



# Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics

College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences  
The University of Georgia

*Alumni Newsletter*

*Spring, 2009*

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Dear Friends:

It is a pleasure to be in touch with you through this newsletter, and update you again on the status of our departmental programs and other important news.

On the undergraduate front, I am glad to report that the demand for our three majors remains strong. As of the beginning of the spring semester, enrollment stood at 116 in agribusiness, 32 in agricultural economics, and 77 in environmental economics and management. Even in these harsh times, our graduates are finding desirable employment opportunities in a variety of careers. If you know of any young men or women who might be interested in pursuing one of these majors, please ask them to get in touch with me. Also keep in mind that our college's transfer program allows sophomores and juniors from other colleges and universities to be admitted under less stringent criteria than freshmen.

On the graduate front, we continue to make substantial progress in reviewing and upgrading the curriculum of our programs in agricultural and applied economics and environmental economics to keep them comparable in rigor to those of other top U.S. universities. In addition, the University Council has approved a non-thesis master of agribusiness degree which business-oriented students can finish in 18 months. Again, if you know of somebody who is thinking about pursuing a graduate degree, please ask her/him to get in touch with me. A more advanced education gives job seekers a significant edge and increased job security, and this is a great time to make such an investment.

As you know, the cornerstone for all of our work is our faculty and staff. In this spirit, it gives me great pleasure to announce that Dr. Jeff Jordan was recently honored with the 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award by the Southern Agricultural Economics Association, and Dr. Michael Wetzstein received the very prestigious University of Georgia Josiah Meigs Teaching Award. In addition, Ms. Jo Anne Norris received the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Classified Staff Award for Excellence in Administrative/Professional Service, and Dr. Lewell Gunter was appointed as associate editor of the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, which is considered a substantial professional honor. Please join me in congratulating these four outstanding individuals for their well-deserved recognitions.

It is with sadness that I announce the retirement of Dr. John McKissick, a Distinguished Professor of Agricultural Marketing and two-time American Agricultural Economics Association Distinguished Extension Program Award recipient after 32 years of service. Dr. McKissick will continue to direct the Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development on a part-time basis. Please join me in wishing John a long and enjoyable retirement.

In closing, let me say the department continues to be engaged in several other efforts to improve the quality, relevance, and breadth of our programs which I will discuss with you 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 their efforts and accomplishments.

Sincerely,

*Dr. Octavio A. Ramirez*

*Professor and Head*

### **2008 J.W. Fanning Lecture**



Dr. Per Pinstrup-Andersen of Cornell University and Copenhagen University delivered the 2008 J. W. Fanning Lecture on October 17, 2008. He gave an informative lecture to a packed room at the Georgia Center entitled, “The Global Food Crisis and Policy Implications.” The PowerPoint slide show Dr. Pinstrup-Andersen presented at the lecture may be viewed at:  
<http://www.caes.uga.edu/departments/agecon/documents/jwflecture.html>

### **J. W. Fanning Distinguished Professional Award Winners**



(L to R: Arch Smith, II, Dr. Octavio Ramirez, Abit Massey, C. Elliott Marsh, Jr.)

**C. Elliott Marsh, Jr.** (B.S.A. in agricultural economics in 2002) is the winner of the 2008 J.W. Fanning Distinguished Young Professional Award. He is the agribusiness instructor at Ogeechee Technical College.

**Arch D. Smith, II** (B.S.A. in agricultural economics in 1977) is the winner of the 2008 J.W. Fanning Distinguished Professional Award. He is the associate state 4-H leader and executive director of the Georgia 4-H Foundation board of directors.

**Abit Massey** was presented the Distinguished Service Award by the Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia. The award recognizes Mr. Massey’s years of dedicated and distinguished contributions to Georgia’s agricultural industry over decades of loyal service. Mr. Massey has served as chief staff officer of the Georgia Poultry Federation since 1960, and he was founder and the first president of the State Poultry Executives Association. He is chairman of the Georgia Games Commission and chairman of the FDR Warm Springs Memorial Advisory Committee. An abbreviated list of Mr. Massey’s contributions includes serving as chairman of the board of directors of the American Society of Association of Executives, president of the Georgia Society of Association of Executives, chair of the GSAE Foundation board of trustees,

president of the UGA Alumni Association, president of the UGA Ag Alumni Association, member of the board of directors and the Executive Committee of the UGA Research Foundation and secretary and director of the UGA Real Estate Foundation. Among numerous other awards, Mr. Massey received the Inaugural Medallion of Honor for Service to UGA CAES, the First Distinguished Citizen Award from Northeast Georgia Council of the Boy Scouts of America, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Poultry & Food Distributors Association, and the Key Award from ASAE.

