IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING NEWSLETTER

Due to the high cost of mailing Alumni Newsletters, this will be the last issue of the newsletter to be mailed through the U.S. Postal Service. After this issue, we will begin emailing the newsletters to our alumni and friends. We ask that each of you (who have not done so already) send your email address to aaecnews@uga.edu and in the subject line please enter “Newsletter” so that we can add your name to our email list. We will continue to post the newsletters on the web at http://www.caes.uga.edu/departments/agecon/newsletters/newsletters.html.

If you do not have access to a computer and prefer to have your newsletters mailed to you, please fill out the form below and return it to Audrey Hudson, Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Georgia, 303 Conner Hall, Athens, GA 30602-7509.

Request to Have Alumni Newsletter Sent Via US Mail

Name___________________________________________________________
Address _______________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
Phone ________________________ Degree______________ Year ________________
2008 J.W. Fanning Lecture

The 2008 J. W. Fanning Lecture is scheduled for October 17, 2008. Our speaker will be Per Pinstrup-Andersen, the H. E. Babcock Professor of Food, Nutrition and Public Policy, the J. Thomas Clark Professor of Entrepreneurship, and Professor of Applied Economics at Cornell University and Professor of Agricultural Economics at Copenhagen University. His topic for the lecture will be “The Global Food Crisis: High Food Prices and How They Affect U.S. Farmers and Consumers.”

Dr. Pinstrup-Andersen is past Chairman of the Science Council of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and past President of the American Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA). He has a B.S. from the Danish Agricultural University, an M.S. and Ph.D. from Oklahoma State University and honorary doctoral degrees from universities in the United Kingdom, Netherlands, Switzerland, and India. He is a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the American Agricultural Economics Association. He served 10 years as the International Food Policy Research Institute’s Director General and seven years as department head, seven years as an economist at the International Center for Tropical Agriculture, Colombia, and six years as a distinguished professor at Wageningen University. He is the 2001 World Food Prize Laureate and the recipient of several awards for his research and communication of research results. He teaches and advises graduate and undergraduate students on globalization and poverty and a social entrepreneurship approach to government policy for the global food system. His research includes economic analyses of food and nutrition policy, globalization and poverty, agricultural development and research, and technology policy. Dr. Pinstrup-Andersen’s publications include Seeds of Contention, co-authored with Ebbe Schioler and published in five languages, and more than 400 other books, refereed journal articles, papers, and book chapters, including books entitled Ethics, Hunger and Globalization – In Search of Appropriate Policies, co-edited with Peter Sandoe, and Agricultural Trade Liberalization and the Least Developed Countries, co-edited with Niek Koning, both published in 2007.

Location and Schedule of Events for October 17, 2008

All events will be held at the Georgia Center for Continuing Education, Athens, GA.

9:30 a.m.  Agricultural Economics Association Board of Directors Meeting - Sanford Board Room, 5th floor

10:00 a.m.  Registration & Refreshments – 2nd floor Concourse

10:30 a.m.  J. W. Fanning Lecture – Rooms 553-554

12:00 noon  Luncheon and Awards Ceremony – Banquet Area

1:30 p.m.  Adjourn

To register for the luncheon, please send $30 to the Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia, 303 Conner Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-7509. Registration deadline for the luncheon is October 10, 2008. (A registration form and additional information are on the last page of the newsletter.)
Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Michael E. Wetzstein, a professor in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, has been at UGA since 1979. He was a Fulbright Scholar at South Bohemian University, Czech and Slovak Federal Republic from 1992-1993 and was also a visiting professor at Kagoshima University, Japan during that time. He is a prolific author with sixty-four published refereed articles in prestigious journals among numerous other published works. He was the recipient of the *Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*’ 2007 Outstanding Journal Article Award.

A crowning achievement of his career was the publication of a textbook Dr. Wetzstein authored, *Microeconomic Theory - Concepts and Connections* (with Economic Applications), published by Thomson South-Western in 2005. The book is a calculus-based microeconomic theory text for undergraduate and graduate students that successfully balances theoretical/intuitive, graphical, and mathematical presentation. In its first year of publication, the book achieved a high level of adoption from a number of eminent schools. As of October 2005, the book was adopted by over ten percent of the members of the Association of American Universities, including Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Ohio State University, SUNY-Buffalo, Texas A&M University, The University of Georgia, and numerous others.

