# What's Happening in AERS

#### Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology

University of Idaho

December 2011 Volume 12, Issue 4

#### A Note from Dr. Roheim



It is such a pleasure to be writing this, my first column as Department Head, in an AERS newsletter! The first thing I'd like to do is to thank Dr. Larry Makus for the excellent leadership he provided to the department as interim head during the past year and a half. It is clear that the faculty and students appreciate the dedication he gave to the position; Larry ensured that the department and people in it, for whom he cares so much,

continued on a steady path.

Since arriving in mid-October I've had the pleasure of meeting many of our terrific students. I met with the Agribusiness Club, which is busy planning several activities, including field trips to surrounding area agribusiness firms, and was pleased by number and quality of the students involved in the Club. I joined Associate Dean and AERS faculty member John Foltz and his wife, Barbara, on a trip to Lewiston to visit the Halloween Corn Maze and saw that students from AERS were actively involved in planning, creating and operating this CALS initiative – plus everyone had a lot of fun!

I'd also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the team of students who, under the mentoring of Professor Aaron Johnson, won 2<sup>nd</sup> place at the Food Marketing Challenge at the Food Distribution Research Society meetings in Portland, Oregon in October. Erica Louder, Whitney Plant-Goodwin, Ashley McClain, and Jesse Smit applied their agribusiness knowledge to a business case presented by Mr. Bill Tennant, VP of Operations for Tillamook County Creamery Association, missing out on 1<sup>st</sup> place to Texas A&M University but coming in ahead of Utah State University. Congratulations to all of you!

We had a productive and informative Advisory Board meeting in October, at which the board members provided several insights for AERS' planning for the future for its teaching, research and extension programs. I look forward to meeting those Board members who were unable to attend.

In closing, I'm excited to be here, part of this outstanding department, and look forward to a productive future. I hope to meet many friends of AERS as I travel around Idaho, but don't be shy; feel free to call, email or stop by my office as well! Enjoy this issue of the newsletter, and may you and yours have a very happy holiday season.

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# Student Team Places 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Food Marketing Challenge

This year's University of Idaho team of Erica Louder, Whitney Goodwin, Ashley McClain, and Jesse Smit placed second at the Food Marketing Challenge.

In this competition, student teams from across the U.S. hear a live case presentation from a company executive on Saturday morning. By Saturday night they are presenting their solutions to the company's challenge. Three teams advance to the final round on Sunday morning.

This year teams heard from Bill Tennet from Tillamook County Creamery Association. He challenged the students with a production location and market expansion problem.



Pictured from left to right: Dr. Aaron Johnson, Erica Louder, Whitney Goodwin, Ashley McClain, and Jesse Smit.

Teams presented twice on Saturday night. The two sets of judges decided to put University of Idaho, Texas A&M, and Utah State University forward to the finals. On the last night, the results were announced with Texas A&M first, Idaho second, and Utah State third.

Our students took a very specific tact on solving the production location problem by being the only team to apply a linear program and supported their ideas with solid research.

If you see these students around the hall, please congratulate them on a job well done.

#### **Thesis Defense**



**Whitney S. Goodwin.** Thesis Candidate, defended her thesis titled "Economic Analysis of Increasing the Minimum Size for Fresh Potatoes in Idaho" on December 9.

### **Faculty Presentations**

**Jeff Luckstead, Stephen Davadoss,** and Ron Mittelhammer "Heterogeneous Products and Apple Trade." School of Economics Science, Washington State University, December 2011.

**Lorie Higgins** presented an approach to evaluating community development programs that tracks the "ripple effects" of community development programs to the Extension Community Development Topic Team in Boise in November. Community development (CD) programs are notoriously challenging to evaluate because there isn't always a direct pathway from intervention to intended outcome. The topic team asked Lorie to take the lead in writing a funding proposal to develop and use the "Ripple Effects Mapping" process in Idaho.

