

What's Happening in AERS

Department of Agricultural
Economics and Rural
Sociology

University of Idaho

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A Note from Dr. Van Tassell



This past week we were able to celebrate the successes of our student, staff, and faculty at the CALS Awards Banquet. While we offer our congratulations to all of our nominees and award recipients (listed on page 4), I would like to specifically congratulate two of our alumni, Travis Jones and Robb Steinke, on receiving CALS Outstanding Alumni Awards. I am continually

impressed with the success of our alumni and their continued involvement with the department and college. I would also like to congratulate Victoria Seever on receiving the CALS Outstanding Office Support Staff. Victoria lends support to our academic programs, has excellent editorial skills, and performs numerous daily tasks. She is also the face of our department—I'm sure many of you have interacted with her in person or on the phone.

It is amazing how fast 2010 is moving along. I wish everyone the best as you move into spring and summer.

larryv@uidaho.edu

Stephen Parrott,

Agribusiness major, has been elected ASUI president. Congratulations!



The AERS crop enterprise budgets have been revised/updated. They are available as PDFs, Excel spreadsheets, and data files for the Crop Enterprise Budget Worksheet Program, which can be downloaded from the AERs web site.

http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/aers/r_crops.htm

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Awards

Erinn Argo received 1st runner-up in the 2010 Student Employee of the Year Awards. Selection is very competitive. As we well know, Erinn is not only an outstanding AERS student; her work in the department is indispensable. Erinn exceptionally meets award qualifications in reliability, initiative, quality of work, disposition, and contribution to their department and the University of Idaho.

Thank you, Erinn!

Publications



Devadoss, S. and **J. Luckstead**. “An Analysis of Apple Supply Response,” *International Journal of Production Economics*, 124, 2010: 265-271.

Elbakidze, L., L. Highfield, M. Ward, B. McCarl, and B. Norby, “Economic analysis of mitigation strategies for FMD introduction in highly concentrated animal feeding regions,” *Review of Agricultural Economics*, 31(4)(2009):931-950.

Foltz, J., and **S. Devadoss**. “Enhancing Student Learning Experiences and Providing Value to the Agribusiness Industry by Building the Industry-Institution Interface,” *Journal of Agribusiness*, 26(2) 2008: 117-134.



Presentations & Trips

January

Kate Painter presented a poster and presentation on preliminary results of a direct seed mentoring project at the PNW Direct Seed Association’s Annual meeting in Kennewick, WA, on Jan 21. Kate also spoke on the same subject at two direct seed group breakfast meetings: Clearwater Direct Seed group in Lewiston, ID, on January 12, and the Colfax Direct Seed group in Colfax, WA, on January 14.

Paul Patterson met with the Potato Cost of Production Advisory Committee in Pocatello the day before the Idaho Potato Conference to discuss the methods used to develop Idaho’s potato costs and returns estimates, problems or issues with the procedures, and the cost changes from 2008 to 2009. At the Idaho Potato Conference on January 20, Paul gave three presentations:

- 2009 Cost of Potato Production, Historical Trends and Forecast
- Is the Idaho Potato Industry Economically Sustainable
- Developing an Equitable Crop Lease.

Joe Guenther was the keynote speaker at Manitoba Potato Production Days on January 27 in Brandon, Manitoba, Canada. The keynote presentation was titled, “North American Potato Industry Outlook.” More than 500 industry people attended the two-day event. One of the meals included “pachos” which are like nachos but the corn chips are replaced with cross-cut potato fries.

Aaron Johnson traveled to San Destin Resort, Destin, FL for the Food Distribution Research Society’s winter board meeting. Aaron is serving as president of the organization this year. While there, he dealt with the business of the organization, including previewing the agenda and accommodations for the annual meeting October 16-21.

February—March

“Idaho Agriculture: Production and Financial Trends and Its Economic Contribution” was presented Ben Eborn and **Paul Patterson** to the Henry's Fork Watershed Council in Rexburg, ID, February 16, 2010.

Liang Lu and **Levan Elbakidze** presented, “Evaluating Vector-Virus-Plant Interaction in Regional Supply of Peas and Lentils: A Limited Dependent Variable Analysis,” at the Legume Virus Project RAMP project meeting, Spring 2010, February 3, at the UI.

Paul Patterson presented “Management Strategies for Economic Survival” to the Eastern Idaho Forage School, Preston, ID, March 2.

Workshop

A hands-on workshop by **Paul Patterson** was held at the UI computer lab at University Place in Idaho Falls on March 18th. Co-Sponsored with USDA Market News, this was a half-day workshop on how to access reports from the Market News Portal.

Economic Impact Study by EMSI

November 2009, President Nellis organized a committee to commission a third party economic impact study for the University to illustrate how valuable the UI is to Idaho. Economic Modeling Specialists Inc. (EMSI) was awarded the contract. **Tim Nadreau**, a research economist at EMSI and AERS graduate student, was the project lead for the study.

Results showed an annual state-wide impact of \$934.4 million, roughly 2% of the entire Idaho economy. Tim said, in reality, the impact is probably higher since not all UI visitors could be accounted for. Another component of the study looked at education as an investment. "Education is a far different type of investment than the standard financial tools. The principle is not returned to the student at the end of the investment period. However, the dividends paid over the students working life have a much higher net present value than the original cost." The study shows an 18% rate of return and a benefit/cost ratio of 5.

As for the university budget cuts, Tim thought increasing student tuition was warranted, given the very high benefit/cost ratio, but did not think the time was ripe

for a reduction of state support. "I don't envy the politicians this year. They truly are between a rock and a hard spot and any solution they come up with will have opponents. I think the best thing people can do right now is just keep working hard and pushing forward."

