



University of Georgia Agricultural & Applied Economics

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2002

Conner Connects Celebration

One hundred twenty alumni, supporters, students, and faculty involved with agricultural and environmental economics at the University of Georgia gathered for the Conner Connects: Past, Present, and Future celebration at Flinchum's Phoenix on April 23 2002. Conner Hall will always be at the center of UGA's south campus and the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. This building, which has connected thousands of people to their agricultural careers, is the current home for agricultural economics, agribusiness, and environmental economics. For this reason, Conner Connects is a fitting title for a banquet honoring the past, present, and future interests in agricultural and environmental economics. Conner Connects - a vision of the undergraduate students and faculty at the University - will continue developing support systems for agriculture and the environment.

The celebration united old friends, faculty members and current students. Along with a delicious meal, we had live entertainment and plenty of time for socializing. Special appreciation is extended to Carol Spruill, Matt Rushton, Leigh Heusner, Emily Howard, Lydia Hargus, Josh Gill, Becky Carson, Joe Brown, Corrie King, and Amanda Padgett, the 2001-2002 Officers of the Agricultural and Environmental Economics Club, who provided great leadership for the Club's activities and the 1st annual celebration. Jo Anne Norris and Steve Turner were recognized for their support of the Club and the celebration. In addition, several individuals and companies helped sponsor the celebration. Such support is critically important for a great celebration.

2002 Rod Ziemer Lecture

Dr. Jean Kinsey, President of the American Agricultural Economics Association, was the guest speaker for the 2002 Rod Ziemer Lecture on April 12, 2002. The topic of the lecture was "The Globalization of Food and Agricultural System: The Nexus of Consumer, Environment, and Science." Dr. Kinsey is Professor of Applied Economics at the University of Minnesota and co-director of the Food Industry Center. The Lecture was sponsored by the Graduate Student Association and the Agricultural and Applied Economics Department. The abstract of the paper is presented below.

A major characteristic of food systems is that location matters. Unlike computers, basic production cannot all be concentrated in one country or climate and product cannot be shipped to end users from a warehouse in Los Angeles. This implies that there are a large number of economic agents with various skills and decision-making authority involved in the food chain and that leads to wide spread competitive advantages. The food industry is moving from neat, linear supply/demand chains to web-like systems of integrated activities in order to produce food for both targeted niche markets and global consumption simultaneously. New business partners require new codes of business conduct, new ways of collecting and analyzing data and new monitoring and regulatory regimes.

The food and agricultural system is responding to consumers' need to save time and labor while eating healthy food. The parallel growth of the organic food industry and bioengineered food ingredients illustrates the breadth of preferences that the food system attempts to meet. The global demand for traceability of food characteristics, safety assurances, environmental accountability, and freer trade are all increasing the pressure for better information about how and where food is produced. It is also increasing the pressure for more integrated food production. Accommodating various special interests involved in a global food and agricultural systems is a major challenge as the speed of change accelerates and global concerns for security overshadow more traditional concerns about hunger and rural lifestyles.

Curricular Changes

The University Council approved the Tifton major in AgriScience and Emerging Technology, which will now go to the Board of Regents for final approval. The new major will include three agricultural economics courses. New minors in environmental law and in environmental economics and management also were approved.

Faculty Awards

Senior Research Award: Stanley M. Fletcher won the Gamma Sigma Delta Senior Research Award in April 2002. Dr. Fletcher, the nation's leading academic expert in peanut policy, has been actively involved in conducting economic analyses of policy alternatives and educating Congressional and state leaders and commodity groups on peanut policy issues. His other areas of expertise include consumer economics, marketing and trade.

Outstanding Teacher Recognition: The University of Georgia held its Honors Day Convocation on May 10, 2002 to recognize and honor those who have excelled in UGA academic programs. Steve Turner was recognized for his outstanding contributions to our teaching program. He had previously been recognized by the University of Georgia, Student Government Association as a recipient of the Outstanding Teaching Award for 2001.

Outstanding Undergraduate Teacher: The Agricultural and Environmental Economics Club recognized James Epperson as the Outstanding Faculty Member. In addition to teaching Agribusiness Marketing and Agribusiness Management, Dr. Epperson encourages students in their academic studies and career paths.

Outstanding Graduate Teachers: The Department's Graduate Student Association selected Steve Turner and Michael Wetzstein to receive the Outstanding Graduate Teacher Award. Dr. Wetzstein teaches the graduate course Microeconomics: Theory with Applications. Dr. Turner teaches the graduate course Futures and Option Markets.

UGA Faculty Recognition Banquet: The 2002 UGA Faculty Recognition Banquet was held April 18, 2002. This occasion honors the 2002 recipients of numerous research, teaching and extension awards. Steve Turner received an Outstanding Teacher Award from the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

Award for Outstanding Service: Wojciech Florkowski received a plaque expressing appreciation for 'support and education of growers nationwide on marketing and economics' from the Pecan Grower. The award was presented to Dr. Florkowski at the Business meeting during the annual Georgia Pecan Growers Association meeting.

Staff Awards

Outstanding Staff Award: The Graduate Student Association recognized Sarah Hull for her outstanding support. Ms. Sarah is appreciated by all, and we are pleased to recognize her dedication.