### **Fall Seminar Series**

- Steve Cook gave a seminar titled "New Growth Theory" on September 16.
- Stephanie Kane gave a Seminar titled "Does Economics Drive Beef Cattle Operation Decision Making, or Are Producers Just Following the Herd?" on November 4.
- Jalal Jahir gave a seminar titled "Spatial Analysis of Agricultural Sector Performance in the Western United States" on October 7.
  - Kelly Wendland gave a seminar titled "Biodiversity Conservation During Times of Transition: Protected Area Effectiveness in European Russia Between 1985 and 2010" on December 2

### **Meetings and Trips**

#### Aaron Johnson attended:

Food Distribution Research Society, Portland, Oregon – October 14-17.
Attended annual meetings, fulfilled responsibilities of immediate past president, and took a team to the Student Food Marketing Challenge.



Northwest Agribusiness Executive Seminar, November 14-16, Skamania Lodge (Stephenson, WA).
Participated in the seminar, interacted with several agribusiness leaders from across the Northwest, presented and discussed a case study to the program. The case was titled, "Creating a (Branded) King - The Tale of the Copper River King Salmon."

#### Lorie Higgins visited:

• New Meadows three times to co-facilitate community meetings with Wim Braak, Valley County Extension Educator. These community planning meetings are following up on the Idaho Community Review conducted in the Meadows Valley last spring. The objective is to help the community plan and implement recommendations made by the Community Review visiting team. For more information, and to view the New Meadows Community Review report, go to <a href="http://irp.idaho.gov/Home/Community Review/">http://irp.idaho.gov/Home/Community Review/</a>. Lorie has served on the Community Review Steering Committee since 2003. She conducts "listening sessions" in the communities and will continue to develop and participate in "Next Steps" processes in Community Review communities.

### **Publications**

• Lorie Higgins completed development of "Artisan Trails of North Central Idaho and Southeastern Washington" this month. 15,000 copies are being printed and an online version is under development. The document, which measures 22 x 35, folds like a road map and provides a map and listings for nearly 200 creative businesses (e.g., art galleries and studios), heritage and recreational sites in a nine county region known as "Two Degrees Northwest: Where Art Meets the Land." The guide is part of a rural development strategy to enhance and promote the cultural industries of a region.

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### **Noteworthy News**





**Rita (Xiaoxue) Du,** from Tianjin, China, is a master's student in agricultural economics and rural sociology. Through her work with Professor Stephen Devadoss, Rita has been able to pursue her interest in researching trade and policy issues. Her research into a trade dispute between the United States and China developed into a co-authored paper that was presented over the summer at the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association meeting in Pittsburgh. Rita says her success is inspired by Devadoss. She says he "constantly encourages and works with me very closely on each and every step of my research, which gives me a lot of confidence. He is the best mentor for me and other graduate students."

**Rita Du (Stephen Devadoss' student)** received Alumni Award for Excellence, University of Idaho Alumni Association, Fall 2011.

**Stephen Devadoss received Distinguished Teaching Service** to the International Studies Program, to the University of Idaho, 2011.

**Stephen Devadoss received Alumni Award for Excellence**, University of Idaho Alumni Association, Fall 2011.



# Congratulations!

# IX Ranch Company—Ranch Crew Leader

The IX Ranch Company is looking for a graduate that wishes to pursue a career in agriculture on a large commercial cow, calf, and yearling operation in North Central Montana. The company is interested in hiring a couple in their 20's and 30's with strong ties to agriculture and have a ranch philosophy similar to their own.

The general job description is to assist in company growth and profitability by helping day-to-day operations and oversight. Maximize efficiencies and quality to minimize waste and expense. Adhere to IX Ranch Mission and Guiding Principles.

Some general qualifications include: good written and verbal communication skills, good organizational, analytical, and teamwork skills, caring attitude toward all fellow employees, subordinates and livestock, well versed in evaluations and determinations of labor needs, use good judgment and other similar qualities.

