



2016

Exchange

Kansas State University Department of Agricultural Economics

A Note from the desk of Dr. Allen Featherstone



Dr. Allen Featherstone

Welcome to the Exchange. We are sharing with you some of the awards our faculty and students have received over the past year, and give you an update on our departmental programs.

Our faculty continues to achieve high marks within the economic community with our faculty garnering the less than 10 years, and greater than 10 years, teaching awards from the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association. We share the journey of one of our extension researchers, Dr. Mykel Taylor as she continues her work in the field. Finally, we will show you some of the awards our undergraduates achieved on their own journeys to success.

The new 2015 Farm Management data has played a pivotal role in developing research pointing to financial stresses within the Kansas farming community. We'll take a look at the data, and invite you to watch a video of my testimony to Congress on the Departmental website. There I address some of the issues faced by the agricultural and ag-finance

sectors.

The Office of Local Government (OLG), the Center for Risk Management Education and Research (CRMER), the Monitoring and Evaluation and Technical Support Services (METSS) and the Arthur Capper Cooperative Center (ACCC) are achieving new milestones this year. OLG transitioned to delving into a broader resource management research base. CRMER is molding young students with direct industry interaction. ACCC continues to innovate and educate state and national cooperatives. METSS completed a comprehensive population based survey report on US-AID operations in Ghana.

Our achievements are directly related to the continued support of our alumni and corporate sponsorships. This support helps us provide our students and outreach programs the proper foundation to continue our tradition of excellence. We appreciate the dedication and engagement of our alumni and outside supporters. Thank you to our generous donors who give back to the Department.

Please take time to learn more about the activities of our department. We also encourage you to share your career and family developments so we can keep your fellow alumni informed. Please email me at afeather@ksu.edu or Thomas Reust, our communications coordinator, at tomreust@ksu.edu with information you would like to share with your fellow alumni.

Dr. Allen Featherstone
Department Head, Professor, Master of Agribusiness Program Director



Table of Contents

2	A note from Dr. Allen Featherstone
4	Office of Local Government
6	Faculty Teaching Awards
7	AgManager.info Launches New Site
8	2016 Distinguished Alumni Award
9	Graduate Student Internship
10	Financial Stress in Agribusiness
12	Profile: Dr. Keith Harris
14	AAEA Case Study Team
15	Center for Risk Management Education and Research
16	Profile: Dr. Mykel Taylor
18	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Technical Support Services
20	2016 Study Abroad: Ireland Edition
22	Arthur Capper Cooperative Center
23	Master of Agribusiness
24	4th Floor Renovations
25	Upcoming Events Spotlight

Cover Photo Courtesy of Jake Pannbacker. Photographs from around the state were gathered for the first annual AgManager.info photo contest, and winners were recognized at the 2016 Risk and Profit Conference. To compete in the 2017 contest, or for more information, please visit the AgManager.info website.

Office of Local Government

Dr. John Leatherman says he finds some of the most rewarding work within the OLG program is in educating his student staff. He calls it “Leatherman University”. One former “LU” student, Emily Mollohan, was recruited into the OLG program during her freshman year of college, and believes the workplace



Dr. John Leatherman

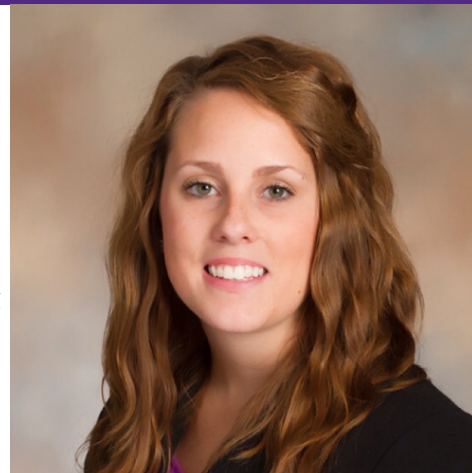
experience gave her the majority of her professional acumen she uses today.

Mollohan said, “I learned such a wide variety of skills that I have been able to apply them in multiple facets, such as internships and graduate school.”

Mollohan received a B.S. in agribusiness and animal science, and went on to complete her masters in agricultural economics under the tutelage of Dr. Glynn Tonsor. The biggest take-away from her work experience with the OLG program? Confidence.

“There was always opportunity to work on a variety

of projects and to learn more skills with lots of patience from our supervisors. We were also rewarded for doing well, which is a great confidence booster that allows for better performance”, said Mollohan.



Emily Mollohan

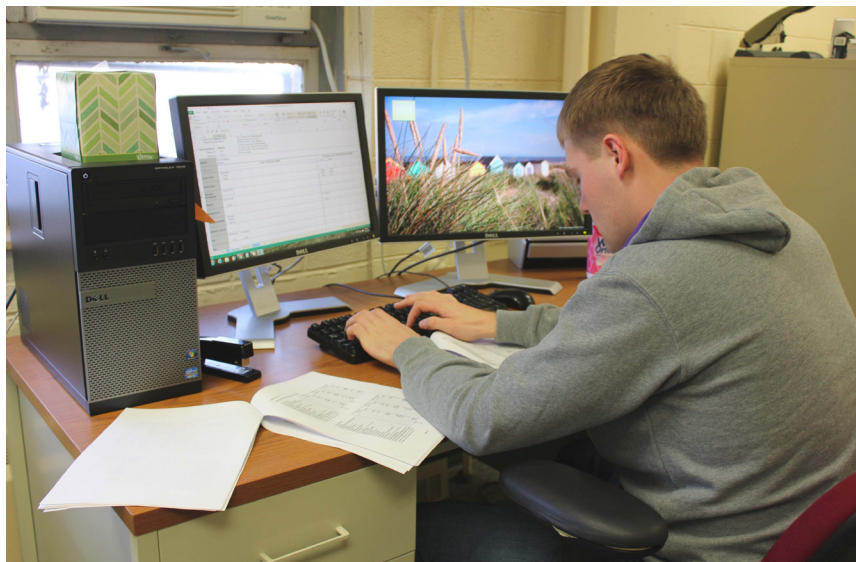
Current students in the program include Alana McLain, a sophomore in Agricultural Economics, and Ryan Nelson, a freshman in Agribusiness. The students work on budgets from 105 counties throughout the state and compare expenditures in selected categories to historical data to measure performance. Those budgets are then resubmitted for revision and approval by OLG professional staff before distribution of the analytical report back to extension agents working within the client counties.

“All of this goes to extension agents that help make programs that benefit people in their counties, and I think this is a really big part of people’s lives on a day-to-day basis, from the sales tax they pay at the grocery store to school education programs,” said McLain.

