

October, 2008

Agricultural and Applied Economics Association

Extension Section Newsletter

<http://www.aaea.org/sections/extension/>

Doug's Journal

It's a pleasure to visit with you via this first edition of the Extension Section Newsletter for 2008-09.

A major highlight of the Orlando meeting was the Graduate Student Competition. My sense is that the two-year old Graduate Student Competition has not just been initiated but it is definitely gaining momentum! Thanks to Larry Sanders, Don Ricks and Jim Novak for planting the seed and nurturing it through emergence. Unfortunately Larry was not able to go to Orlando but the rest of the crew carried on in fine fashion. Thanks also to Stan Ernst, Andy Seidel, Don Ricks and Jim Novak who were the judges this year. The committee included Larry, Chair, Jim, Henry Bahn, and Margot Rudstrom as well as a rep from the Graduate Student Section. I also want to thank the Farm Foundation for their moral and financial support for the competition.

Speaking of Larry, he reports that after a multitude of tests and consultations he is back at his desk but is only working 40 hours per week rather than 70. We wish him the best as he keeps a close check on his ticker. He has stepped down as chair of the committee but the competition is still in good hands, Jim and Margot have agreed to co-chair it next year.

The Extension track sessions were all well attended. Thanks to all who organized and presented at those sessions. These track sessions are not just a way of disseminating information to our extension colleagues but are an opportunity for extension professionals to contribute to the whole profession. My casual observation was that there were at least as many, if not more, non-extension participants than extension professionals in the Extension track sessions.

I want to thank Ken Bailey for his leadership of the Section this past year. Probably the one thing you might remember about the Association this past year was that it changed its name. However, I think the most important accomplishment of the AAEA was maintaining outreach as one of functions of the association. Many people were involved in this effort and I was not privy to all behind the scenes negotiations. But I do want to recognize Walt Armbruster and his committee as well as Otto Doering and Richard Just for crafting a workable plan. From the Extension Section's perspective, Ken carried the ball in getting the document prepared with our Section's response and suggestions.

Thanks to Bob Craven and his colleagues at the Farm Financial Management Center for maintaining our website. Bob was very prompt getting the results of the Orlando meeting posted.

One other topic I want to mention is membership. It won't be long before AAEA sends out the membership renewal notices for 2009. Make sure you not only renew your membership in the Extension Section but encourage colleagues who are not members to join. You should have received a ballot voting on a reduction in membership fees. So a positive for membership building this next year is the possibility of lower membership dues. This must be fairly unprecedented, that is, for an economics organization to test its own theory that more consumers will buy if the price is lower. The Extension Section is highly regarded by both the AAEA Board and the general membership. Even though our numbers are declining in academia, the value of outreach and extension, as related to life long learning, is widely recognized. We have an opportunity to build on that recognition and enhance the professional benefits of our members.

2008 Extension Section Pre-Conference Study Tour

The tour left the hotel about 7:30 am and headed south through the heart of Florida.

The first stop of the day was the MacArthur Agro-Ecology Research Center at Buck Island Ranch. The ranch is located 7 miles from Lake Placid and only about 30 miles as the crow flies from Lake Okeechobee. The 10,300 acre working cattle ranch has about 3,000 Brahman-cross cows. The ranch is owned by the John D and Catherine T MacArthur Foundation and is operated on a long term lease by the Archbold Biological Station. The Research Center is dedicated to long term ecological research, education and environmental stewardship of a large-scale commercial ranch. The focus is on protection and restoration of the Northern Everglades Ecosystem. The ranch received the 2007 Florida Agriculture Commissioner's Ag-Environmental Leadership Award. After a tour of the ranch in the custom built swamp buggy, a locally catered barbeque lunch was served at the ranch headquarters. And no, there were no gators cited on the tour the President-Elect took!

The second stop was the Bates Sons and Daughters Caladium Growers operation near Lake Placid. For the non-horticulture experts, a caladium is a foliage-type plant that grows from a bulb. The Lake Placid area grows about 95% of the all caladiums sold in the country. Our hosts were Don Bates and his daughter Dot. They took us on a bus tour of the caladium fields in the area where we saw a wide range of varieties - all with different base colors, leaf configurations and color patterns. Each person on the tour received a complementary bag of bulbs from the Bates family. The Extension Section President-Elect seemed to end of with the unclaimed bulbs which arrived safe back in Nebraska. They got planted in pots about the first of August and, as this newsletter is being prepared, we are still frost-free and the caladiums are providing a beautiful array of colors.

The last stop of the tour was at Florida's Natural Growers Grove House. Florida's Natural Growers is a cooperative of over 1,000 Florida citrus growers, including John VanSickle, our tour guide. We were not able to tour the processing plant but were hosted in the Grove House across the street from the plant. Our host was Bob Behr, a Ph. D agricultural economist who serves as Vice President of the company. He showed a video about the company and answered questions about the Florida citrus industry, giving us the ag economist's perspective of the industry.

Thanks to John VanSickle who arranged the tour and acted as our guide. All stops were interesting. The ranch and caladiums fields gave us a different perspective of Florida agriculture than probably many of us had. It was interesting and enriching to have a wide variety of participants on the tour from students to retired faculty members.

2008 AAEA Annual Meeting

The details of the Extension section tack sessions are available on our Section website at: <http://www.aaea.org/sections/extension/annual.html>

As mentioned elsewhere, all the sessions were well attended and organizers and presenters did an excellent job.

Highlights of Annual Business Meeting

The business meeting was attended by 26 people—at least 26 signed the attendance sheet although there were more that that in attendance by the end of the meeting.

