

Ag Econ alum's holistic medicine company takes off

Eileen Schaeffer earned her Master's degree in Agribusiness in 2019 and immediately launched into her entrepreneurial career with Herb Girls, the FABricate-winning company founded by Schaeffer and fellow UGA alum Amy Wright. Their winning pitch for Herb Girls' Rally coffee supplement, which promotes gut health and boosts coffee's anti-inflammatory benefits, earned the pair \$2,500 for their business.

Schaeffer's primary goal is to promote the acceptance of herbal medicine and holistic health, areas she has been passionate about since working with AmeriCorps' Vista program after earning her undergraduate degree. She channeled that passion into a certificate in permaculture design and becoming a master gardener before coming to Athens and UGA for her M.A.B.

After graduating from the Agricultural and Applied Economics department, Schaeffer has continued to work at UGArden while running her business. Herb Girls hosts community workshops as well as classes that teach their students how to integrate herbs into their diet. Herb Girls also makes tea blends, bath bombs and other personal products in addition to their Rally coffee supplement.

Schaeffer was recently featured in a story in the University of Georgia Graduate School Magazine, on which this article was based. For more information, read the full story at <http://gradmag.uga.edu/eileen-schaeffer/>.



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DEPARTMENT INFO

The Agricultural and Applied Economics Department is proud of our alumni! To contribute a story for the newsletter, email Emily Clance at [eclance@uga.edu](mailto: eclance@uga.edu)



Letter from the Department Head

Dear friends:

I hope this newsletter finds you well. Due to ongoing health concerns, USG has made the decision to transition to online-only courses and faculty, staff and graduate students are working from home in order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, which means UGA and Conner Hall are much quieter than usual around this time of year. Nevertheless, our faculty are continuing to teach their courses and conduct their research and Extension activities remotely, and our department continues to meet those responsibilities as best as possible.

For some good news, I am pleased to let you know that Dr. Cesar Escalante received the 2020 President's Fulfilling the Dream Award from the University of Georgia; Dr. Craig Landry was invited to do some important work for the Environmental Protection Agency's Science Advisory Board; and Dr. Greg Fonsah received the American Society for Horticultural Science's Blue Ribbon Extension Communication Award for his contributions to the report of "Hurricane Michael's Impact on Vegetable Production in Georgia". Congratulations to all of them for their outstanding achievements!

Once again, I would like to encourage all of our alumni to keep in touch with us. Please consider sharing updates about changes in your life or career so we can include them in this newsletter. You may contact us by emailing Emily Clance at eclance@uga.edu, or by following our LinkedIn page at <https://www.linkedin.com/company/uga-ag-applied-economics>.

As well, if it is within your means, I hope that you will consider donating to one of the departmental scholarship funds listed at the end of this newsletter. Scholarships are more important than ever, given the rising cost of a college education and the financial hardship many students might experience as a result of the ongoing economic slowdown. All the donations to these funds are tax-deductible and are used to provide scholarships to deserving students.

With my sincere wishes for everyone to stay safe and healthy during these trying times;



Octavio Ramirez



Faculty Spotlight

Will Secor

Will Secor comes to the University of Georgia from CoBank's Knowledge Exchange Division, where he analyzed strategic risks and opportunities as a Grain and Farm Supply Economist.

"The Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at the University of Georgia has a strong agribusiness field. This strength cuts across research, teaching, and extension," he said. "I am excited to have the opportunity to join the department in this area and contribute to the program."

Secor's career in economics began with his B.S. in Agricultural and Applied Economics from Virginia Tech in 2010, followed by an M.S. in the same from Virginia Tech in 2012 and a Ph.D. in Applied Economics from the University of Minnesota in 2015. He served as an instructor at Virginia Tech and as Associate Director and Clinical Assistant Professor at Purdue University's Center for Food & Ag Business, as well as in Purdue's Agricultural Economics Department before making the move to CoBank.