The Office of Local Government strives to teach their student workers what it is like to work in a professional environment, where being precise and accurate in the work you do is important.

“You have to be precise with what you are doing, you have to try for zero errors and that can be challenging sometimes because if you have one mistake, you have to go through the whole budget to find where you messed up,” said Nelson.

The students work with sensitive information, which is consolidated into a booklet and



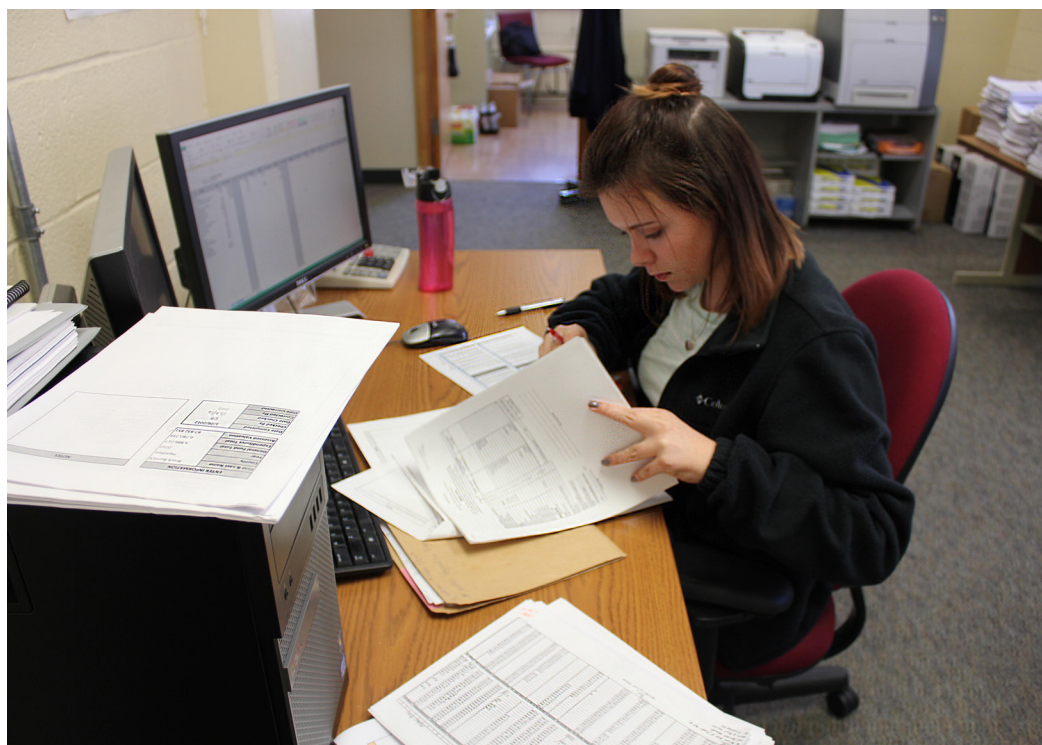
Ryan Nelson

placed online for public use and access. The published report gives more detailed information about what a budget change means to the general consumer within a given community. The data also helps local officials make fiscal decisions and educates the citizens of local communities to become more informed as consumers.

“I think it’s important to look and see what the Office of Local Government actually does. They go through all of this data and make charts and you can go back and see how it affects your home county, your friends and family,” said Nelson.

The Office of Local Government is a tight-knit group that sets its students up for success after they graduate, not only in their careers, but in life. Students are encouraged to hold themselves to a higher standard, in their work and in their office environment.

McLain said, “I think it is really important, especially for students, to find a job that is going to give them some professional experience even if it is just working in a grocery store, I think putting a level of professionalism into what you do on a day-to-day basis is important, not only in an office like this, but in every student job, and that is something that is really encouraged here.”



Alana McClain

Faculty Teaching Awards

Two of our faculty members won teaching awards from the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) over the summer in Boston.

This year Dr. Andrew Barkley and Dr. Jason Bergtold were honored by the association for their accomplishments as teachers and their efforts to improve the profession as a whole.

Andy Barkley continues to be innovative in his teaching. He teaches agricultural market structures at the junior level and managerial economics at a distance. Currently, Andy is using flipped classroom methods to increase interaction and active learning. He previously had earned the AAEA undergraduate teaching award for less than 10 years of experience. Dr. Barkley also received the Quality of Communications Award during the conference.

Jason Bergtold has established an outstanding teaching portfolio mastering instruction from the freshman level through the Ph.D. level. He is especially known for using active learning experiential methods in his freshman course to help students understand economic concepts.

For the second year in a row, a professor from the Kansas State University department of agricultural economics received a prestigious award for teaching.

Dr. Aleksan Shanoyan received the “Undergraduate Teaching Award with ten or less years of experience” from the Western Agricultural Economics Association, or WAEA.

The head of the Department of Agricultural Economics, Dr. Allen Featherstone, says, “Dr. Shanoyan continues the tradition of excellence in our undergraduate instruction, we are pleased that others see the dedication our faculty have to educating their students.”



Dr. Aleksan Shanoyan



Dr. Andrew Barkley won the AAEA Over Ten Years Experience Teaching award, and the Quality of Communication award.



Dr. Andrew Barkley



Dr. Jason Bergtold won the AAEA Distinguished Teaching: Less Than Ten Years Experience award.



Dr. Jason Bergtold



Updated

AgManager
.info

AgManager.info website is a comprehensive source of information, analysis, and decision-making tools for agricultural producers, agribusinesses, and others. The site serves as a clearinghouse for applied outreach information emanating from the Department of Agricultural Economics at Kansas State University. It was created by combining departmental and faculty websites as well as creating new features exclusive to the AgManager.info site. The goal of this coordination is to improve the organization of web-based material and allow greater access for agricultural producers and other clientele.

Topics presented on the AgManager.info site include: crop and livestock marketing and outlook reports, crop insurance, farm management, agricultural finance, agricultural policy, human resources, income tax and law, and agribusiness. Features on the site are updated regularly, encouraging repeat visits to the site. AgManager.info contains decision-making tools, such as budget spreadsheets, and data sets that can encourage the agricultural industry to view AgManager.info as the most comprehensive and widely used university-sponsored website for applied research and economic outreach information.

The updated site features an improved functionality that helps users find information quickly and easily. Site manager Rich Llewelyn is pleased with the new design, and is excited for the possibilities offered within the new system.

One of the key features for the site allows users to build personalized reports, and then save them to their own profiles. Information is parsed to each individual user, and the new releases are clearly visible on the front page. We invite you to visit the new AgManager.info site, and give us any feedback you may have on its operations and utility. The Department of Agricultural Economics is dedicated to providing you applied research and education to assist in dealing with challenges in your own operations. For more information email Dr. Rich Llewelyn at rwl@ksu.edu.