Report of Richard Just, incoming AAEA President. He thanked the Section for their efforts to help get the new outreach efforts functioning. Reported Doug Jose will serve on the AAEA membership committee. He discussed the Board's proposal to reduce the membership fees.

AAEA Outreach Committee—Walt Armbruster. He gave an update on the Shared Materials component. The committee is trying to identify an editor for this section. A peer review of materials is planned to maintain the integrity of the site and the professional legitimacy of the materials.

Website Competition: The 2008 winner was farmdoc. It was suggested the annual website competition focus on sites that communicate information on the farm bill in 2009. The Executive Committee is still open to suggestions.

The membership in the Section was 196 as of June 30, 2008. The Extension Section is the largest of all sections. Suggestions were raised on strategies to expand the membership for the Executive Committee to consider.

The reception was again sponsored by The Center for Farm Financial Management and farmdoc (University of Illinois).

Luncheon

The Extension Section Luncheon speaker was Lonnie Ingram, Distinguished Professor at the University of Florida. He discussed the many aspects of converting lingocellulose to ethanol.

AAEA Extension Award Winners

The following people and programs were recognized for their contribution to the profession at the recent AAEA meeting in Orlando, Florida:

AAEA Individual Extension Award—Less than 10 Years' Experience: Vera Bitsch, Michigan State University

AAEA Individual Extension Award—More than 10 Years' Experience: Michael Boehje, Purdue University

AAEA Distinguished Extension Program Award—Group: “The Packer-Feeder Game—An Experiential Learning Program” Clement Ward, Oklahoma State University; Derrell Peel, Oklahoma State University; Stephen Koontz, Colorado State University; and James Trapp, Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service

Extension Section Award for an outstanding Website for a Program or Issue: Farmdoc, University of Illinois

Graduate Student Extension Competition:

First Place: T.J. Hanson, University of Minnesota; What do we know about Minnesota's Job Opportunity Building Zones (JOBZ) Program?

Second Place: Keri Perez, North Carolina State University; Optimal Conservation Strategies for Landowners: An Extension Program to Address Conservation Decision on Agricultural Land

Third Place: Jennifer Thorvaldson, Colorado State University; Water Leases: Attitudes of South Platte Farmers

Extension Section Executive Committee Nominees

Nominees are needed for President-Elect and two Directors to serve three year terms, beginning August 2009. Steve Halbrook's term as At-Large Director and Larry Sanders' term as Southern Region Director will be expiring in 2009. If you have suggestions (including yourself) please pass those on to Ken Bailey, Past President (baileyk@psu.edu).

Call for Proposals for 2009 Extension Section Track Sessions

This is the call for proposals for our track sessions for the 2009 AAEA meeting in Milwaukee. Traditionally we have used three of our allocated slots for symposia on crop and livestock outlook and public policy update. The past two years we have had the three finalists in our graduate student competition make their presentations. This uses one-half of one slot with the Graduate Student section being the other sponsor. Personally I think we have been light in presenting symposia on subjects such as resource and environmental economics, rural development, technology change, rural/urban conflicts, and entrepreneurship. If you have ideas on any topics please send me your suggestions and proposals. Joint proposals with other sections are always welcome as this expands the number of sessions we can sponsor or co-sponsor.

The deadline for submission of Extension Track proposals is November 3, 2008.

If a symposium is not accepted as part of the Extension Track, submitters will be notified in time to submit their proposal to the general AAEA competition. The Extension Section Executive Committee will make the selections for our AAEA tracks.

Guidelines for Proposals:

At least one of the organizers must be a member of the Extension Section. The symposia proposals must be extension or outreach related. The symposia are 90 minutes long with the formal presentation taking no more than 60 minutes allowing at least 30 minutes for audience participation. Please submit your proposals electronically by November 3, 2008 to Doug Jose at hjose1@unl.edu.

Include:

1. Title
2. Names of organizers with mailing and email addresses and telephone numbers.
3. Short abstract of about 50 words summarizing the symposium.
4. An abstract of no more than 1,000 words giving detailed description of the symposium.
5. The names and titles of the moderator and suggested speakers.

2009 Extension Award Nominations

We have some great outreach programs in Agricultural Economics and outstanding individuals who are deserving of recognition. Please take the time to nominate your colleagues or yourself for your hard work by honoring them with an AAEA Extension Award. The deadline for submissions will be after the new year but start thinking about deserving colleagues. There are three awards for Distinguishing Extension/Outreach Programs: (1) individual with less than 10 years experience, (2) individual with more than 10 years experience, and (3) a group program effort. You can find the guidelines for the AAEA Extension Awards on the AAEA website (www.aaea.org) under the “Awards” tab.

Also encourage graduate students to submit a nomination for the Graduate Student Award. This competition recognizes outstanding extension/outreach programs that are based on a student’s thesis or dissertation. The finalist will present a seminar at the 2009 AAEA meeting. If more information is needed please contact James Novak, Auburn University at (334) 844-3512 or e-mail him at novakjl@aubrun.edu

2008-2009 Extension Section Executive Committee

Your 2008-2009 Extension Section Executive Committee members are listed below. Feel free to contact any of them if you should have any questions or comments about AAEA Extension Section activities.

Thanks goes out to retiring Executive Committee members Ken Bailey, Pennsylvania State; Laurence Crane, National Crop Insurance Services; J. Henry Bahn, USDA CSREES; Trent Teegerstom, University of Arizona; and Richard Just, AAEA Board Liaison.

Welcome to the new Committee members: Bob Craven—not new to the committee, just promoted up the ladder, John Hewlett, Lin Hoffman, Greg Ibendahl, Gary Schnitkey, and Ron Mittelhammer. We are pleased the AAEA Board has continued the precedent of appointing the AAEA President-Elect as the Extension Section Liaison.

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