### Faculty Spotlight

#### Dr. Chung L. (Charlie) Huang



Dr. Charlie Huang was presented the 2007 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Southern Agricultural Economics Association (SAEA). He is a prolific scholar, having published in over 30 distinguished refereed journals. In addition, he has edited a book, authored a number of book chapters, and delivered numerous presentations at professional meetings.

Dr. Huang has been a faculty member in the department since 1980, and he has taught undergraduate courses in applied econometrics and graduate courses in consumer demand theory and independent study. He served as secretary-treasurer of the SAEA from 1984 to 1988. He spent over 12 years serving as editor/co-editor for two important agricultural economics journals. His early service as co-editor of the *Journal of Agribusiness (JAB)* helped to establish it as a national outlet for scholarly works in research, extension, and instruction. He served as editor of the *JAB* from 2004 through 2007. While serving as co-editor of the *Journal of Agricultural and Applied Economics (JAAE)*, Dr. Huang was instrumental in revamping the journal, restructuring the editorial council and review process, redesigning the cover, and developing a professional format for the articles. He also procured funding, developed, and published the supplement issue of the journal which required indexing 30 years of articles. Currently, he is serving as a member of the editorial board of *Food Policy*.

Dr. Huang received a B.A. in economics from Tunghai University in 1967, an M.A. in economics from Central Missouri State University in 1972, and a Ph.D. in agricultural economics from Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University in 1976. He was a visiting professor at the Institute of Applied Economics, National Taiwan Ocean University from September 2001 to January 2002. Since 1991, he has served as an adjunct professor for the Department of Housing & Consumer Economics at The University of Georgia.

Dr. Huang has been on the forefront of leading-edge research in his field. During his early work on the Food Stamp Program, he advanced the use of Tobit analysis and flexible functional forms. His computer program using the Box-Cox transformation techniques for specification of functional form served to expand the use of these techniques in applied economics. He led the way in publishing techniques for modeling consumer preferences for organics and communicated research findings to policy makers. His research continues with recent work in consumer risk perception and health economics.

### Faculty News



**Dr. James Epperson** was recognized for 31 years of service at The University of Georgia, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Years of Service Recognition Ceremony. Congratulations, Dr. Epperson!



**Dr. Lewell Gunter** was appointed by the board of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association as an associate editor of the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*. Congratulations, Dr. Gunter, on this honor and recognition by your colleagues!



**Dr. Jeff Jordan** was selected to receive the Southern Agricultural Economics Association's 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award. Congratulations, Dr. Jordan, on this notable recognition!



**Dr. John McKissick**, the Distinguished Professor of Agricultural Marketing and two-time American Agricultural Economics Association Distinguished Extension Program Award recipient has retired as Extension Economist after 32 years in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics. Dr. McKissick will continue to direct the Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development on a part-time basis.

**Dr. Forrest Stegelin** was appointed to the board of directors of the Food Distribution Research Society at the organization's 2008 fall conference. Forrest will also be serving as the vice president for research, which encompasses soliciting selected papers, reports, and updates of applied research and scheduling those accepted abstracts for presentation during the annual conference. The 2009 meetings will be in Broomfield, Colorado, and hosted by Colorado State University, October 31 – November 4, 2009. Congratulations, Dr. Stegelin, on this honor and recognition by you colleagues!



**Dr. Michael Wetzstein** received The University of Georgia Josiah Meigs Teaching Award. Congratulations, Dr. Wetzstein, on this well-deserved recognition!



### Cameroon High-Level Diplomats Visit UGA



(Left to right: Rt. Hon. Simon Achidi Achu, Dr. Ramirez, Dr. Fonsah, and Dr. Nwana)





(Left to right, Dr. Nwana, Dr. Nathan Smith, and Rt. Hon. Simmon Achidi Achu.)