Photo Contest Winners

In August, the first annual AgManager.info Photo Contest winners were announced at the 2016 Risk and Profit Conference. This year's winner was Trevor Hands with Lacy Wray chosen as the runner up. Watch for upcoming details about the next contest.



Trevor Hands



Lacy Wray

2016 Distinguished Alumni Award

The Department of Agricultural Economics is pleased to announce the 2016 Distinguished Alumnus Award will go to Steve Packebush, President of Koch Ag & Energy Solutions, LLC; a subsidiary of Koch Industries, Inc., for which he also serves as senior vice president – Ag & Energy. Most recently, he was president of Koch's fertilizer business, a position he held since 2003.

Mr. Packebush began his career at Koch in 1987 and has served in business development, marketing, sales and trading roles with Koch Minerals Services, Koch Agriculture Company and Koch International Company. He is a 1987 graduate of Kansas State University with a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics.

Packebush will receive this award at the department Scholarship and Awards banquet on October 7, 2016.

Koch Ag & Energy Solutions is involved in the agriculture and energy sectors, and includes subsidiaries Koch Fertilizer, LLC, Koch Agronomic Services, LLC, Koch Energy Services, LLC, and Koch Methanol, LLC.



Steve Packebush

Koch Fertilizer and its affiliates are among the world's largest manufacturers, marketers and distributors of fertilizer products. Koch Fertilizer companies own or have interests in nitrogen fertilizer plants in the United States, Canada and Trinidad and Tobago. The companies have the capability to market and distribute more than 14 million tons of fertilizer products annually and cover global demand through an extensive supply, storage and distribution system that includes terminals in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Australia, France and the United Kingdom.

Koch Agronomic Services and its affiliates produce and market enhanced efficiency fertilizers for agriculture producers and turf and ornamental professionals. Koch Agronomic Services delivers value through a combination of research and development and an innovative product portfolio.

Koch Energy Services markets approximately 2.5 BCF per day of natural gas into the North American market. In addition, an affiliate of Koch Energy Services owns and operates a natural gas-fired, combined-cycle electric power generation facility in Odessa, Texas. The facility has a capacity of 1,055 megawatts and provides electric power to the Electric Reliability Council of Texas system, a power market serving 23 million Texas customers.

Koch Methanol and its affiliates supply methanol to a global customer base. Methanol is used in the manufacturing of plywood, carpet, fuels and plastics.

Based in Wichita, Kan., Koch Industries, Inc. is one of the largest private companies in America with annual revenues of about \$115 billion, according to Forbes. It owns a diverse group of companies involved in refining, chemicals, grain processing and biofuels; forest and consumer products; fertilizers; polymers and fibers; process and pollution control equipment and technologies; electronic components; commodity trading; minerals; energy; ranching; glass; and investments. Since 2003, Koch companies have invested more than \$70 billion in acquisitions and other capital expenditures. With a presence in about 60 countries, Koch companies employ more than 100,000 people worldwide, with about 60,000 of those in the United States. From January 2009 to present, Koch companies have earned more than 930 awards for safety, environmental excellence, community stewardship, innovation, and customer service.

Graduate Student International Internship

Candice Wilson, a masters graduate student in the department, served as the International Agricultural Internship Program (IAIP) intern for the United States Mission to the European Union (USEU) in Brussels, Belgium. While interning at the USEU, Wilson was active in several FAS topic areas including biotechnology, biofuels, trade and sustainability. In addition to representing FAS at an array of conferences covering climate change, biodiversity, and the circular economy, Wilson also had the opportunity to sit in on internal meetings with industry organizations such as Copa Cogeca, EuropaBio, and the International Soybean Growers Association.

Aside from responsibilities relating to the EU, FAS Brussels is also tasked with bilateral relations with Belgium. As such, Wilson had the opportunity to serve as lead point of contact and facilitator for two meetings between Belgian government officials and U.S. Forestry industry representatives.

“Having the opportunity to do an internship internationally only confirmed for me that I want to work in the area of Ag Policy,” said Candice Wilson.

Several highlights of Wilson’s responsibilities while at post include attending and reporting on TTIP stakeholder meetings, coordinating the weekly EU

policy update, working to update the FAS USEU website, and analyzing trade data to predict implications for U.S. agriculture.



Candice Wilson with mentor in Brussels

Wilson served as a contributing author to the 2016 EU-28 Biofuels Report as well as reports covering the impact of the removal of duties on U.S. ethanol (General Court rules against anti-dumping duty on U.S. ethanol) and Brexit (Brexit- Initial Analysis on Impact on U.S. Agriculture.) Wilson worked as the lead author on reports detailing the Slovak Presidency of the Council of the EU, and maximum residue levels in the European Union.

Wilson had the opportunity to attend a farm tour hosted by Bayer focused on the digitalization of farming. Additionally, she was able to attend the Libramont Agricultural and Forestry Fair. The event was an outdoor exhibition attended by more 200,000 domestic and international visitors.

Wilson works as a graduate research assistant in the department. She is studying enrollment factors affecting Kansas producers for Farm Bill program selection although her favorite policy topics include biotechnology, biofuels, and trade access.



Candice Wilson at Agriculture and Forestry Fair



FINANCIAL STRESS HITS AGRIBUSINESS

According to the recently released Kansas Farm Management Association (KFMA), a unit within the Department of Agricultural Economics, the average 2015 net income for Kansas farms was \$4,568. That is a 95% decrease in income levels when compared to the 2014 fiscal year. Producers are also facing the first net worth loss on Kansas farms since 2002 as net worth fell by an average of 2.4% across the state. Tightening cash position for farms is a direct result of lower commodity prices and decreased profitability across both crop and livestock operations.

As an example, South Central KFMA economist Clay Simons says some of the livestock operations within his region were hit hard by the recent downturn “everything they gained in 2014, if they weren’t hedged up, they gave it all back and then some in 2015.”

KFMA Executive Director Kevin Herbel, says the current agricultural environment means efficient operations will be key as producers move forward, “During tougher financial times, it becomes very important for farmers to make decisions based on careful planning, good communication and a quality set of records.”

Herbel stressed that clear communication with everyone involved in farm production, including agricultural lenders, will make it easier to get in front of any problems the operation may face. Farmers are also in a better financial state in general due to the recent high profitability in agricultural markets in previous years. This provides a greater buffer during this downturn than was seen in the 1980s.