Dr. Wetzstein received a B.A. in economics with a minor in mathematics from California State University, Sacramento in 1972, and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in agricultural economics from the University of California, Davis in 1974 and 1978 respectively. His research focus is on applied microeconomic theory with emphasis on natural resource and environmental impacts upon agricultural production systems. Objectives are to employ microeconomic theory in conjunction with biological systems to increase the understanding of natural resource and environmental impacts on optimal production input mixes.

Dr. Wetzstein is known to be a dynamic teacher. Undergraduate level courses he has taught include microeconomic principles, macroeconomic principles, environmental economics, intermediate microeconomics, econometrics and a career placement seminar. Graduate level courses include masters microeconomics, Ph.D. natural resource economics, dynamic optimization, and investment under uncertainty. He has also taught a dual-level course in production economics. On five separate occasions, Dr. Wetzstein was presented the department’s Outstanding Graduate Faculty Teaching Award, and in 1997 he won the Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award. He is the recipient of the D.W. Brooks Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching, the Agricultural Alumni Association’s Distinguished Faculty Award in Teaching, and the Gamma Sigma Delta Teaching Award. On eight separate occasions, he has been recognized as an outstanding instructor at the university’s Honors Day Ceremony, and he was recognized as an outstanding instructor at commencement in 1987. In addition, he received the American Agricultural Economics Association’s 1997 Distinguished Undergraduate Teaching Award and their 2007 Distinguished Graduate Teaching Award. Most recently, he was presented the Southern Agricultural Economics Association’s 2008 Outstanding Teaching of a Course Award.

In the course of his career, Dr. Wetzstein has served on numerous committees in various professional organizations. He has also served as editor of the *Journal of Agricultural and Applied Economics* and as a member of the Editorial Council for the *Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*. 
Greetings from the Department Head

Dear Friends:

It is a pleasure to be in touch with you again through this newsletter. With my first note in the previous newsletter, I pledged to keep you updated on our progress in improving the quality, relevance and breadth of our programs.

An essential element in this process is to make the most efficient use of the resources that are made available to us by the Georgia and U.S. taxpayers. To this effect, the department has started an effort to streamline its undergraduate offerings by optimizing course scheduling and class size. The goal is to shift resources from lower to higher impact uses and thus improve the quality of our programs. Resource use efficiency will also increase as our efforts to recruit more students into our majors begin to pay off.

In regard to our undergraduate programs, I am pleased to inform you our proposed new major in Food and Industry Marketing and Administration has been approved by the UGA Board of Regents. This major, to be offered jointly with the Department of Food Science and Technology in both Athens and Griffin, will prepare students for administrative and management careers in the U.S. and international food industry.

On the graduate front, the Graduate Committee has set several very ambitious goals for our Masters and PhD programs. The attainment of these goals will without a doubt place our graduate programs among the very best in the world. Due to resource limitations, we have had to make some compromises in the short-run, but our long-term objective is to achieve a high national stature in two fields: Natural Resource Economics and Policy and Food and Agribusiness.

As you know, the cornerstone for all of our work is our faculty and staff. So, it gives me immense pleasure to let you know that four of our members, Drs. Greg Fonsah, Curt Lacy, Jeff Mullen, and Nathan Smith, have earned tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. In addition, the department recently welcomed a new faculty member, Dr. Genti Kostandini. We are confident that Dr. Kostandini will live up to very high expectations and quickly become a strong contributor to our teaching and research programs.

We, of course, have made strides in several other fronts during the last few months, some of which I will discuss in future communications. In the following pages, you will also find a variety of news on the accomplishments and activities of our faculty and students. As Department Head, I could not be more proud of them and their commitment to academic excellence.

Sincerely

Dr. Octavio A. Ramirez
Professor and Head
Faculty News

Dr. Don Shurley received the Teaching Award for Excellence at the Tifton Campus. (Dr. Shurley is pictured with Dean Scott Angle)

The paper titled “Is There Gender Bias in U.S. Federal Farm Lending Decisions?,” authored by Dr. Cesar Escalante, Dr. James Epperson and Uthra Raghunathan, received the Best Paper Award at the International Conference on Business and Information sponsored by the International Business Academics Consortium in Seoul, South Korea.

The Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics welcomes Dr. Gentian Kostandini, our new faculty member in Griffin. Dr. Kostandini obtained M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va. He will be conducting research, teaching, and working on specialized fields within agribusiness.

The Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics welcomes Dr. Elizabeth Kramer, our new public service assistant. She is a former assistant research scientist in the Department of Ecology.