(Both pictures were taken at UGA, RDC Tifton campus)

**Dr. Octavio Ramirez**, professor and head of the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Georgia, received Rt. Hon. Simon Achidi Achu, Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Cameroon and Dr. Bernard S. Nwana, Secretary General of Cameroon Chamber of Agriculture, Livestock, and Forestry during the Georgia Peanut Tour (September 16-19, 2008). The purpose of this high-level diplomatic visit was to discuss possible collaboration between UGA, the Chamber of Agriculture, Livestock, and Forestry and Cameroon universities. The Cameroonian delegation held several meetings with scientists from various departments, including the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, as well as the assistant dean of the UGA Tifton campus. Cameroon produces cotton, peanuts, bananas, pineapples, rubber, palms, vegetables, livestock, and dairy. The Cameroonian delegation expressed the need for collaboration in teaching, research, and extension.

### Departmental Research, Publications, and Outreach

**Professor Terence J. Centner** is the author of a new book entitled, America's Blame Culture: Pointing Fingers and Shunning Restitution (Carolina Academic Press).



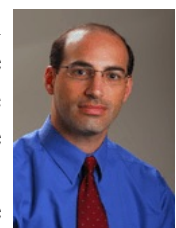
This book alleges that Americans live in a blame culture; they decline to accept responsibility for their actions and instead threaten to sue and place liability on someone else. "Where is our rugged individualism?" Persons who cause injuries should accept the responsibilities that accompany their actions.

Centner advocates that Americans should stop pointing fingers at others and take action to make people more responsible for their conduct and welfare. He uses his personal experiences of keeping his children safe while living abroad to support his assertions. The book concludes with seven strategies for improving the quality of our lives and the lives of those around us.

On February 21, 2009, **Terry Centner** was an invited panelist at the Yale Law School's Lawyering Conference. His remarks addressed the topic, "Food Fight: Putting Food Policy and Agricultural Law on the Table."

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**Dr. Jeffrey Dorfman** provided the Executive Committee program at the Southern Legislative Conference in October 2008. He shared his insights on the current economic meltdown



and observations on what states could anticipate for the coming year. He also fielded questions from attendees of the conference.

**Dr. Dorfman** authored an op-ed which was published in the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* on October 16, 2008 which encouraged the federal government to include state and local governments in a potential future financial bailout plan. He recommended that states be given money equal to 5% of their general funds and to be required to spend half of it on infrastructure projects. Money for city and county governments was also something that he encouraged with these funds to be used in grants for infrastructure programs only. Dr. Dorfman explained that existing federal agencies already run similar programs so we know how to make them work.

On December 10, 2008, **Dr. Jeff Dorfman** presented an overview of the current national economic situation for the city/county managers and economic development officials of the Atlanta Regional Commission and the City of Decatur at a networking breakfast meeting. His presentation was titled, "Surviving the Economic Storm in 2009."

On March 20, **Dr. Dorfman** will serve as the facilitator for a forum on municipalization and its impact on counties to be held at the Commerce Club in Atlanta. The panelists will be the chairmen of the county boards of commissioners for Cherokee, Gwinnett, Fulton, and Cobb Counties plus the CEO of DeKalb County. The central question will be "Town Boom or Bust – Is the Formation of New Cities Helpful or Harmful?" Professor Dorfman will introduce the topic with some remarks

on the economic impacts and motivation of municipalization and lead a discussion by the panelists on these topics. The Commerce Club in Atlanta has most of the business leaders in Georgia as members as well as many other prominent individuals of the Atlanta community. This forum is part of a continuing series so members can learn about and discuss ideas that are of interest and importance to their communities.

**Jeffrey H. Dorfman, Barry J. Barnett, John C. Bergstrom, and Bethany Lavigno.** 2009.

"Searching for Farmland Preservation Markets: Evidence from the Southeastern U.S." *Land Use Policy* 26 (1): 121-129. (The paper studies the issue of farmland preservation in Georgia. It also examines farmers' willingness to preserve their farmland for a fee and the public's willingness to pay for such a program.)