The KFMA annual net farm income report is generated

from over 2,000 farms summarized by region within the state of Kansas. The data from the report can be found on www.AgManager.info.

The Department of Agricultural held its annual Risk and Profit conference on August 18th through the 19th to offer producers insight into the current research and management techniques in an effort to help producers mitigate losses during the current fiscal downturn. Visit www.AgManager.info/events for more information about the conference.

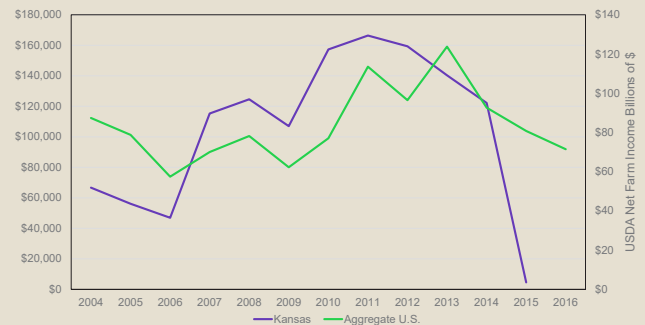


Dr. Allen Featherstone testifies before Congress

Dr. Allen Featherstone testified in Congress on in April. The topics included fiscal fitness and the over all current state of finances in the agricultural community. For the full video of the testimony please visit:

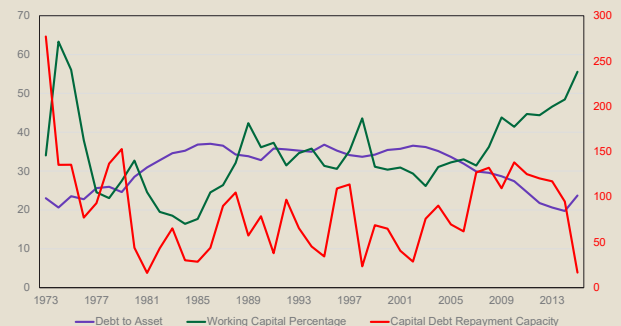
[Http://www.ageconomics.k-state.edu/](http://www.ageconomics.k-state.edu/)

Net Farm Income



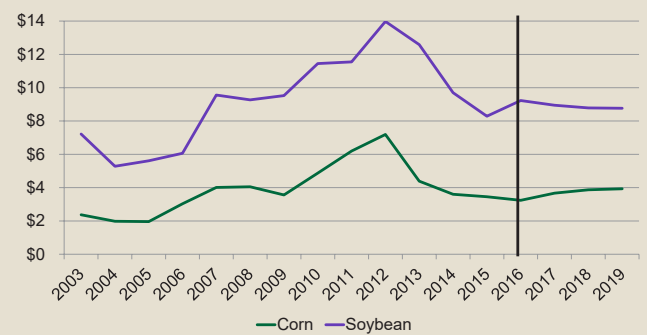
Net farm income in Kansas, and nationally, fall substantially since 2013

Changing Kansas Farm Economy



Kansas Debt to Asset ratios increased during 2015. Kansas working capital ratios increased in 2015. The ability to repay debt fell to the lowest levels since 1981.

Recent and Projected Farm-Level Crop Prices



Corn and Soybean prices have fallen dramatically since 2012 and are expected to remain near current levels.

A Conversation with Assistant Professor Dr. Keith Harris

Exchange (EC): Can you give us an introduction to yourself, and a little bit of what you're currently working on?

Dr. Keith Harris (KH): I started my career in industry as a commodity merchandiser with General Mills, Inc. I merchandised oats and wheat used in the firm's grain based snacks and breakfast cereal. While at KSU, I noticed that a number of graduates from the College of Agriculture and particularly from the Department of Agricultural Economics pursued a career in grain merchandising. As a grain merchandiser, I can recall a colleague stating that "ag economists" don't make good merchandisers. In his experience economists have solid analytical skills, but lack some of the soft skills needed to be a successful merchandiser. One of my research projects will test the veracity of that statement, and better yet provide additional input on improving the university or company sponsored merchandising training programs. In doing so, we are collecting and analyzing data from KSU graduates from 2004 - 2015, who started their career in merchandising and compare their responses with other seasoned merchandisers.

Also, I am in the final stages of completing a case study of a firm in the food industry, that faced a long-run cost inflation for its primary material (input cost). The high input costs had a significant impact on the firm's cost structure and profits. I plan to use this case to bring a real-life context to teach how firm's in mature markets make decisions. The case will lead students to perform an economic analysis and apply concepts involving market structure, entrepreneurship, and product differentiation.

I have a paper accepted for publication in the *Journal of Business Strategy* and a follow up paper under review by a different journal. Both papers suggest an approach for agribusiness managers when on the one hand, practical knowledge is too subjective and insufficient to carryout supply chain plans. And, on the other hand, the available scientific knowledge is too generalizable and not designed to solve a specific problem.

EC: How do you think your research will impact



Dr. Keith Harris

industry, or private firms?

KH: Industry expects universities to provide a ready-to-work workforce. If we are able to identify any shortcomings (soft or hard skills) of our graduates, our undergraduate coursework in logistics, finance, commodity trading, risk management, writing and communication.

EC: What are you excited about working on in the future?

KH: My work analyzes the performance of agrifood supply chains for fresh agricultural products (vegetables and fruits) and processed food products (meats and snacks) and it is comprised of growers, auctions, processors, wholesalers, retailers and specialty crops.

I am looking to continue work in the supply chain, but change my focus from the larger firms to smaller firms. In particular, I have some interests in smaller organizations in urban food settings - urban food systems. More people live in urban settings as opposed to rural environments. Urban settings for food production and distribution bring on a different set of challenges. Often urban communities are distressed and are engaged in two strategies of survival – economic growth or economic development strategies. I will use a cluster based approach as an economic development strategy to help build or strengthen urban food systems.

KH: I invite many agribusiness professionals to class and use their experiences to help develop the real-life context of the student’s learning experience. In addition, each year for an assignment I put students in contact with agribusiness leaders from my personal network to discuss business strategy, supply chain opportunities, and careers. Afterwards we discuss the conversations in class and invariably students have an opportunity to expand their own network, and walk away learning the value of communicating verbally. If any alumni, would like to be a part of this assignment. Please let me know!

EC: What do you enjoy most about teaching?

KH: When students begin to think of the implications of a management decision, and how a decision maker (an agribusiness leader) must get comfortable making decisions in the “gray” area as opposed to the “black and white” area. Students are not comfortable dealing in gray areas, which is understandable at this time in their careers. However, when students develop their own questions and begin to see the challenges through their own experiences (work or education), they are learning how to get more comfortable operating in those gray areas. I like watching them wrestle with a problem as an intellectual and/or practical pursuit, and then begin to use an economic framework to help make a decision. It is common to have lively discussions in class and have students stop by my office to continue the discussion.



