

# ORGANIZED SYMPOSIA

## **THE AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS PROFESSION UNDER STRESS: IMPLICATIONS FOR 1862 AND 1890 LAND GRANT INSTITUTIONS (Moderator: Donald R. McDowell, North Carolina A&T State University).**

**Organizer: Donald R. McDowell, North Carolina A&T State University.**

**Presenters: Marion R. McKinnie, North Carolina A&T State University; Dorothy Comer, University of Florida; and Richard Robbins, North Carolina A&T State University.**

Over the last decade, many Departments of Agricultural Economics at 1862 and 1890 Colleges of Agriculture have been experiencing declines in enrollment, causing much stress among faculty and administrators. Enrollment within the Colleges has declined by 15 percent during the last five years. Curriculum revitalization has been proposed as a primary means of attracting more students into the profession, thus reducing this stressful condition. McKinnie, addressing enrollment problems and trends, foresees the decline in enrollment tapering off with a shift from primarily white males to more females and minorities. Comer and Robbins address major curriculum reforms under consideration and changing internal and external factors that must be dealt with at 1862 and 1890 institutions, respectively. Surprisingly, both institutions are facing similar problems and combatting the problems in similar manners; however, the problems are more exacerbated among the 1890 institutions.

## **ISSUES PROGRAMMING OF EXTENSION—EFFECTIVE RESPONSE OR MORE BUREAUCRACY? (Moderator: A. Lee Meyer, University of Kentucky).**

**Organizers: A. Lee Meyer, University of Kentucky; and Ronald Plain, University of Missouri.**

**Presenters: Daniel Smith, Clemson University; Ron Plain, University of Missouri; William O. Mizelle, Jr., University of Georgia; and T. Roy Bogle, Oklahoma State University.**

The presenters described a variety of Issues Programming approaches used. Missouri's originates at the county level. Georgia uses less formally organized teams. South Carolina organized Problem Identification Committees for input. Oklahoma's approach has varied according to the initiative.

The discussion of professional implications included conflict between being a team-oriented generalist and a disciplinarian publishing in peer-reviewed outlets; loss of freedom to select issues; and potential separation from economists with research positions.

Success of issue-oriented teams is mixed. This approach can maintain and build support. However, there are doubts that it can have a more substantial impact.

## **MARKETING ALTERNATIVES FOR SMALL FARMERS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DIRECT MARKETING**

**(Moderator: Handy Williamson, Jr., University of Tennessee).**

**Organizers: Surendra P. Singh and Faqir S. Bagi, Tennessee State University.**

**Presenters: Joe Free, Tennessee Valley Authority; Lionel Williamson, University of Kentucky; B. N. Hiremath, S. P. Singh, F. S. Bagi, and S. L. Comer, Tennessee State University; and Kelso Wessel, Ohio State University.**

A great deal of interest has recently surfaced in direct marketing. Small farms with limited resources are operating under relatively higher risks. An adequate job of marketing can help reduce those risks. "Direct marketing" has often been suggested as a solution to many marketing problems faced by small farmers. There is, however, lack of relevant information in this area to provide answers to many important questions.

The participants addressed several key issues during this session. Hiremath presented findings of a study being conducted in Tennessee of marketing problems faced by small farmers in Tennessee in the traditional mar-

keting system. An overview of marketing problems and alternatives used by small farmers was presented. Lionel Williamson in his presentation emphasized that it is easier to promote the adoption of alternative enterprises by small farmers, but the necessary marketing outlets and facilities generally are lacking. This results in over-supply and under-demand and discourages established farmers from continuing these operations and new farmers from adopting such enterprises.

Wessel suggested that in the ever-changing rural environment, farmers have to be innovating and enterprising in finding new alternative enterprises like fish ponds, Christmas trees, small restaurants/gift shops/pony rides, along with their roadside or pick-your-own operations. There was a lively exchange among the audience and the participants.

### **THE NATURE OF RURAL POVERTY IN THE SOUTH: CAUSES, PROBLEMS, AND SOLUTIONS FOR THE 1990'S** (Moderator: Lionel Williamson, University of Kentucky).

**Organizers: David L. Debertain and Craig L. Infanger, University of Kentucky.**

**Presenters: David L. Debertain and Craig L. Infanger, University of Kentucky ; Rodney Clouser, University of Florida ; and Mark Henry, Clemson University.**

The presentation by Dr. Debertain and Dr. Infanger identified the four poverties of rural America—traditionally poor rural farm and nonfarm, and the rural and nonrural residents who are now poor because of the farm financial crisis of the 1990s. They suggested that different approaches are needed for solving poverty problems within each group. The presentation by Dr. Clouser dealt with educational strategies for dealing with rural poverty. Although a strategy focusing on improved education has appeal for academicians, Clouser's presentation identified numerous problems in implementing such a strategy. Rural industrialization has also been viewed as the long-run solution to the rural poverty problem, but there are also major problems in implementing this strategy. Dr. Henry's presentation dealt with some of these issues.

### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR BEEF CATTLE PRODUCTION IN THE SOUTH** (Moderator: N. Rob Martin, Auburn University).

**Organizer: Kenneth E. Nelson, U.S.D.A.**

**Presenters: Dan McLemore, University of Tennessee; Kenneth E. Nelson, U.S.D.A.; and Thomas Spreen, University of Florida.**

Excess forage and labor resources indicate that the South will maintain its share of feeder cattle production. Altered genetic makeup of cow herds will accommodate leaner beef. Improved feeder cattle description and more efficient assembly and exchange systems are needed. The South seems unlikely to attract large-scale beef slaughtering facilities without developing a cattle feeding industry. The future role of new products is uncertain, but lower production costs and retail prices for poultry seem to explain poultry's gain on red meat. A comprehensive GAMS-based multi-commodity regional livestock-meat model will directly address questions raised in the symposium.

### **HOW WE CAN SAVE THE LAND GRANT SYSTEM** (Moderator: P. J. van Blokland, University of Florida).

**Organizer: P. J. van Blokland, University of Florida.**

**Presenters: Burl Long, University of Florida; Hal Harris, Clemson University; Robert Evenson, Yale University; Daniel Padberg, Texas A&M University; Thomas L. Frey, Urbana, Illinois; and J. T. Bonnen, Michigan State University.**

Six experts concurred that "we can save the land grant system." B. F. Long examined undergraduate teaching and emphasized a more professional curriculum to meet business needs. R. E. Evenson demanded a more global approach and argued that research investments brought high returns. H. Harris requested relevant administrative support for

meaningful extension programs and underlined real solutions for real problems. D. I. Padberg took an administrator's perspective in warning that we must have broader clientele and wider political support as we change. J. T. Bonnen, following this direction, emphasized that we should courageously direct changes ourselves. Finally, T. L. Frey reinforced private sector demands and recommended we be adult educators for clients that include non-farm businesses.

### **GREEN REVOLUTION/ EXACTION—MAKING ECONOMIC PRINCIPLES COME ALIVE THROUGH CASE SIMULATION GAMING**

**(Moderator: James Trapp, Oklahoma State University).**

**Organizer: James Trapp, Oklahoma State University.**

**Presenters: Dan Bernardo, Oklahoma State University; Wade Gregory, Pragma Corporation; and Larry Sanders and Joe Schatzer, Oklahoma State University.**

Green Revolution/Exaction is a guided role-playing case study simulation game. The game simulates a two-sector economy consisting of agricultural and industrial sectors, and the linkages of these sectors to the international market. Players assume the roles of farmers, middlemen, industrialists, laborers, and government policy makers. The game is a very effective teaching tool for a wide variety of economic topics and audiences, including university students. The realistic experiences generated through the game supplement traditional lecture-based instruction by providing opportunities for the players to apply a wide variety of economic principles as well as practice their communication and decision-making skills.

### **ECONOMIC MULTIDIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABLE FARMING SYSTEMS**

**(Moderator: Stephen Ott, University of Georgia).**

**Organizer: John Ikerd, University of Missouri.**

**Presenters: Patrick Madden, CSRS; Dixon Hubbard, ES-U.S.D.A.; Fred Hitzhusen, Ohio State University; and John Ikerd, University of Missouri.**

Low-input Sustainable Agriculture (LISA) is a reality that agricultural economists can no longer ignore. Madden pointed out that LISA has evolved from the hippie movement of the late '60s to practical methods of producing food and fiber that are being adopted by commercial farmers. Ikerd stressed that internal farm resources should be incorporated, along with external purchased resources, in developing production function relationships. Hitzhusen showed how off-farm costs of soil erosion can be quantified at the farm level. Hubbard said agriculturalists must now think about environmental and social impacts as well as farm impacts in analyzing production systems.

### **PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR COOPERATION IN FOSTERING DEVELOPMENT OF INFANT INDUSTRIES: THE CASE OF AQUACULTURE IN THE SOUTHEAST** (Moderator: **James Dillard, Mississippi State University).**

**Organizer: Upton Hatch, Auburn University.**

**Presenters: Michael Dicks, U.S.D.A.; Jim HERNsberger, Mississippi State University; and Carole Engle, University of Arkansas/Pine Bluff.**

Demand for aquacultural products is increasing as a result of relatively constant supply from capture fisheries and increases in income and population. At the farm level, aquaculture has become an attractive alternative to traditional agricultural crops in some areas.

The participants addressed several key issues. Dicks summarized the perspective from Washington, particularly focusing on water quality problems in Mississippi and the need for recirculating systems. HERNsberger provided an overview of the new value-added emphasis in the catfish processing industry. Engle presented marketing research related to product and consumer characteristics of existing and potential markets for cultured species.