On October 1 and 2, 2008, **Dr. Wojciech Florkowski** visited the Rural Development Administration (RDA) in the Republic of Korea to present progress on the cooperative grant with this institution. On

October 1, after a short morning meeting with several scientists, including Dr. Dong-Kyun Suh who visited UGA in 2007, Dr. Florkowski presented an hour long seminar followed by a 40 minute discussion. The seminar provided a summary of three studies based on the Korean consumer survey conducted by RDA and UGA in 2007. Among the issues discussed with Korean counterparts were the perceptions and



attitudes of consumers regarding the safety of various food production and processing technologies, the use of genetic modification, and the general support for publicly funded agricultural and food technology research. The visit preceded the annual audit of RDA by the legislative committee. After the meeting with the director general of the RDA technology research division, Dr. Florkowski was guided by Inkyu Lee (visited UGA in 2005) through the main cabbage production area. He observed the harvest and farm-level post-harvest handling of cabbage used for making the famous Korean condiment, kimchi. Korean farmers have had to compete with imported kimchi from China in recent years, forcing them to become increasingly more efficient or search for alternative crops. The research cooperation, RDA-UGA under the current grant, will continue through 2009.



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**Dr. Greg Fonsah** was among several Tifton personnel who worked with a Fulbright visiting scholar, Daouda Koné, who completed a one-year study in August 2008 at the UGA Coastal Plain Experiment Station. Koné is a plant pathologist from the University of Cocody, Cote d'Ivoire, Africa. The project focused on development of biorational approaches for control of *Phytophthora capsici*, a devastating pathogen of vegetables. Koné studied systemically acquired resistance inducers and brassica cover crops as green manure for soil amendments. Additionally, he worked on diseases of bananas at the Bamboo Farm and Coastal Gardens in Savannah, identifying diseases not

previously reported on bananas grown in Georgia.

In an article in the Southeast Farm Press, December 10, 2008, by Stephanie Schuppska, UGA, **Dr. Greg Fonsah** stated, "If our research succeeds, bananas will be like other fruits such as blueberries and strawberries. It will be our new commodity, and at least part of that \$1.1 billion spent to import bananas to the United States would be going back to boost our economy." Dr. Fonsah is part of a UGA collaborative team working with 35 different banana varieties at the Bamboo Farm and Coastal Gardens in Savannah trying to find the best banana varieties to be grown in Georgia's climate. The article can be read at <http://southeastfarmpress.com/news/georgia-agriculture-1210/>.

**Dr. Greg Fonsah** was listed in the acknowledgements of the working paper, "Capacity Building Activities to Strengthen Agroforestry as a Sustainable Economic Alternative in the Orangutan Habitat Conservation Program of Batang Toru, North Sumatra," by Endri Martini, Jusupta Tarigan, James Roshetko, Gerhard Manurung, Iwan Kurniawan, Joel Tukan, Suseno Budidarsono, Melissa Abdo, and Mein van Noordwijk of the World Agroforestry Centre.

**Esendugue Greg Fonsah, Gerard Krewer, Kerry Harrison, and Danny Stanaland.** 2008. "Economic Returns Using Risk-rated Budget Analysis for Rabbiteye Blueberry in Georgia." *HortTechnology* 18:506-515.

**Gerard Krewer, Esendugue Greg Fonsah, Mark Rieger, Richard Wallace, David Linvill, and Ben Mullinix.** 2008. "Evaluation of Commercial Banana Cultivars in Southern Georgia for Ornamental and Nursery Production." *HortTechnology* 18:529-535.

The following is a summary of an article on the assessment of land use change impacts in Georgia by **Liz Kramer** which was published on UGA's Home Page on September 24, 2008.



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A paper entitled, "Do Volatility Determinants Vary across Futures Contracts? Insights from a Smoothed Bayesian Estimator," by **Berna Karali, Jeffrey H. Dorfman, and Walter N.**

**Thurman** (NC State Univ.) is listed on Social Science Research Network's top ten download list for *ESM: Bayesian Analysis*. Congratulations to the authors on this notable accomplishment.

Georgia is one of the fastest growing states in the United States. This rapid population growth translates into an increase in developed area across the state, which means we are replacing farms and forests with buildings and roads. These new hard surfaced areas, such as parking lots, highways, buildings, etc. modify the water cycle and impact our rivers and streams. Recently we have completed a study of these changes in Georgia's impervious surface and tree canopy for 1991, 2001, and 2005 for the Georgia Forestry Commission's Urban and Community Forestry Program. In the period between 1991 and 2001, the state of Georgia added 214,402 acres, a 4% increase, and between 2001 and 2005, the state of Georgia added 154,064 acres of impervious surface, a 19% increase. Although the majority of the increase was in the Atlanta Metropolitan Region, most areas of the state show an increase in low densities of impervious surfaces. Results of this study were presented at the Poultry Forum: Turning Litter into Opportunities, which was co-sponsored by CAES, GSU, Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission, and NRCS in August 2008.