EC: Any final thoughts?

AAEA Graduate Student Competition



Ralph Armah, Pacem Kotchofa, Dr. Aleksan Shanoyan, Bowen Chen

Hours of work and dedication paid off for the Department of Agricultural Economics graduate student case study team at the recent Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) conference in Boston.

Pacem Kotchofa, Bowen Chen and Ralph Armah took home the second place award and credit their success to the many hours of work to perfect their presentation. According to event guidelines, a presentation of their solution to their problem could take no longer than 15 minutes, and a question and answer portion followed.

The first round of the competition started on Sunday, July 31st, at 8:00 a.m. and continued into Monday, August 1st. After the intense two day affair, the places were announced at an awards ceremony on Monday night.

“The competition went well. The entire exercise helped hone our skills with group presentations as well as addressing real world business problems”, said Armah.

At the event, our team tackled a case study titled “Burgerville-Fresh Out of Local and Sustainable.” Armah, Kotchofa and Chen spent hours practicing their techniques in front of faculty and their peers in the lead up to the competition. Dr. Aleksan Shanoyan said he was proud of their work ethic, and notes that the competition takes large amounts of preparation.

“The many hours we spent working to effectively

communicate our solution paid off”, said Armah.

The event hosted eight teams with only four qualifying to go onto the second round. The 2nd place finish keeps a long standing tradition of excellence by the department going strong. Below are some of the recent finishes of our students in the AEA graduate student case study competition.

Past AAEA Winners:

Ralph Armah, Pacem Kotchofa, Bowen Chen	2nd place	2016
Ana Claudia Sant'Anna, Sandra Contreras, Emrah Ehr	1st place	2015
Michelle Estes, Emily Mollohan, Steven Ramsey	1st place	2014
Marcus Brix, Jon Brammer, Will Callis	2nd place	2013
Brady Brewer, Rebecca Manes, Melissa Lynes	1st place	2012
Elizabeth Canales, KSU with J. White & C. Risch, Univ. of MN	4th place	2011
Brady Brewer, Brian Lauer, Cooper Morris	2nd place	2011
Shonda Anderson, Sandra Contreras Gomez, Yue Zheng	1st place	2010
Graciela Andrango, Elizabeth Canales, Jaeljattin Jean	2nd place	2010
Bill Golden, Jeri Stroade, Erika Lehman	1st place	2001
Luther Hamman, Nancy Mitchell, Matthew Domine	3rd place	2000



Pacem Kotchofa, Bowen Chen and Ralph Armah

Center for Risk Management Education and Research

The Center for Risk Management Education and Research (CRMER) delivers high quality educational experiences for students across eight different majors. It hosts industry guest speakers and facilitates industry visits around the country for Student Fellows to learn direct risk management practices from industry leaders.

The current class of Student Fellows took a trip to Washington D.C. in May to meet with several risk management experts working in the D.C. metropolitan area.

Student-led applied research is another integral part of the educational experience for the Student Fellows of the Center. Four new research projects were completed in May of 2016, adding to the seven research projects already completed by Student Fellows since the program's inception in 2013.

Graduates who successfully complete the requirements of a Student Fellow receive a notation on their transcripts to acknowledge this achievement. More than half of the May 2016 graduating class of Student



CRMER in Washington D.C.

Fellows had already secured full time positions before graduation at an impressive line of employers including Deloitte Consulting, ADM, and Cerner.

For more information about the Center for Risk Management Education and Research please visit their website at k-state.edu/riskmanagement.

Meet Our New Assistant Professor

**Ed
Perry**
Assistant Professor

Areas of Specialization

Industrial Organization
Food and Agricultural Supply Chain
Production Economics
Genetically Engineered Crops

I am originally from Monroe, WI, a town south of Madison, WI. I received my Bachelor's from St. Norbert College in Green Bay, WI and my Master's from Marquette University. I then attended Iowa State University for my PhD. I'm currently researching the implications of changing market structure for producer welfare in the corn and soybean seed markets. You can reach me at edperry@ksu.edu * 785-532-4436 * WA 304C

There and back again: Dr. Mykel Taylor

Growing up as a rancher's daughter in Montana, Dr. Mykel Taylor never imagined she would have a degree in agriculture, let alone a Ph.D.

"I was going to be a high school science teacher and a girls' basketball coach, that's what I wanted to do," said Taylor. "When I thought of a degree in agriculture, I just assumed that meant you were going to be a farmer or a rancher."

After an inspiring international experience, Taylor realized that there was a completely different side to agriculture involving science.

Taylor says she was an animal science student at Montana State University and eventually switched into agribusiness, "I loved the whole Econ thing, it was about people. It wasn't about math or money. I find explaining why people do what they do, pretty darn fascinating."

After a couple of internships and receiving funding, Taylor was on her way

to Kansas where she worked as an extension assistant. It was here that Taylor really discovered the power of extension. She knew she wanted to be an extension economist, which required a Ph.D., so off to North Carolina she went.

"That was four years of hell in graduate school, but it was worth it because I knew I wanted to do extension," said Taylor. "I just thought it was so cool that we would work on questions or issues, go out into a meeting and you would be talking to people and they actually cared. They would engage and ask you questions and they would call you on your stuff. It was a hard job but it was very satisfying to be impactful in people's lives."

Upon graduating, Taylor took an extension position at Washington State University. However, Kansas still held a special place in her heart and the Taylor family moved back to Kansas where they've lived for the past five

years.

"I think it was just one of those things, I call it my apprenticeship in extension at K-State, and it was very influential. To get to come back here, and do it was so cool," said Taylor.

The majority of the Taylor's extension work Taylor involves land and leasing, understanding and tracking the land market and then helping people with those issues. Kansas land values and the cost of leasing is a hot topic



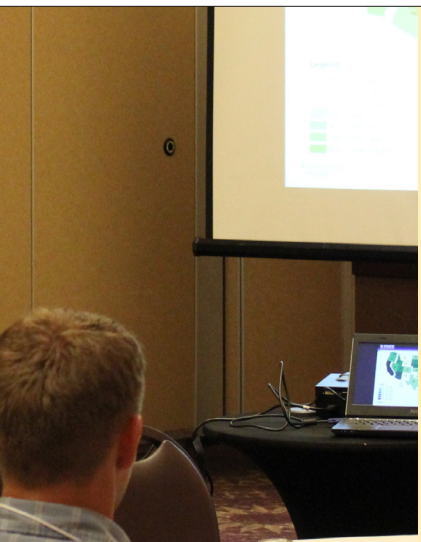
Dr. Mykel Taylor Presents Research

"I find explaining why people do what they do, pretty darn fascinating."

when discussing the current farm crisis.