Publication News


Jeffrey Dorfman had an op-ed in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution on the economics driving the formation of new cities. In the piece, he explained that because many local governments get a large percentage of their revenue from property taxes, in many cases residents and property owners are not paying taxes in relation to the cost of services received, but in relation to the value of property owned. Some services are funded on the basis of services received (trash and water are common examples), but many are not (such as police, fire, libraries, etc.). Because of the growing importance of property tax revenue, many situations have occurred recently where a group of residents can form a new city and pay lower taxes. The formation of the new city means that remaining residents of the unincorporated area of the county will face large tax increases. These remaining residents generally complain loudly about this situation. However, the truth is that in such cases they have been getting a partially free ride on the backs of the residents forming the new city. As long as some people are overcharged for services received, the incentive to form new cities will remain.

Escalante, C.L. “Custom Farm Machinery Rates in Georgia, 2008.” Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics. AGECON 08-03 (August 2008).

Dr. Esendugue Greg Fonsah has been serving as faculty associate for Fulbright Visiting Scholar, Dr. Daouda Kone, from Cocody University-
Abidjan, Cote D’Ivoire during the past year. Along with other collaborators from the Department of Plant Pathology, Dr. Kone was studying bananas, which is directed by Dr. Fonsah, and vegetable diseases. This collaboration led to the significant first discovery of Deightoniella Torulosa, a disease that attacks banana plants. The result of their findings entitled “First Report of Black Leaf Spot of Banana Caused by Deightoniella Torulosa in Georgia,” is being published in the Journal of Plant Disease.

The two publications, "Factors Affecting International Demand and Trade in Organic Food Products" by Luanne Lohr and "Emergence of U.S. Organic Agriculture: Can We Compete?" co-authored by Luanne Lohr, are among the top thirty papers downloaded from the AgEcon Search open access repository of full-text scholarly literature in agricultural and applied economics from January 2001 through April 2008. The second paper listed is in the top five downloads. We congratulate Dr. Lohr for this notable academic accomplishment.

Who’s Been Where & Why

AAEA Meeting Presentations in Orlando, Florida in July:

Tullaya Boonsaeng and Stanley M. Fletcher, UGA, “The Impacts of U.S. Nonprice Export Promotion Program on Export Demand for Peanuts in Canada, the European Union, and Mexico.”

Terry Centner, UGA, “Adopting Greater Precaution in the Use of Non-Therapeutic Antibiotics in Food Animals.”


Jeffrey Dorfman, UGA; Mark Partridge, OSU; Hamilton Gallowy, Economic Modeling Specialist Inc., “Are High-tech Employment and Natural Amenities Linked: Answers from a Smoothed Bayesian Spatial Model.”

Archie Flanders, Fred C. White, and John C. McKissick, UGA, “Bennett-Bowley Measure for Productivity Analysis of Georgia Agriculture.”


Mohammed Ibrahim, FVSU; Renata Elad, ABAC; J C. Bergstrom and Ivery Clifton, UGA, “Factors Affecting Georgia Farmland Prices: A Spatial-Temporal Approach.”


Berna Karali and Jeffrey H. Dorfman, UGA; Walter N. Thurman, NCSU, “Do Inventory and Time-to-delivery Effects Vary across Futures
Contracts? Insights from a Smoothed Bayesian Estimator.”

Curt Lacy, UGA, “Cattle and Beef Outlook.” Extension Section Livestock Outlook Session.

Biing-Hwan Lin, USDA-Economic Research Service; Steven T. Yen, UT; Chung L. Huang, UGA, “U.S. Demand for Organic Fruits and Vegetables.”

Octavio Ramirez, UGA; Mary Bohman, USDA-Economic Research Service; Wayne Howard, CAL POLY, “Getting Involved: Steps to Becoming an Irresistible Applicant.”

Kavita Sardana and John Bergstom, UGA, “Accounting for Activity and Geographic Heterogeneity in Recreation Demand Models.”


Michael Wetzstein, UGA, “‘Teaching Tips’ from the 2007 Distinguished Graduate Teaching Recipient, More Than Ten Years Experience.”


Congratulations to Uthra Raghunathan, Florence Santos, and Jon Wong (alternate), for making it to the finals of the 2008 AAEA Case Study Competition. This year’s case study competition analyzed how Imagination Farms, a fresh produce marketing firm, could best grow and develop. Through ingenuity and hard work, the team created and practiced their presentation within the allotted two weeks and managed to place in the final four teams. Good job!