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The IRS *W&I Offline* newsletter for September 2008 ran an article highlighting the National Farm Income Tax Extension Committee's work with the IRS on Publication 225, *Farmer's Tax Guide*.

W&I's Tax Forms and Publications partner with the USDA and top educators from universities across the nation to assist farmers with their income tax obligations. This partnership is known as the National Farm Income Tax Extension Committee. **Keith Kightlinger** has served on this committee since 1996 and served as co-chair of the committee since May 2003.

The results of our study have implications for water quality and quantity in the state. Increases in urbanization lead to an increased amount of nonpoint source pollution delivered to our rivers and streams due to higher run off. The increase in impervious surfaces also reduces the amount



of groundwater infiltration which in turn provides the baseflow in water bodies. This means that there is less water in our streams and rivers to dilute the existing pollutant loads that may be coming from agricultural lands or the additional inputs from urban activities. This is of special concern to farmers who use litter for fertilizers. Even if local producers are spreading fertilizers at the same rate as they have in the past, urbanizing watersheds can no longer dilute these previous levels of loadings.



Research conducted by **Drs. Warren Kriesel** and **Jeff Mullen** was featured on the University of Georgia website and in the *Red and Black* in November 2008. Their study



titled, "Are There Incentives for Growing Green? Evidence from the Coastal Marshlands of Georgia," was funded by a Georgia Sea Grant.

Their study indicated that there are economic incentives for real estate developers to incorporate more open space in their design of residential subdivisions in marshland environments. Indications were that property developments with green characteristics may have higher resale value.

Drs. Kriesel and Mullen investigated the cost of building a marsh-side Savannah development of 36 home sites named Barbour Pointe. It was determined that for homes within about a third of a mile of the marsh, every one percent of common space relative to the entire development boosts the price of each home by \$3,300. With 55

percent of Barbour Pointe's buildable land being commons, each home's sales price supports a potential premium of more than \$180,000. The findings are not only good news for the developer of Barbour Pointe, but for those concerned that booming coastal development could harm sensitive marsh environments. When developers learn that it pays to preserve land adjacent to ecologically precious areas, the market might begin to do what regulation has not yet accomplished. Developers of Barbour Point went further than just setting aside common space – they put it in a land trust. This will enable them to charge more for their home sites and to reap a significant tax deduction for the charitable donation of prime marsh-side real estate.

**Dr. Luanne Lohr's** work was recognized in the publication, "Investing in Organic Knowledge," in *Impacts of the First 13 Years of the Organic Farming Research Foundation's Grantmaking Program* by Jane Sooby of the Organic Farming Research Foundation. OFRF is a national organization dedicated to funding and promoting research in organic agriculture and has had significant input to framing organic research initiatives in the last three Farm Bills. Dr. Lohr's co-authored report, "Maximizing Shareholder Retention in Southern CSAs: A Step Toward Sustainability," was from an M.S. thesis funded by OFRF in 1996 and is among OFRF's top three requested research reports. Sooby stated that Dr. Lohr "...has become one of the most prolific agricultural economists writing on organic issues in the country."



**Stephanie Schupska** (UGA), 2008. "Can Georgia Develop Viable Banana Industry?" *Southeast Farm Press*, December 10, 2008.

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**Dr. Forrest Stegelin** was a co-author of one of the three "Outstanding Paper" manuscripts presented at the recent Southeast Decision Sciences Institute in Charleston, South Carolina. The article, "The Allurement of Administration and Management," was co-authored by his daughter, Amber, who is a doctoral candidate at the University of South Carolina.