"When I got here, we were in the middle of these good years, with a lot of money floating around and it was a question of how much could you pay to rent ground and were you paying enough. That was what we were talking about in 2012 and 2013," said Taylor. Commodity prices started to drop in 2014 and stayed low throughout 2015, with that drop, came the decrease in profit margins.

"One of the big studies that I published concerns estimates of what somebody could afford to pay if they were renting, and it is based on a budget. That budget has both revenue and cost, and all of a sudden we went from having this huge profit margin to having a very tiny profit margin," said Taylor. "I was looking at numbers that were half or a third of what those other numbers were." The question was, could people keep renting with land prices being as competitive as they



Research at Risk and Profit

are? The small profit margins and high land prices are what pushed Taylor to really look at the issue.

“I got a phone call from a land owner who was upset with his tenant, because the tenant charged him to haul his grain and I think we will see more of that, this is people’s livelihood,” Taylor said.

“If I can do anything to help them make the best decisions, my job is not to help people keep farming, my job is to help people make the best decisions that they can... The challenge that comes with helping people make decisions, is not knowing everyone’s situation and remembering that the decision is ultimately up the farmer and the other people involved in running their business. I think it is recognizing that there are limits to what economic analysis can do.”

A small part of Taylor’s extension work includes the Women in Agriculture program. Women in Ag is

designed to deliver information and training on a variety of topics specifically for farm women.

“If I get asked to do a Women in Ag event, I hardly ever say no if I can make it,” said Taylor. “It’s so much fun because we have some great conversations, occasionally we get off topic, but there’s always great stories and ideas. The learning dynamic is different and I enjoy it very much. There is the element of personal relations, what I call soft skills, that is part of my extension program and I think it’s made more interesting. I am interested and passionate about it and I think that has definitely helped me.”



2016 Risk and Profit

Meet Our New Associate Professor Jesse Tack

Jesse Tack
Associate Professor

Area of Specialization
Agricultural Production
Risk Management

I am originally from San Diego. I received my bachelor’s degree in Economics from the University of California, Davis in 2003, an M. Sc. in 2004 and Ph.D. in 2009 from the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the University of California, Berkeley in 2009.
You can reach me at jtack@ksu.edu * 785-532-4443 * WA 331F



METSS

Monitoring, Evaluation and Technical Support Services

The Monitoring, Evaluation, and Technical Support Services (METSS) program contributes technical assistance for achieving the developmental goals of the US-AID/Ghana Economic Growth (EG) Office. The EG Office manages development programs that improve local health and livelihoods by generating market-driven mechanisms and nurturing commercial relationships that improve Ghana's industrial competitiveness.

METSS is providing support for the US-AID Feed the Future (FtF) initiative in Ghana. Kansas State Agricultural Economics professor Vincent Amanor-Boadu, Ph.D, serves as the principal investigator for the program, and is backed by a dedicated staff that includes undergraduate and graduate students. Recently, the program finished conducting a landmark population based survey (PBS) measuring the progress forward for the initiative. The survey was the second in the series and included over 4,000 households in northern Ghana.

Dr. Cesar Guvele is part of the METSS team and believes the study has developed a useful skill-set

amongst the enumerators he helped train in Ghana. Guvele enthusiastically promoted the value of conducting good research as it pertains to making policy decisions. The METSS team worked closely with the authorities in Ghana to recruit a team of



Measuring children in Northern Ghana

dedicated young university students in Ghana. METSS team members from the Department of Agricultural Economics worked as trainers and

METSS Leadership Team



Dr. Vincent Amanor-Boadu

Dr. Kara Ross

Dr. Yacob Zereyesus

Dr. Cesar Guvele

Dr. Aleksan Shanoyan

provided oversight in Ghana. As part of the process, over 150 enumerators underwent rigorous training in Accra before heading north to gather the survey data over a large geographical region covering 45 districts. The survey itself consisted of over 80 pages of questions to gather family demographics, health data and environmental conditions in the impoverished region.

Guvele says there was a focus behind the massive undertaking, “The idea was to capture the impact of the current Feed the Future project.”

Guvele believes the process of conducting the survey showed young Ghanaian university students how to conduct good research, and emphasized the concept of self-efficacy throughout their staff of students and fellow researchers. That idea is reinforced within the undergraduate and graduate students at the Manhattan campus who are currently cleaning the data and providing other support functions within the METSS initiative.


Elizabeth Gutierrez, was a M.S. graduate of the Department of Agricultural Economics and is now working with METSS as a research assistant. Gutierrez worked closely with her colleagues to clean the data from the PBS survey.

Gutierrez says the process was daunting at first, but the work allows her to engage with research in a different light as she sees the families impacted by the aid project.

Gutierrez said, “We’re learning to think more deeply.”

Another METSS team member, Research Assistant Professor Kara Ross, agrees and says, “Working with the students has really been a rewarding experience and it helps them make the important connection between abstract data and the very real people who are the subject of the study.”

Meet Our New Assistant Professor



Gabe Sampson
Assistant Professor

Area of Specialization
Natural Resource & Environmental Economics

I am originally from California and received a bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from California State University, Chico in 2007, an M.S. in Environmental Science and Management from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 2010 and my Ph.D. in Agricultural and Resource Economics from the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the University of California, Davis in 2016. My research combines theoretical and empirical methods to study spatial and strategic elements of natural resource management. You can reach me at gsampson@ksu.edu * 785-532-3453 * WA 305D

Study Abroad Trip: Ireland 2016



Several students in the Agricultural Economics Department were able to visit the fabled green isle over the summer with Professor Sean Fox on a study abroad opportunity. Students were able to interact with producers and industry professionals as they toured various production sites.

Dr. Fox says, “Your time as an undergraduate is the best opportunity you will ever have to explore another country or culture. You’ll learn a lot about other people – and about yourself.”

“In Ireland we saw all the sights that you could dream of in addition to visiting many different agriculture sectors such as cattle and goat dairies, university fields, cattle farms, and sheep farms. The most interesting thing personally was that everyone I met was so friendly and very welcoming of the “tourists”. I was able to gain the entire cultured



experience because I felt so at home in this element and time while I was there”, said undergraduate student Jacqueline Clawson.