This position offers a variety of responsibilities as well. These include, but are not limited to, areas in human resources, quality assurance, day-to day operations, end of the day duties, and other miscellaneous tasks.

The beginning salary is negotiable based on experience and other benefits are also included.

For more information about this opportunity, or if you are interested in applying, please contact Richard Roth at (406) 390-2955 or <a href="mailto:rroth@ixranch.com">rroth@ixranch.com</a>, or go to the IX Ranch Company website at www.ixranch.com.

# **AERS Winter Potluck and Ugly Sweater Contest**

The Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology Department had its annual winter potluck on December 9. Thanks to a suggestion from the graduate students, this year's potluck included more than just good food and great company—it included an Ugly Sweater Contest. This contest was open to all faculty, staff, and students who wished to participate, and added a unique sense of fashion to the luncheon. The individuals who participated were graduate students John Maxwell, Hannah Vinson and Chris Anderson, as well as faculty member Lorie Higgins. After much deliberation, it was decided that graduate student Chris Anderson had the ugliest sweater and that Lorie's sweater was actually very nice. Thanks to everyone for showing off your Christmas worst and congratulations Chris!

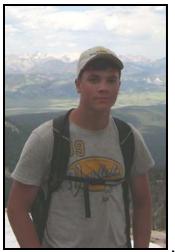


Pictured above from left to right: John Maxwell, Chris Anderson, Hannah Vinson and Lorie Higgins.

# **Ambassador Spotlight**

The College of Agricultural and Life Sciences student Ambassadors are selected to represent the College at various public events. These individuals must be nominated by their professors, faculty, or staff in the College of Agriculture for their outstanding student leadership and achievements. Once they have been nominated, they are eligible to partake in the application and interview process. Those students who are selected as ambassadors participate in many events throughout the year, including high school visits where they try to recruit future Vandals. The AERS has a few outstanding students that are a part of this program this year.

#### **Travis Chase**



#### Sophomore: Major—Agribusiness & Soil and Water Science

What do you like most about your degree? I am majoring in Soil and Water Science, which has a lot of emerging opportunities. I come from an agricultural background, so this major allows me to keep that connection to the land while helping to find solutions to some of our most pressing issues of this century, like water quality/quantity and land stewardship/food production as we meet the demands of a rising population. It is exciting to have so much freedom within my major to focus on the things I really am passionate about and follow that direction! I am also majoring in Agribusiness, which is one of the most versatile majors you could think of. Its scope includes anything from owning a farming operation to running your own business to sales and marketing to property appraisal. I come from an agricultural background, so this major is preparing me with what I need to return to those roots and make the most of the growing opportunities in agriculture.

What factors influenced your decision to attend UI and select a major in the

**College of Agricultural and Life Sciences?** I'm a second generation Vandal, so I grew up with the Vandal pride and love of "The University" that follows. When I was in high school and decided I wanted to go on to college for something Agriculture related, the U of I was at the top of my list. It has the exact degrees that I care about and so many opportunities to get involved with things that are important to me.

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#### **AERS Students**

### The Agribusiness Club

Jessica Reynolds, President Aaron Johnson & Larry Makus, Advisors

The Agribusiness Club is open to all majors in any college, which allows us to provide diverse and unique opportunities to our members. Our focus is on the Agricultural industry, and we explore career and professional opportunities there through guest speakers, local field trips, fundraising, and an annual Spring Trip. We value our membership and work to provide social (and fun!) events that provide life-long friendships that enhance your college experience at UI! Recent events that we've been involved in are the Clearwater Corn Maze, Ag Days Food Fair and Casino Night, Food for Finals, and a guest speaker, Steve Kaufman from Northwest Farm Credit Services.



PNW Trip, pictured from left to right: Dr. Cathy Roheim, Anne Moscrip, Michelle Ball, Jessica Reynolds, Mac Reynolds, Travis Chase, and Dr. Larry Makus.