First Pioneer Farm Credit is the leading lender for agriculture and agribusiness in eight northeastern U.S. states (NY, VT, NH, ME, MA, CT, RI, NJ). Approximately 40% of their portfolio of borrowers is in greenhouse production and floriculture marketing. Nearly 70% of their portfolio is in the green industry, including sod farms, container and field-grown nurseries, and their allied industries or agribusinesses. First Pioneer hosted a webinar from three of their offices, and the topic was managing a greenhouse business during a downturn in the economy and the industry. Over 300 borrowers, extension staff, Cornell University educators and students, and First Pioneer office personnel in the eight states logged on for the webinar, 97 of whom attended the webinar from their own businesses or homes. **Dr. Forrest Stegelin**, from the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at UGA, conducted two one-hour PowerPoint web casts, focusing on observations and trends in the greenhouse business and marketing strategies and tactics, and sustainable production: profitability and conservation and general

business management opportunities and actions. A discussion of alternative energy sources and water usage was included in the presentation on sustainable production. Dr. Stegelin's presentations were very well received by First Pioneer Farm Credit and Farmer Mac.

### Who's Been Where and Why



**Dr. John Bergstrom** traveled to Blacksburg, Virginia in January 2009 to present an invited research seminar at Virginia Polytechnic University and meet with faculty on collaborative research projects. He also traveled to Austin, Texas in February 2009 to attend the W-2133 Regional Project annual technical meeting as the official UGA representative.

**Dr. Terry Centner** traveled to Minneapolis, Minnesota in October 2008 to present a paper at the American Agricultural Law Association Meeting.

**Dr. Stanley Fletcher** traveled to Washington, D.C. to participate in the Food and Ag Policy Research Institute (FAPRI) 2008 baseline review and development of the 2009 baseline used to determine economic viability.

**Dr. Jeff Jordan** traveled to Washington, D.C. to present a paper and participate as a discussant at the annual Southern Economics Association meeting in November 2008.

**Keith Kightlinger** traveled to Durham, North Carolina in February 2009 to attend the annual meeting of the Land Grant University Tax Education Foundation.

**Dr. Genti Kostandini** traveled to Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota in November 2008 to collaborate with colleagues at the University of Minnesota to complete two papers. He also traveled to Berkley, California in January 2009 to present a paper at the University of California Berkley conference, Biotechnology in Developing Countries.

**Dr. Jeffrey Mullen** traveled to Chicago, Illinois in November 2008 to attend a workshop on how to link biophysical and economic models of biofuel production and environmental impacts. Dr. Mullen also traveled to Tuskegee, Alabama in January 2009 to lead a grant proposal to the NASULGC related to higher education in Mali.

**Dr. Tim Park** traveled to North Palmerston, New Zealand to present a seminar at the Department of Agricultural Economics at Massey University in November 2008.

**Dr. Richard Schermerhorn** traveled to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina to conduct the Georgia Cooperative Council Couples Conference in November 2008.

**Dr. Don Shurley** traveled to Franklin, Virginia to make a presentation at the Virginia Cotton Meeting in February 2009.

**Dr. Michael Wetzstein** traveled to Baku, Azerbaijan to participate as an Open Society Institute Scholar (Visiting Fellow) at Baku State University in December 2008.

## Student News

Rodney Miller, CEO of McCormick International USA, Inc., was the speaker for the Agricultural and Environmental Economics Club meeting on November 4, 2008. Mr. Miller joined McCormick Tractors, based in Norcross, GA, in June 2007 and became CEO in 2008. McCormick Tractors builds and distributes agricultural tractors for both full-time and rural lifestyle farmers. Their line of tractors starts at 28 hp and goes through 280 hp. McCormick has state-of-the-art factories in several countries around the world and is privately held by the Morra family in Italy. McCormick International distributes through a growing network of dealers throughout the United States.



**Mr. Rodney Miller**

**Jim Hodges** (Agricultural Economics in 1985) was the speaker at the Agricultural and Environmental Economics Club meeting on February 11, 2009. Jim is the vice president/regional lending manager of AgGeorgia Farm Credit, ACA in Royston, Georgia. Jim has hired quite a few departmental graduates in the past.



**Graduation Class - Fall 2008**



**Graduate students and friends at a holiday party with Dr. Ramirez at Dr. Wetzstein's home**

### **Staff News**



**Yanping Chen**, IT Professional Specialist, was recognized for 10 years of service at the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Years of Service

Recognition Ceremony. Congratulations, Yanping!

**Jo Anne Norris**, administrative specialist, was presented the Classified Staff Award for Excellence in Administrative/Professional Service by the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

Jo Anne's position is central to the operation of the department, and she does a fantastic job in every facet of her work. Congratulations, Jo Anne, on this well-deserved recognition!