His research interests primarily lie in agribusiness marketing and management, with additional interests in managerial economics, industrial organization and agricultural finance. He has published papers in the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* and *Agribusiness*, as well as ten research reports and case studies between CoBank and Purdue. At UGA, he will be splitting his time between further research and teaching, beginning in Fall 2019 with his Agribusiness Marketing course.

"I am thankful for the opportunities I have



Will Secor

had interacting with current and future agribusiness industry leaders," Secor said. "I hope I have made a positive impact on their careers and the industry as a whole, and I hope that this continues in my new role here at the University of Georgia."



Student Spotlight: Wenying Li

Wenying Li is a Ph.D. student set to graduate in May 2020 upon completing his dissertation on household purchasing behaviors. The first chapter of his dissertation, “A Simple Strategy for Reducing Aggregation Bias in Large Consumer Demand Systems,” is currently out for review, while the second chapter, “The Implications of Heterogeneous Habit in Consumer Beverage Purchases on Soda and Sin Taxes”, was published in *Food Policy* in 2019.

Li’s research primarily focuses on analyzing consumer behaviors by estimating large demand models accurately and efficiently. It relies heavily on microeconomic theories, advanced statistical techniques and big data programming skills. He has been working on seven papers since he joined the Ag Econ Ph.D. program, with four of those published in the last two years and the remaining three on the path to publishing. Additionally, he won the first SAEA Job Market Paper competition while representing UGA.

“But what I am most proud of,” Li said, “is that I have the opportunity to work with top economists Dr. Chen Zhen, Dr. Jeffrey Dorfman, and Dr. Eric Finkelstein throughout my Ph.D. study. Without their guidance and encouragement, I could not have made such achievements.”

Li’s work with the faculty in the Ag Econ department helped him land a position at Auburn University after he graduates. Beginning in August 2020, he will be a tenure-track assistant professor of quantitative method, where he will teach three econometrics classes and develop and lead a nationally-recognized research program in applied social science.



Wenying Li

“The department at Auburn University is now undergoing a lot of transitions – with a few top economists retiring and new-generation economists coming in. During my interview, I was deeply impressed by the passion of their faculty members and the ambition of the entire department,” Li said. “The two universities are very similar geographically and culturally. These characteristics will allow me to quickly adapt to the new pace of work. And, what makes me most happy is that I can often see my old friends in Atlanta.”

Li would like to thank his major professor, Dr. Chen Zhen, as well as faculty members Dr. Jeffrey Dorfman, Dr. Travis Smith, Dr. Octavio Ramirez, Dr. Scott Shonkwiler, Dr. Gopinath Munisamy, Dr. Susana Ferreira, Dr. Greg Colson, Dr. Berna Karali and Dr. Ellen McCullough.

“I want to especially thank my fiancée Yunhan Li who is also a Ph.D. graduate from our department,” he said. “It is her endless help that makes me focus on my research.”



Department Publications

Ahmadiani, M. and **S. Ferreira** (2019) "Environmental Amenities and Quality of Life across the United States" *Ecological Economics*, 164 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2019.05.021>

Jordan, J.L. and **G. Kostandini**. 2019. Leaving for Education. *Journal of Agribusiness*. 37(2): 171-176.

Yukiko Hashida, John Withey, David J. Lewis, Tara Newman, Jeffrey D. Kline. (2020) "Anticipating changes in wildlife habitat induced by private forest owners' adaptation to climate change and carbon policy" PLOS ONE Biodiversity Conservation Collection (forthcoming)

Karali, B., S.H. Irwin, and O. Isengildina-Massa. 2020. "Supply Fundamentals and Grain Futures Price Movements." *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 102(2):548-568.

Rabinowitz, A. N., Liu, Y. & Lai, J. H. (2019). The 2018 Farm Bill PLC and ARC Decision: Implications for Georgia Producers. Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Georgia. Report No. AGECON-19-14PR. November 2019.