Outstanding Staff Award: The Agricultural and Environmental Economics Club recognized Christy Porterfield for her outstanding staff support. Christy has only been in the department 20 months, but she has already distinguished herself.

Student Awards

Outstanding Senior Award: Faculty in the Agricultural and Applied Economics Department recognized Joe Brown as the Outstanding Senior in the department. During the school year Joe Brown is a mild mannered environmental economics student at the University of Georgia. But come summertime, he picks up his shovel and ax and heads west to work as a fire fighter for the National Forest Service.

Rising Star Award: Carol Lea Spruill, an Agricultural Economics major from Jackson County, received the Rising Star Outstanding Junior Award at the South Campus Awards Banquet in March 2002. She has maintained a perfect 4.0 grade-point average and is a truly outstanding leader. Congratulations, Carol for being selected the College's top junior.

AGHON Initiate: Emily Howard, an Agribusiness major from Newborn, Georgia, was a spring 2002 initiate into AGHON. The honorary agricultural society, which was founded at UGA in 1920, promotes leadership and spirit in South Campus students.

National AgriMarketing Competition: The 2002 UGA Chapter of the National AgriMarketing Association recently competed in the Student Marketing Competition in Nashville, Tennessee. The local chapter was selected as having one of the top twelve marketing plans out of the 35 competing universities. The team consisted of the following students: Sarah Brownlee, agricultural communications; Terri Kimble, agricultural communications; Jordan Byce, agribusiness; and Adrian Tippens, agribusiness. The faculty advisors were Forrest Stegelin and Steve Turner. The product was a hydrangea that blooms throughout the spring, summer, and fall.

Graduate Student Recognition: Jean Kinsey, President of the American Agricultural Economics Association, made opening comments at the April 12, 2002 ceremony recognizing outstanding accomplishments in graduate education. Graduate student productivity for 2001 included 7 journal articles, 4 proceedings articles, 10 industry publications, 4 faculty series, 2 abstracts, 29 scholarly presentations. Well done graduate students! The award winners are as follows.

Murali Adhikari received the Outstanding Ph.D. Student Award. He has co-authored a large number of publications, selected papers and posters.

Arusyak Alaverdyan received the Claudia DePalma Davis Outstanding M.S. Student Award. She has maintained a perfect 4.0 grade-point average.

Laxmi Paudel and Murali Adhikari received the Rod Ziemer Outstanding Ph.D. Paper Award for "Analysis of Exchange Rate Linked Subsidies for Non-Price Export Promotion: The Case of Soybeans."

Mawar A. Tresna received the Rod Ziemer Outstanding M.S. Paper Award for "Managing Input Price Risk in Agricultural Production: The Case of Rollover Hedging of Diesel Fuel."

Steer Wrestling Champion: Chris Groeskreutz, a senior in Agricultural Economics and President of the UGA Rodeo Club, won the Ozark Region Steerwrestling 2002 Championship. Chris transferred from ABAC to UGA in 2000 and has been accepted for graduate studies in Agricultural Economics. To win the championship, Chris competed in ten rodeos during the 2001-2002 year against 38 other student "bulldoggers" from colleges and universities in the Southeast. Chris will compete for the National Collegiate title, representing UGA at the College National Finals Rodeo, June 11-15 in Casper, Wyoming. Chris is the first UGA student to qualify for the National Rodeo Finals. Congratulations!

Summer Internships Selected

Brussels Intern Announced: John Paul Martin, an agricultural economics major from Bainbridge, will serve as the College's intern in the Georgia Department of Agriculture's International Trade Office in Brussels, Belgium for the summer of 2002.

Congressional Internships: Students from the Agricultural and Applied Economics Department were awarded three out of the College's four Congressional internships for summer 2002.

Madison Charles Coley, Agricultural Economics major, was selected for the 2002 Saxby Chambliss Agricultural Internship in Washington, D.C., May 13-August 2, 2002.

Campbell Warren Kirbo, Agricultural Economics major, was selected for the 2002 Sanford Bishop Agricultural Internship in Washington, D.C., May 13-August 2, 2002.

Emily Ruth Howard, Agribusiness major, was selected for the 2002 Jack Kingston Agricultural Internship in Washington, D.C., May 13-August 2, 2002.

What's Happening with You?

What have you been up to since graduation?

Are you putting your degree to work?

Have you continued on for more schooling?

What are your job duties?

Tell us all about it! The survey for the alumni directory can be downloaded from the web at <<http://www.agecon.uga.edu/>>. Otherwise, we will send you a copy of the survey if you call 706-542-2481 or email aaecon@agecon.uga.edu.

Your answers to this short alumni survey will help prospective and current students with some of the most important decisions they'll ever make - choosing the right major and the right career. If you remember what you went through in selecting a major and career, you know they'll appreciate all the help they can get. Thank you for your participation!

Personnel Changes

Wojciech Florkowski has received UGA Board of Regents approval to be promoted from Associate Professor to Professor effective July 1, 2002. Congratulations, Professor Florkowski!

Grant Humphries, research coordinator, retired March 1, 2002 after 33 years of service to the University of Georgia. We extend Grant best wishes for an enjoyable and fulfilling retirement.

Kim Waters has returned to the department's business office, replacing Stephanie Crowe who resigned to take another position on campus..

Arla Williams, senior secretary, resigned to pursue missions related to her faith for a year before returning to complete her college education.