting to step out of my comfort zone and learn something new. Really enjoyed getting to know women in the farming industry."

"Every session was good. Brought awareness to many topics that I find myself thinking about on a daily basis. Will definitely be helpful in the future of our farm."

"Each session was set up well, not too much information at once. They did so well making something difficult become learnable."

participants on the webinar.

"Part of the reason to hold the webinar was because the agriculture economy was difficult before March, and COVID-19 made everything much more uncertain. We wanted to emphasize the importance of continued financial management on their farms so they can use their records

The program was supported by the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture through North-Central Extension Risk Management Education.

Upcoming Events

2020 Farm and Ranch Income Tax/Estate and Business Planning Seminar

July 20 - 21, 2020
Deadwood, SD

Washburn University School of Law presents the two-day seminar "Farm and Ranch Income Tax/Estate and Business Planning Seminar" on Monday, July 20 and Tuesday, July 21, 2020 at Lodge at Deadwood, in Deadwood, South Dakota. This program is appropriate for agribusiness professionals, attorneys, certified public accountants, enrolled agents, and tax practitioners.

Risk and Profit Conference

August 20 - 21, 2020
Manhattan, KS

An annual conference hosted by the Department of Agricultural Economics that provides an opportunity for key agricultural decision makers to interact with each other and with faculty on important topics in agriculture.

2020 Scholarship and Awards Banquet

September 18 2020
Manhattan, KS

Ag Econ Students, Alumni and Friends Tailgate

September 19, 2020
before the K-State/Vanderbilt game
Manhattan, KS

Ag Lenders Conference

September 29, 2020
Garden City, KS
September 30, 2020
Manhattan, KS

Master of Agribusiness (MAB) Students, Alumni and Friends Tailgate

October 10, 2020
before the K-State/Kansas game
Manhattan, KS

Kansas Crop Insurance Workshops

October 27, 2020: Brush, CO
October 28, 2020: Grand Island, NE
October 29, 2020: Salina, KS
October 30, 2020: Enid, OK