### **Alumni News**

**Gina Foil** (BSA in agricultural economics in 1981) joined the residential sales division of Fickling & Co.

**Ryan S. Grab** (BSA in agribusiness in 2007) is working with United Rentals, Inc. in Bogart, Georgia.

**Mitch Lathem** (BSA in agricultural and applied economics in 2005) has a position as an associate broker with Southern Heritage Land Company specializing in land sales and acquisitions throughout the southeast. He also has a photography business, Foxfire Photography ([www.mitchlathemphotography.smugmug.com](http://www.mitchlathemphotography.smugmug.com)). His focus is on fine art photography, but he also does some portraiture and wedding photography.

**Candice Clark McKie** (BSA in agribusiness in 2005, MS in agricultural economics in 2007) works for the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners as a program analyst in their Division of Economic Analysis.



**Joel McKie** (BSA in agribusiness in 2005) graduated from UGA School of Law in May 2008 and is currently an associate in the lawfirm of Hall, Booth, Smith, & Slover, P.C., Atlanta, Georgia.

**Gene Murkinson** (BSA in agricultural economics in 1959) retired from Georgia Southern University after 23 years. He is now a professor emeritus of management and continues to write papers concerning business history and conducts research on selection of managers for isolated and remote assignments. He is active in Kiwanis Club of Statesboro and the VFW.

**Barry L. Storey** (BSA in agricultural economics in 1982) was elected as a director of the Athens First Bank and Trust by the board of directors to aid the bank's parent company, Synovus, in their Augusta market growth.

**Paul Wojtkowski** (M.S. in agricultural economics in 1984) published his seventh book in 2008. Paul stated, "I write on agro-ecology in all its variations, i.e., agriculture, forestry, and agro-forestry. This recent book is along these same lines. The difference is that this text goes back to my UGA roots; the title is Agroecological Economics, Sustainability and Biodiversity. This book was published by Elsevier. In writing this pilot text, I wanted to open a new frontier in agricultural economics, one that comes equipped with new methodologies and approaches. I hope that others take up the challenge and look into the possibilities and potentials offered. To date, sales have been strong. The UGA library has a copy."

## 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](mailto: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. To support the Agricultural Economics Fund (which supports general departmental activities) or the Stephen J. Brannen Student Leadership Fund, please make checks payable to the Arch Foundation. To support the Tom Frazier Scholarship Fund, Wen Williams Scholarship Fund, Evan Brown International Education Fund, William Firor Scholarship Fund, Roy Proctor Scholarship Fund, or Tate Brookins Scholarship Fund, please make checks payable to the UGA Foundation. Mail all checks to 303 Conner Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-7509.

### **Scholarship Opportunity**

The National Poultry & Food Distributors Association is pleased to award scholarships from \$1500–\$2000 to various students of agricultural colleges and universities across the U.S. To qualify, each applicant must:

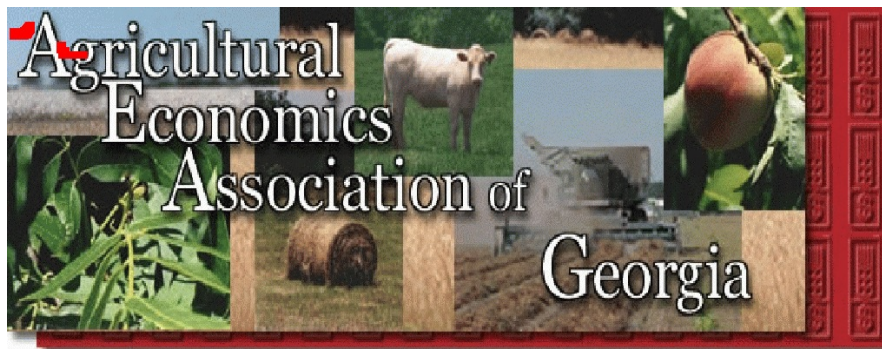
- Be a college junior or senior the upcoming (award) year at a U.S. institution
- Be enrolled as a full-time student
- Be pursuing a poultry or related agricultural degree: Food Science, Dietetics, Poultry Science, Ag. Econ., etc.
- Provide his or her current official transcript
- Provide a letter of recommendation from his or her dean or department head
- Complete an application
- Provide a one-page letter describing his or her goals and aspirations

Application deadline is May 31, 2009

For application and further information, contact Audrey Hudson at (706)542-0763 or email [ah1@uga.edu](mailto:ah1@uga.edu).