A small group of Agribusiness Club members and AERS Faculty were also able to participate in a professional tour of Pacific Northwest Farmers' Cooperative in Genesee, Idaho. Former University of Idaho, Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology Graduate, Mac Reynolds, now works for PNW as a Commodities Coordinator and was our tour guide for the afternoon. On this tour, we watched a short movie and had an opportunity to ask questions and learn about the company. We also were able to actually walk through the production plant to see equipment and understand how the processing of products occurs. PNW provides transportation, handling, storage, and processing of grain and legume crops for farmers throughout the Northwest. This tour was an interesting learning opportunity and the staff at PNW were great hosts; we even left with free pens and PNW beanies to help stay warm during the winter. The Agribusiness Club would like to say thank you to the faculty that were able to attend this tour with us and to Pacific Northwest Farmers' Cooperative for their time!

This Spring we're looking forward to hosting a CALS-wide Kickball Tournament, touring local agribusinesses, guest speakers from industry professionals, our annual Golf Scramble fundraiser, supporting the Agribusiness Quiz Bowl team, and more!

# The Collegiate Farm Bureau

**Erica Louder**, President Joe Guenthner, Advisor

The Collegiate Farm Bureau had a busy but very successful few months. In late October we were privileged to host the Young Farmers and Ranchers Discussion Meet for District 5. This year's question was: *How do we capitalize on the growing world demand for agricultural products?* Our top three competitors were all collegiate members, Erica Louder (1<sup>st</sup>), Tyler Johnson (2<sup>nd</sup>), and Nicola Elliott (3<sup>rd</sup>). The top three then competed at the state discussion meet at the Idaho Farm Bureau Meeting in Coeur d'Alene. All three competed extremely well in the state event. Erica Louder qualified for the final round, where she placed 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Early this month we hosted our Collegiate Discussion Meet. This meet is specifically for collegiate farm bureau members. The question posed was: *How can we convince the public that the animal agriculture industry balances production efficiencies with the public's expectations of animal care?* There was great discussion by all the participants and it turned into a very close competition. We award-



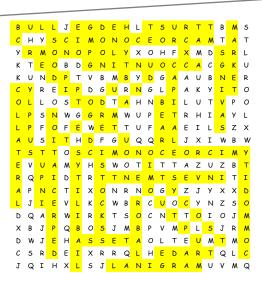
ed prizes to our top three competitors, Nicola Elliott (1<sup>st</sup>), Kirk Ramsey (2<sup>nd</sup>), and James Nasados (3<sup>rd</sup>). Nicola and Kirk will represent Idaho and our Collegiate Farm Bureau at the national discussion meet hosted by the Young Farmers and Ranchers in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Congratulations!

#### Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology

If you have information you would like to include in our next newsletter please contact the editor, Jessica Reynolds, at the address to the left or at reyn1344@vandals.uidaho.edu

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We're on the Web! http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/aers



#### **AERS Word Search**

Accounting Macroeconomics Asset Marginal Market Bear Microeconomics **Budget** Bull Monopoly **Opportunity Cost** Capital Collateral Output Commodity Savings Credit Stocks Demand Supply Depreciation Tax Hedge Trade Input Trust Investment

Labor

Liability

BULLJEG DEHLTSURTT H Y S C I M O N O C E O R C A OLYXOHFXMD TEOBDG NITNUOCCAC T V BMBYDGAAUB EIPDGURNGLPAKY 0 S T 0 DTAHNBILUT RMWUPETRHI OFEWETTUFAAEILSZ SITHDFGUQQRLJXI STTOSCIMONOCEORC V U A M Y H S W O T I T T A Z U Z B QPIDTR TTNEMTSEVNIT P N C T I X O N R N O G Y Z J Y X X JIEVLK C W B R C U O C Y N Z S QARWIR KTSOCNTTOI X B J P Q B O S J M B P V M P L S D W J E H A S S E T A O L T E U M T M C S R D E I X R R Q L H E D A R T Q L J Q I H X L S J L A N I G R A M U V M Q

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