Report of the Section Chair

1. Membership and Financial Status
   Section membership as of June 30: 121
   86 academic, 15 USDA, 20 other (private or non-USDA gov)
   Some fluctuations, but no strong trend

   Balance on account, as of June 30: $11,466.39.
   Down from $17,380.58 on December 31, 2006.
   Support for two policy conferences since then.

2. Annual Policy Conference
   March 10, 2008, at ERS in Washington
   Theme: Information, Policy, and the Food System
   Financial Support from ERS and AMS
   Outstanding ERS facilities support

   Participation:
   Good papers/presentations, not many submissions
   45 registrants, good interaction, could have been better
   Joint sponsorship yielded free-rider problems

3. Election of Officers
   a. Chair-elect: Christiane Schroeter
   b. Treasurer: Chuck Nicholson

4. Looking Ahead
   Rising travel expenses
   Steady membership but limited conference participation
   Declining balance
   Rookie chairs
   Proposal: appoint committee to review section activities and membership,
   report to Joe with proposals for conference organization, website,
   newsletter, etc.
Policy Conference Sessions

8:30-10:15 Information, Labeling, and Consumer Choice
Moderator: Elise Golan, Economic Research Service
“Public Policy and Endogenous Beliefs: The Case of Genetically Modified Food,” by Jayson Lusk (Oklahoma State University).
“What is it About Organic Milk? An Experimental Analysis” by John Bernard and Daria Bernard (University of Delaware).

10:35-11:45 Two Evaluations of Federal Policies
Moderator: James MacDonald, Economic Research Service
“Outlook vs. Futures: Three Decades of Evidence in Hog and Cattle Markets,” by Evelyn Colino and Scott Irwin (University of Illinois).

1:00-2:30 Mandatory Livestock Price Reporting
Moderator: Bill Hahn, Economic Research Service
“How Informa Uses Mandatory Livestock Price Reporting Data,” Rob Murphy (Informa).

2:50-4:00 National Animal Identification Systems
Moderator: Janet Perry, Economic Research Service