**THE EMERGING FEDERAL POLICY ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT: CURRENT PERSPECTIVES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS (Moderator: Tesfa Ghebremedhin, Southern University).**

**Organizers: Thomas G. Johnson, Virginia Tech; and Tesfa Ghebremedhin, Southern University.**

**Presenters: John Dunmore and Ken Deavers, U.S.D.A.-ERS; Thomas G. Johnson, Virginia Tech; and Ronald Wimberly, North Carolina State University.**

The 1985 Food Security Act (FSA) demonstrates some "emerging" trends in agricultural policy (flexibility, market orientation, and decoupling). It is possible that the 1990 FSA will continue this pattern. Historically, agricultural policy has been ineffective in improving rural conditions. Since rural America is so diverse, a diversity of programs is called for, including an important role for state and local governments. But the federal government also has a role in creating equity among regions. Federal programs to enhance infrastructure and education will probably be most effective. Finally, land grant universities and the Extension Service must refocus and revitalize themselves if they are to contribute to the revitalization of rural America.

**"ALTERNATIVES FOR AGRICULTURE" PROGRAMS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR AGRICULTURAL ECONOMISTS (Moderator: Charles Curtis, Jr., Clemson University).**

**Organizers: Paul Teague, Arkansas State University; and Charles Curtis, Jr., Clemson University.**

**Presenters: Charles Curtis, Jr., Clemson University; Gary Fairchild, University of Florida; Harold Harris, Jr., and P. James Rathwell, Clemson University; and Paul Teague, Arkansas State University.**

Identification of economically viable alter-

native enterprises is being widely encouraged. Research and extension efforts in "Sustainable Agriculture" and "Non-traditional Enterprises" are drawing substantial attention and resources. Harris provided a historic perspective of the adoption of "new" enterprises in the South and discussed the forces behind adoption. Teague discussed production and farm financial issues relating to new enterprise viability. Rathwell described the special challenge of non-traditional crop marketing. Fairchild provided a regional perspective warning against the "fallacy of composition" in individual state efforts. Cooperative efforts among states are needed to assess cumulative regional impact.

**ALTERNATIVE FOR FINANCING INFRASTRUCTURE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES IN THE SOUTH (Moderator: Gerald A. Doeksen, Oklahoma State University).**

**Organizer: Southern Rural Development Center Infrastructure Task Force.**

**Presenters: James Hite, Clemson University; William W. Falf, University of Maryland; Glen Pulver, University of Wisconsin, Joseph A. Lee, Alabama A&M University; and Dave Chicione, University of Illinois.**

In a recent study, the National Council of Public Works Improvement found convincing evidence that the quality of America's infrastructure is insufficient to meet future growth demands. This symposium was organized to address the issues of inadequate infrastructure and methods to finance infrastructure. Dr. James Hite (Clemson) discussed infrastructure needs and particular problems of financing infrastructure. He particularly brought in the equity concept with rural water district programs. Mr. Joseph A. Lee reviewed a regional project which addressed infrastructure issues. Dr. Chicione (Illinois) reviewed this paper and discussed the difficult problems associated with financing infrastructure.

**IMPLICATIONS OF TRADE LIBERALIZATION FOR U.S. GRAIN SECTOR (Moderator: William Lin, U.S.D.A.).**

**Bengt Hyberg, U.S.D.A.**

The emphasis being placed on agricultural trade in the current round of GATT negotiations has raised concerns about implications of trade liberalization for the U.S. grain sector. A key question remains whether the United States truly has a competitive advantage among world exporters for wheat, rice, and feed grains under a free trade environment.

The participants addressed effects of trade liberalization on production, consumption, grain prices, price instability, and trade flow in world grain markets. Effects of trade liberalization on U.S. competitiveness in the markets and how the U.S. grain sector would likely adjust to this new environment were presented. The participants also identified gainers and losers from trade liberalization and future research activities needed.

**EFFECTIVELY UTILIZING  
VIDEO TECHNOLOGY IN THE  
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS**

**PROFESSION (Moderator: Mike D. Woods, Oklahoma State University).**

**Organizers: Mike D. Woods and Larry D. Sanders, Oklahoma State University.**

**Presenters: Larry Sanders, Marla Barnes, and Ron Dahlgren, Oklahoma State University; and Earl Brown, University of Maryland.**

Agricultural economists face a changing world and changing clientele needs. Production of videotapes and satellite broadcasting offer new opportunities. Many are already utilizing these types of resources while others are considering the use of this technology.

The participants addressed several key issues during the session, including subject matter concerns, expectations of video specialists, expectations/needs of local site coordinators for satellite conferences, consideration of state versus nationwide conferences, and videotape production.