Other Travel and Presentations:

John Bergstrom traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with the USDA on research projects and moderate a session on agriculture and the environment at the National Faculty Leadership Conference in June.

Terence Centner presented a paper at the International Conference on Integrated Diffuse Pollution Management in Khon Kaen, Thailand in August.

Cesar Escalante presented a paper at the 5th International Conference on Business and Information, International Business Academics Consortium in Seoul, Korea in July. He also traveled to Washington, D.C. in July to meet with senior economists at the head office of the Farm Service Agency.

Stanley Fletcher gave a presentation at the 2008 Southern Peanut Growers Conference in
Panama City Beach, Florida in July. He also traveled to Washington, D.C. to attend a called meeting by the USDA to implement a program for the 2008 Farm Bill and peanut grading research in July.

W. J. Florkowski traveled to Orlando, Florida in July to attend the annual AAEA board of directors meeting.

Greg Fonsah presented a paper at the 5th Annual Conference of the Consortium for Western China Development Studies in Xi’an, Shaan Xi, China in July. He also chaired the section on migration.

Jack Houston presented a paper at the Western Agricultural Economics Association annual meetings in Big Sky, Montana in June.

Berna Karali presented a paper at the Western Agricultural Economics Association annual meetings in Big Sky, Montana in June.

David Keiser presented a paper at the American Peanut Research and Education Society in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma in July.

Luanne Lohr presented a paper at the Organic World Congress in Modena, Italy in June.

Jeffrey Mullen traveled to Barnako, Mali in August to meet with IPR for collaboration between Barnako and UGA.

Timothy Park presented a poster at the Organic World Congress at Modena, Italy in June.

Joseph Price presented a paper at the Western Agricultural Economics Association annual meetings in Big Sky, Montana in June.

Louisiana in June to attend a Southern Extension Committee meeting.

Michael Wetzstein presented an invited paper at the Bioeconomy Conference in Berkeley, California in June. He attended a Peer Review Panel meeting on Food and Agriscience National Needs Graduate Fellowship in Washington, D.C. in July. Also in July, he presented the membership committee report to the AAEA board at the annual meeting in Orlando, Florida.

Staff News

Alice Pitts received the Award of Excellence for Administrative Support at the Tifton Campus. (Ms. Pitts is pictured with Dean Scott Angle)

Alumni News

Charles Grimsley (BSA in agribusiness in 2001) was married to Amy, a pharmacist, in January. Congratulations to the happy couple!

Melissa Inoue Sparrow (B.S.A. in agricultural economics in 1997) and her husband, Andy, are the proud parents of a baby girl named Anna Hooks Sparrow, born March 11, 2008. Congratulations!

G. Barton Pennington (M.S. in agricultural economics in 1999) was elected to the position of vice president of the board of directors of Athens First Bank & Trust. He is the branch manager of the bank’s Lexington Road branch and an active volunteer for the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce’s Ambassadors.
Obituaries

W. Doyle Dominy (B.S.A. in 1965 and M.S. in 1967, both in agricultural economics) passed away Friday, August 22, 2008. He was a lifelong resident of Laurens County and a member of the Jefferson Street Baptist Church. Mr. Dominy was President and Co-founder of the Dominy Oil Company, a former County Commissioner, past President of the Dublin-Laurens County Chamber of Commerce, former member of the Morris State Bank Board of Directors, and he served on the Board of Directors of the Dublin-Laurens County Development Authority. He was a member and past President of the Dublin Rotary Club, and he served on the Board of Directors of the Georgia Oilmen’s Association.

Request for News

We want to hear from you! If any of our alumni, faculty, students, staff, or friends have any news or announcements you would like to share in the newsletter, please notify us. We want to know if you have a new job, if you have moved to a new address, if you have married, if you have had a baby, or any other important events in your lives that you would like to share with the readers of the newsletter. Please email the information to Audrey Hudson at aaecnews@uga.edu with the word “news” in the subject line, or mail the information to Audrey Hudson, Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, UGA, 303 Conner Hall, Athens, GA 30602-7509.

Opportunity to Support Department

Please consider making an investment in future economic leaders by supporting our educational programs. You may specify which fund you want your contribution to support. Make checks payable to the Wen Williams Scholarship Fund, to the Evan Brown International Agricultural Economics Scholarship Fund, or to the Tom Frazier Scholarship Fund. Mail all checks to 303 Conner Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-7509.