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### **Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia Section**



## Take Advantage of What Your Associations Have to Offer

Contributed by Kristin McWhorter, CAE, Executive Director of NPFDA-National Poultry & Food Distributors Association, Gainesville, GA and President of the Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia

When the economy turns south, it seems that more and more companies turn inward. They slow down or stop advertising altogether, drop out of organizations, or, at the very least, stop participating in organizational functions.

Unfortunately, it is times like these when you should be more active with industry associations. Everyone is feeling the pinch to some degree. Some are just handling it better. Oftentimes, these are the same people who are active in their industry associations. These are also the same people who are usually happy to share some of their ideas. And what better way to meet these people than being active in a resource that is available to you.

You get out of something what you put into it. You've heard that many times over the years. This is especially true with organizations and associations. Some people elect to be barely involved, and they *will* benefit *some* from membership. But it is those who choose to really be involved who get the big payoffs. Those who contribute time through leadership or committee work will soon begin to get a return on their investment.

Members who attend functions, conventions, who are active on committees, etc., are the ones who will be quick to point out how much they get from membership. And most of the time, these are the same individuals who are excelling in their businesses and personal lives. We see this continually at the National Poultry & Food Distributors Association (NPFDA). The members who attend our annual meetings, regional and Distributor Exchange Meetings are the members who are leaders in the industry.

We're all looking for benefits of some kind. But, if you really think about it, the main reason is simply to better yourself and to better the industry. These are the real benefits of any association. How can joining an association and sharing "your secrets" make you a better business person? The answer is fairly obvious. Look around you, wherever you look, you will always find those with more experience and those with less. You will always find a fellow association member who has a better way of doing things and another who could learn something you already know. When you meet and share what you know, you learn. And if you learn just one thing, you become more successful. If everyone shared this attitude, the whole industry would benefit! Plus, the ultimate winner here may be the consumer.

Many associations offer educational benefits and networking opportunities. When you participate in forums, conferences, and conventions you'll be welcomed into a community of professionals who share your commitment to the industry. Most associations will offer leadership opportunities. Committee involvement also offers the chance to provide direction to the association's governance as well as the association's growth.

Bill Blades (speaker-AZ) reported at an NPFDA meeting that 99% of businesses that fail don't belong to associations. There are many other interesting statistics regarding the importance of

associations. Here are some that should be of interest (from the American Society of Association Executives):

Today, more than 147,000 associations exist in the United States, representing nearly every industry, profession, charity, hobby, cause, and interest.

Nine out of ten adult Americans belong to one association, and one out of four belong to four or more associations, according to a 1998 study by the American Association of Retired Persons.

Associations employ 295,000 people in the United States.

More people work for nonprofit organizations than for the federal government and all 50 state governments combined (8.6 million versus 6.8 million).

Associations spend \$2.2 billion annually on technology.

More than 173 million volunteer hours in community service are documented annually by associations, often using members' skills for the greater common good.

Associations dominate the \$83 billion meetings industry, spending more than \$56 billion annually to hold conventions, expositions, and seminars. The entire meetings industry ranks as the 23rd largest contributor to the Gross National Product.

The direct spending of the conventions, expositions, meetings, and incentive travel industry supports 1.57 million full-time equivalent jobs in the United States. Meetings and conventions generate 22 percent of the operating revenue of the air transportation industry.

Meetings also account for more than \$12.3 billion in state, local, and federal sales and income taxes.

Success is all about relationship building. Great salespeople build relationships with their clients. Most good salespeople and managers are active within several associations. They are active on committees, boards, and attend association functions. They contribute part of the 173 million volunteer hours and get back what they put into it.

If you are not active with an association and would like to become more successful, create more relationships, and have a group of industry professionals you can count on when needed, then perhaps you should look into membership with one or more of the many associations within the poultry industry. There are many state, regional, national, and international associations that can play a part in helping you and your company achieve success. Membership makes a difference. You'll see the difference where it counts the most – in the practice of your profession and the growth of your career.