“This experience was life changing in a way that I was able to see that agriculture goes far beyond the practices that we know and see here in the United States. I was able to appreciate where I come from but be thankful for the experiences I have the chance to experience. I formed friendships that will last a lifetime and memories that will never be forgotten. I originally wanted to go on this trip to “dip my toes in the water” for a study abroad experience to see if I wanted to study an entire semester abroad. After this experience, I can happily say that I definitely want to further my study abroad experiences and go for an entire semester”, said Clawson.

Arthur Capper Cooperative Center

Innovative cooperative education is part of the teaching and outreach mission of the Arthur Capper Cooperative Center (ACCC). A new online cooperatives class focused on the business structure of cooperatives has been developed by ACCC Director, Dr. Brian Briggeman. Fall 2016 brought the launch of the online class through K-State's Global Campus. There are 27 students enrolled in the inaugural class. Several cooperative education videos have been developed to support the learning objectives of the co-op's class and in time, will also be available to new cooperative employees.


"What Lies Ahead? Future Issues Facing Co-ops and Agricultures" was the theme of the 2016 K-State Symposium on Cooperative Issues, held by the ACCC in August 2016. It's a turbulent time for agriculture with depressed net farm incomes, rising competition, consolidation of agribusinesses and the variety of misinformation spread about the safety of our food. The Symposium served as a forum for speakers to address those issues with stories of innovation, the future of food, insights on the changing agribusiness landscape and a view of what the future might look like with 3D printing and innovative farm machines.

The Emerging Leaders programs continue to add value back to local cooperatives. Building a Cooperative Finance Foundation was offered for the third time this summer in Manhattan, Kansas. Employees of 20 cooperatives in six states were in attendance. In the words of one attendee, "I was nervous coming to the conference due to my lack of knowledge, but the worksheets and hands-on training made it enjoyable to learn and listen."

Additional cooperative education offerings are held through-out the year, including the upcoming Emerging Leaders: Building Trusted Relationships scheduled in December 2016. A new Emerging Leaders program, Building a Cooperative Finance Foundation 2, will be launching next summer.

\$672,856 in cooperative scholarships have been awarded on behalf of the cooperative community through the ACCC since 1985. \$60,224 was awarded to 17 students for the current 2016-17 academic year. The ACCC is proud to work with the cooperative community to honor outstanding students at Kansas State University.

Meet Our New Assistant Professor

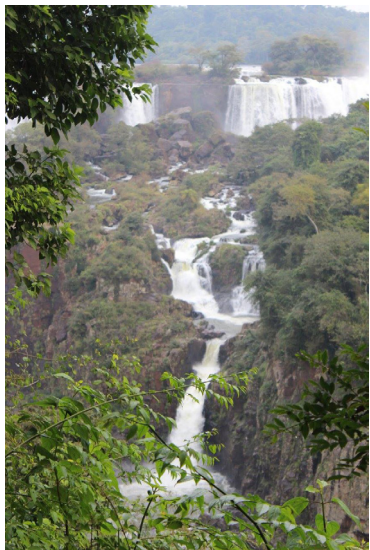


Jisang Yu
Assistant Professor

Area of Specialization
Economic Consequences of Risk Management related to Farm Policies around the World

I am originally from South Korea and received a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Economics from Seoul National University in 2011, an M.S. in 2012 and Ph.D. in 2016 from the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the University of California, Davis. Currently, my research projects investigate how crop insurance programs and embedded subsidies affect crop choices and farm resource allocation. You can reach me at jisangyu@ksu.edu * 785-532-3357 * WA 305A

Master of Agribusiness



In June, thirty Master of Agribusiness (MAB) students, alumni, faculty, staff, friends and family members participated in an international farm and agribusiness tour of Brazil sponsored by the program.

“The MAB farm and agriculture tour of Brazil was a once in a life-time opportunity! It was a privilege and an honor to represent Kansas State University and American agriculture in South America. We collaborated to learn more about Brazilian production practices, while Brazilian agriculturalists asked us about our production practices. The trip was well worth the time and investment in my education as a graduate student,” said Andrew Lauver, MAB student and Sales Promoter/Encirca Certified Services Agent for DuPont Pioneer in Rockwell City, Iowa.

Agriculture is a principal driver of the Brazilian economy. While sugar cane has traditionally been a primary emphasis, Brazil has become one of the world’s largest exporter of coffee, soybeans, beef, sugar cane and

ethanol. During the 10-day tour, participants had the opportunity to learn more about Brazilian agriculture with stops at a citrus farm, coffee plantation, sugar and ethanol plant, a cattle ranch, dairy, an agricultural university, an edible bean research center, a John Deere dealership and a crop farm. Participants noted the lack of physical infrastructure and agricultural education as some of the main differences between the U.S. and Brazil.

“In the U.S. we are blessed with land grant institutions. The positive impact of the education, research and extension on agriculture and rural development has been significant. I wonder where Brazil’s agriculture would be today if they had a similar focus and commitment on development through the years,” Dave Rock, MAB alum and Manager, Channel Development for John Deere in Olathe, Kansas, said.

“All weather farm-to-market roads are also taken for granted in the U.S. During the visit to the Agropecuaria Missoes [Dairy] Farm we traveled a winding dirt road.” said Rock. “This growing dairy business faces a daily challenge moving packaged milk to the retail market over that road, regardless how muddy it may be.”

The trip was not all business, as sightseeing was also worked into the schedule. The group toured the Port of Santos by boat, visited the Itaipu Hydroelectric Dam, viewed the three-country monument where Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay connect, and took in the majestic Iguazu Falls from both the Brazilian and Argentinian side.



“The trip was very valuable and educational. We have a new appreciation for citrus, coffee, and sugar production, as well as our agricultural infrastructures in the United States,” said Kevin and Linda Lauver, Calhoun County, Iowa. “More than just an agricultural tour, it was magical to see macaws, parrots and parakeets living in their natural habitat.”

See more photos of the trip on the MAB Facebook page: www.facebook.com/KStateMAB.



Graduate Student Fourth Floor Renovations

The fourth floor of Waters Hall has seen renovations completed to help enhance the graduate student experience and improve productivity as they move forward in their program of study. New features include new carpet, fresh paint, brighter and more energy efficient lighting, desks, a kitchenette and a state-of-the-art conference room.

Other infrastructure improvements saw the stairwells getting a make-over with more lighting and a fresh coat of paint.



Undergraduate Recognition

Kansas State University nominated three students for the Rhodes and Marshall scholarship competitions.