Dear Agricultural Economics Association Members and Graduates,

I am pleased to welcome Dr. Ramirez to the University of Georgia. Dr. Ramirez is excited about serving the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics as the Department Head. He is also excited about the
Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia and has many ideas about how the department and association can work together to create new opportunities for the department, AEAG members and graduates.

Dr. Ramirez and I are very eager to work together to strengthen AEAG. In order to do that, we want to create a very strong leadership. We are looking to our AEAG members (and prospective members) to help us out. If you are involved in the agriculture industry and feel you can be an asset to our organization, we invite you to join the leadership in either a board capacity or an advisory capacity. We need board members who will be committed to the organization and can invest just a little time and energy – as well as new ideas! We need nominations from the membership by those who want to nominate themselves or from those who know someone who will be an asset. Current board members who want to stay involved are also welcome to nominate themselves for another term (only if your term will be up this year).

We hope to create a few opportunities for members to network with one another, to work with the department, to provide internships and to help promote the fields of agricultural and applied economics.

I also want to encourage board members, members and graduates to join us on October 17, 2008 for the J.W. Fanning Lecture and Awards Luncheon. Dr. Ramirez has scheduled a wonderful speaker for the J.W. Fanning Lecture – Per Pinstrup-Andersen, H. E. Babcock Professor of Food, Nutrition and Public Policy, the J. Thomas Clark Professor of Entrepreneurship and Professor of Applied Economics at Cornell University and Professor of Agricultural Economics at Copenhagen University. His topic is "High Food Prices and How it Affects U.S. Farmers and Consumers." This will surely prove to be a very timely and enlightening lecture.

The board meeting, lecture and luncheon will be held at the Georgia Center for Continuing Education. The AEAG board meeting is scheduled for 9:30 in the Executive Conference Room.

10:00 Registration, Refreshments - 2nd floor concourse
10:30 Fanning Lecture
Noon – Luncheon and Awards

If you are not a member of the Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia, and you want to support the association and the field of study, membership is easy and very affordable. 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. Agriculture and its fundamental role in growth and development has recaptured the public's attention. All too often economic criteria are ignored in public and private decision making. We must be more effective in communicating the relevance of agricultural economics. We must recruit more students and better support agricultural economists if we are to meet the challenges for further applications of agricultural economics to farm, resource, environmental and agribusiness problems. These are some of the goals of the association – and we need members to make this happen.

As a member, you will receive a return on your investment. Membership in the Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia (AEAG) provides opportunities for professional interaction for those interested in agricultural economics and offers practical solutions for problems facing Georgia’s agriculture. AEAG membership also offers benefits through the following:
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. AEAG members are invited to the department's annual undergraduate spring banquet, which provides numerous opportunities to meet students interested in employment and internships.

Membership is very affordable – regular memberships are only $25 per year. That is a very small investment – yet a great opportunity to support the field of study that led many of you to successful careers. Lifetime memberships are also available. If you would like to know more about AEAG, please contact us at (706) 542-2481 or visit the AEAG website at www.agecon.org. We look forward to interacting with you about the issues that concern agricultural economists and our other related fields.

Kristin McWhorter
AEAG President

AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS ASSOCIATION OF GEORGIA
Membership and Registration Form

Name ___________________________________________ Telephone ______________________
Address __________________________________________________________________________
Employer __________________________________________________ Position ______________________

2009 Membership Options
Associate Member**.................................................. ( ) $10 annual
Individual/Regular Membership .................................... ( ) $25 annual
Library/Institutional Member...........................................( ) $35 annual
Corporate Membership..............................................( ) $150 annual
Individual Lifetime Membership ..............................( ) $250
Corporate Lifetime Membership.................................( ) $1000

**Available to individuals who have graduated within the past three years.

Make check payable to Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia and mail with membership form to: 303 Conner Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-7509.

For more information, call 706-542-0763

(See last page for 2008 J. W. Fanning Lecture & Luncheon Registration Form)
2008 J. W. FANNING LECTURE & LUNCHEON REGISTRATION

REGISTRATION: Lecture attendance is free. A registration fee of $30 is required for the luncheon. Please register no later than October 10, 2008 for the luncheon. Make check payable to the Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia and return with this form.

I plan to attend the lecture ____ ( ) I plan to attend the lecture and luncheon ____ ( )

Name _______________________________________ Telephone ________________________

Address ______________________________________________________________________

City ______________________________ State __________________ Zip ______________

Please return form to Attention: Audrey Hudson, Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia, Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, 303 Conner Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-7509. For additional information, please call Audrey Hudson at 706-542-0763.