Liu, Y., Rabinowitz, A. N. & Lai, J. H. (2019). Computing the PLC and ARC Safety Net Payments in the 2018 Farm Bill. Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Georgia. Report No. AGECON-19-13PR. November 2019.

Liu, Y., Rabinowitz, A. N. & Lai, J. H. (2019). Eligibility and Payments under the 2018 Farm Bill PLC and ARC Programs. Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Georgia. Report No. AGECON-19-12PR. November 2019.

Liu, Y., Lai, J. H. & Rabinowitz, A. N. (2019). Updating the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) Payment Yields in the 2018 Farm Bill. Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Georgia. Report No. AGECON-19-10PR. October 2019.

Liu, Y., Rabinowitz, A. N. & Lai, J. H. (2019). Understanding the 2018 Farm Bill Effective Reference Price. Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Georgia. Report No. AGECON-19-02PR. July 2019.

Fan, F., **Liu, Y.**, DeLaune, P.B., Mubvumba, P., Park, S., & Bevers, S. J. (2020). Net return and risk analysis of winter cover crops in Dryland Cotton systems. *Agronomy Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/agj2.20091>

Fan, F., **Liu, Y.**, DeLaune, P.B., Mubvumba, P., Park, S., & Bevers, S. J. (2020) Economic analysis of adopting no-till and cover crops in irrigated cotton production under risk. *Agronomy Journal*. 1(11). <https://doi.org/10.1002/agj2.20005>

Bowers, C., Toews, M., **Liu, Y.**, & Schmidt, J. M. (2020). Cover crops improve early season natural enemy recruitment and pest management in cotton production. *Biological Control*. 141(104149).

Melo, G., **C. Zhen, G. Colson** (2019). "Does Point-of-Sale Nutrition Information Improve the Nutritional Quality of Food Choices?" *Economics and Human Biology* 35:133-143.



Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia

As fellow graduates from the Agricultural and Applied Economics Department of the University of Georgia, we invite you to join the Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia. The investment is nominal, but the rewards and mission are great. It is our hope that most of you will want to support the organization that promotes our industry and field of education.

The Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia (AEAG) was established in 1976. The goals of the Association are:

- To provide opportunities for the professional improvement of people interested in the field of agricultural economics
- To provide a forum for the discussion of economic problems and issues of mutual interest to people working in agriculture, agribusiness, and related fields
- To recommend solutions to economic problems facing Georgia's agriculture

Agricultural economics is involved in all sectors of our economy. The opportunities are greater now than ever before. We must recruit more students and better support agricultural economists if we are to meet the challenges for further application of agricultural economics to farm, resource, environmental, and agribusiness problems.

The AEAG board has new goals to support students in agricultural and applied economics as well as high school students who have yet to make decisions about college. We need your support to be able to carry out those goals to assist the future leaders in our field.

AEAG membership offers benefits through the following:

- *Journal of Agribusiness*
- AEAG newsletter
- J.W. Fanning lecture
- Recognition for career accomplishments
- Enhanced educational opportunities for students in agricultural economics

In addition, AEAG enjoys an active relationship with the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at the University of Georgia. The activities of the association provide occasions for interaction among AEAG members, faculty and students. This interaction provides students and professionals important opportunities to network for the purpose of future career connections and the sharing of information and knowledge.

On the following page you will find an application for membership. Lifetime memberships are also available. If you would like to know more about AEAG, visit the AEAG website at <http://aeag.uga.edu>.



For More Information:

Yes, I would like to join the Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia!

Name: _____

Employer: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Please check one:

- Student Member (\$10)
- Individual Member (\$25)
- Library/Institutional Member (\$35)
- Corporate Member (\$150)
- Individual Lifetime Member (\$250)
- Corporate Lifetime Member (\$1000)

Please send your membership application and dues to the following address:

Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia
315 Conner Hall
University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602-7509

For more information, call 706-542-0763 or visit <http://aeag.uga.edu>.