As noted in the University of Idaho Communication Friday Letter on April 9, President Nellis stated, "The University of Idaho may be the best investment one can make in a strong state of Idaho. . . . I believe an independent review is instructive and serves as necessary stewardship in our partnership with the taxpayers of the Gem State."

http://www.uidaho.edu/president/economic_impact

PNW Cooperative

Pacific Northwest Farmers Cooperative, Litehouse Foods, and Spokane Seed have graciously joined faculty **Larry Makus** and **Aaron Johnson** to make senior capstone class an exciting learning opportunity for our students. The companies agree to bring a tough, real world problem for students in the AERS capstone course AgEc 478: Advanced Agribusiness Management to work on during the semester. The projects provide an invaluable real life experience to students.

As if that isn't enough, the companies have generously made a monetary contribution to support student programs in the department. These contributions allow us to have financial resources so students will be able to participate in extracurricular activities to enhance their education. For example, without the support of these companies, taking student teams to national competitions and agribusiness tours becomes cost prohibitive.

Bill Newbry of PNW is excited Aaron has taken such an interest in working with companies like his. Agriculture is in a time of real change. These real life challenges will better equip students entering the Ag workforce and to become contributing members of the industry.

AERS Seminars

Most recent AERS seminars presented include:

- **Kate Painter**, AERS Agricultural Economics Analyst, "Direct Seed Mentoring Project: Preliminary Economic Analysis." February 5
- **Stephen Cooke**, AERS faculty, "An Analysis of Idaho's Wages and Employment Compared to Rocky Mountain States of US: 2001 to 2005." February 19

Seminars focus on current issues being analyzed in AERS, present the research process, and provide an opportunity for faculty, students, and agribusiness leaders to interact. Please join us!

* Seminars are connected off-campus through Adobe Connection



Awards

Alex Vigil (left), Agricultural Economics senior and Collegiate Farm Bureau President, received two UI

awards at the Student Achievement Awards in Leadership and Service on April 16. They were: the Outstanding Senior Award and the Guy and Grace Wicks Memorial Award. Both awards recognize outstanding academic achievement and exemplary leadership. The Outstanding Senior award recognizes 10 deserving graduating students from less than 2% eligible seniors. The Guy and Grace Wicks Memorial Award distinguishes the man and woman from the Outstanding Seniors who exhibited the greatest leadership qualities.

Chris McIntosh was selected to receive the Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award with More than Ten Years Experience from the WAEA. The award will be presented on July 27th at the WAEA Awards Breakfast at the joint meetings with AAEA in Denver.

Stephen Devadoss received the Teaching Award of Merit from the North American Colleges and Teacher's of Agriculture, 2010.



As part of WSU's Climate Friendly Farming project, **Kate Painter's** team received the USDA's 2009 CSREES Partnership Award for Innovative Program Models.

Jude Bayham and **Stephen Devadoss** received an award for Outstanding Poster Award (1st Prize), Poster Competition, School of Economics Science, Washington State University for "A General Equilibrium Analysis of the Federal Biofuel Tax Credit and Mandate."

Taking 2nd place in the same competition were **Jeff Luckstead** and **Stephen Devadoss** for "Implications of Immigration Policies for the U.S. Farm Sector and Workforce,"

The GPSA Travel Award committee awarded a GPSA Travel Grant of \$640.00 to **Liang "Jimmy" Lu**.



CALS Awards



While technically, this news would go in the next newsletter, it is hot off the press and we'd like to congratulate our students before they leave for the semester. At the CALS Spring Banquet on April 19, the College honored representatives from its academic departments and alumni as being outstanding students, faculty and staff. AERS nominated its department outstanding members in the respective college categories and congratulate each for their excellence:

Erica Ramsey, Outstanding Freshman

Caitlin Buermann, Outstanding Sophomore

Erinn Argo, Outstanding Junior

Alex Vigil, Outstanding Senior

Elliott Toevs, Outstanding AERS Graduate Student

Whitney Plant, WAEA Outstanding Senior

J.D. Wulforst, Outstanding Teacher

Christopher McIntosh, Outstanding Advisor

Victoria Seever, Outstanding Support Staff

Also honored at the Banquet were recent alumni **Jude Bayham**, Gamma Sigma Delta Outstanding Graduate Student; AERS alumni **Travis Jones**, Alumni Achievement Award; and **Robb Steinke**, AERS Advisory Board member for a Distinguished Alumni Award. The College also awarded Victoria Seever as its representative in her category this year.

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*If you have information you would like to include
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We're on the web:

<http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/aers>

Noteworthy News



The Agribusiness Club

The Agribusiness Club meetings in the spring of 2010 have focused on attracting excellent guest speakers and planning our annual Agribusiness Golf Tournament. The February meeting featured Jim Fitzgerald, Executive Director of the Far West Agribusiness Association, and Lee Gibbs from Zions Bank Moscow branch presented at the Club's March meeting. The annual golf tournament is the primary fundraiser for the year and will take place on Saturday, May 1 at the Moscow Elks Golf Course. Participation and sponsorship levels look very promising, and we are hoping for a nice day. At this time, it looks like we will have two teams going to the annual Quiz Bowl competition, scheduled for late July in Denver.

◇ Larry Makus & Aaron Johnson, Club Advisors



SSRU

The SSRU is currently working with a project, Watershed Health in the Tri-State Region, which is designed to help land owners in decision-making for best management practices and conservation. The project documents and analyzes community-level impacts of the dairy industry in southern Idaho; it also determines the general public perception and compares rural and urban difference. Timeline is March-April. The grant funding source is USDA Conservation Effectiveness Assessment Program for Rangelands to WSU and UI.

◇ Stephanie Kane, Project Manager