Ronald Lee Sullivan Jr., a senior in our agribusiness program, was selected from the department. If Sullivan Jr. receives the award, he will be provided two years of full funding to study at Oxford University in England. Sullivan is the founder and past president of Wildcats for International Development, and is a grand knight of St. Isidore's knights of Columbus. Sullivan says he is a violinist in the choir at St. Isidore's, student co-coordinator of International Service Teams and student co-coordinator for the Mandela-Washington Fellowship Summer Institute. He has received the Staley School of Leadership Studies Student Spotlight Award and Outstanding Graduating Senior Award, and the Flinchbaugh Agricultural Policy Scholarship. He is a Cargill Global Scholar and a Harry S. Truman Scholarship finalist. he is the son of Ron and Judy Sullivan, Paola.



Ronald Lee Sullivan Jr. (photo courtesy: LinkedIn)

Research and Extension Highlight

Sexton-Bowser will lead Center for Sorghum Improvement at Kansas State University

Center is focused on boosting national sorghum yield and expanding markets.

Story by: Mary Lou Peter with edits by Tom Reust

Sarah Sexton-Bowser has been named managing director of the Center for Sorghum Improvement based at Kansas State University. She will start her new role Sept. 12.



Sarah Sexton-Bowser

The center is focused on expanding markets for sorghum and increasing the average national sorghum yield from 61.95 bushels per acre to 100 bushels per acre by 2025 by funding research in such areas as plant breeding and field-level management. Those goals are outlined in an agreement between the United Sorghum Checkoff Board, the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission and K-State.

“The new Center for Sorghum Improvement has been a long time coming. Featuring collaboration between the university, and national and state entities, this cooperative agreement will make K-State the world’s destination for sorghum research and outreach,” said John Floros, dean of K-State’s College of Agriculture and director of K-State Research and Extension. “Sorghum producers in Kansas, the U.S. and beyond will be impacted by the center’s efforts. We value the strong leadership Sarah brings to the center, based on her years of experience and contacts in the sorghum industry, and look forward to working with her.”

Sexton-Bowser brings an extensive background in the grain industry to her new role. She served as a regional director with the United Sorghum Checkoff Program and as vice president of membership services and external affairs for the Kansas Grain and Feed Association, Kansas Agribusiness Retailers Association and Kansas Association of Ethanol Processors.

She earned a bachelor’s degree in agricultural economics with a specialty in political science at Kansas State University and a master’s degree in public administration from the University of Kansas.

“Sarah is an extremely driven, results-oriented leader. She and her husband are actively engaged in farming which further strengthens her commitment to maximize these investments to help sorghum growers,” said Tim Lust, CEO of the United Sorghum Checkoff Program.

“The sorghum industry is prime for a focused, collaborative vision and vision execution to drive the domestic sorghum industry,” said Sexton-Bowser. “Farmers need enhanced cropping options to meet today’s demands to continually push for farm efficiency and productivity. The center is uniquely positioned to foster collaboration targeted towards enhancing productivity, value and demand for the domestic sorghum farmer.”

Sorghum typically sells for less than corn. By increasing sorghum yield while at the same time expanding demand for sorghum, Sexton-Bowser and her team will work to decrease the trading discount of sorghum to corn from 4.6 percent to 2 percent by 2025.

The center and its work is supported by a \$2 million investment from the Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission and \$2 million from the Sorghum Checkoff, both made in annual payments of \$200,000 for 10 years, as well as an \$800,000 investment from K-State.

Scholarship & Awards Banquet

We will be awarding scholarships to students on Friday, October 7th at 5:30pm at the Farm Bureau Building. Invitations are going out soon, and we hope you can join us for the celebration. This year we will award 83 students over \$231,947. We look forward to seeing our alumni and friends in the fall!

Upcoming Events

Ag Law Symposium	September 20, 2016	Manhattan
<p>Kansas State University/Washburn Law School Inaugural Agribusiness Symposium This symposium examines the intersection between the business and economics of agriculture and the legal environment in which they operate. The legal environment is composed of the body of law impacting agriculture, the applicable tax systems, and government programs unique to agriculture. Law and regulation impacting the agricultural businesses of farming and ranching are the focus of this symposium.</p>		
Ag Lenders Conferences	October 4, 2016	Garden City
<p>K-State's annual Agricultural Lenders Conferences are designed to provide the Kansas financial community with updates on current agricultural topics.</p>		
Kansas Income Tax Institute	October 24 - 25, 2016	Garden City
<p>The Kansas State University Department of Agricultural Economics invites you to attend the 68th annual Kansas Income Tax Institute. The program is intended for tax professionals and is designed to provide up-to-date training on current tax law, regulations, and updates. This years program will review recent cases and rulings and key legislation, provide an in-depth review and analysis of a number of tax areas, and cover newly enacted regulations and procedures critical to tax practitioners.</p>		
Kansas Crop Insurance Workshop	November 10, 2016	Salina
<p>This one-day workshop will help crop insurance agents, agricultural lenders, farmers/ranchers, and other financial consultants provide better risk management information and advice to their clients or apply to their farm-ranch. If you are involved in the crop insurance industry, either as an agent, a producer, or an ag lender, you should consider attending this workshop.</p>		
Women Managing the Farm Conference	February 9 - 10, 2017	
<p>The share of U.S. farms operated by women nearly tripled over the past three decades, from 5 percent in 1978 to 14 percent by 2012, according to the 2012 Census of Agriculture. Since 2012, the trend is certainly continuing. Whether it be from inheriting farm ground, continuing the family operation, marrying into a farm family, or a host of other reasons, women find themselves in a position that requires knowledge of managing a farm operation with little background experience or training to do so.</p>		





**FOOD, FUN,
PRIZES!**

Agricultural Economics

TAILGATE

3 hours before kickoff
October 8th (kickoff time to be announced)

KSU WILDCATS vs Texas Tech

*You could walk
away with a
football signed by
Coach Bill Snyder!*

Registration Fee: \$20 per person, includes lunch from Cox BBQ, FREE KSU items for every attendee and a chance to win a football signed by Coach Bill Snyder!
 Register by Monday, October 3rd
<https://commerce.cashnet.com/KSUMABSTORE> or for more information contact Mary Bowen mjbowen@ksu.edu or 785-532-4435.

Kansas State University
Department of Agricultural Economics
342 Waters Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506-4011
192-001

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 525
Manhattan, KS 66506

KANSAS STATE

U N I V E R S I T Y

Agricultural Economics

 **Facebook** facebook.com/ksuageconomics

 **Twitter** [@kstateagecon](https://twitter.com/kstateagecon)

 **YouTube** youtube.com/kstateagecon

Brand names appearing in this publication are for product identification purposes only. No endorsement is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products not mentioned. Contents of this publication may be freely reproduced for educational purposes. All other rights reserved. In each case, credit the **Department of Agricultural Economics**, Exchange, Kansas State University, September, 2016