Presidential Note

Join us in Logan, Utah July 8-11 for a fun and productive conference! The Department of Economics at Utah State University has planned an interesting set of sessions and social events for this year’s WAEA annual meetings. Their efforts have resulted in (1) a large number of high-quality selected papers, (2) a thought-provoking and timely set of invited paper presentations, and (3) a superb setting to enjoy mountains, fresh air, and socializing.

Dawn Thilmany and the Selected Paper Committee have accepted a large number of interesting papers for presentation in Utah. Gary Brester and the awards committee are busy selecting qualified recipients of the WAEA awards for excellent in teaching, research, and extension. Bruce Godfrey and the Planning Committee are enthusiastic about the opening social on Sunday evening, July 8. The meeting plans also include group luncheons on both Monday and Tuesday, July 9 and 10. A special Dutch Oven supper will be provided on Monday evening, to give us all a taste of local culture and cuisine. I would like to extend a hearty and sincere thank you to all of the individuals who are working hard to organize our annual meetings. Your work to make this event possible is greatly appreciated. For more details on the program see the conference web page (http://www.econ.usu.edu/events/WAEA.asp).

Please plan to attend the WAEA business meeting on Monday evening. We will be discussing several issues important to our Association’s future. If you have any items that you would like to add to the business meeting agenda, please forward them to me (barkley@ksu.edu).

The 2001 elections are upon us! The nominating committees have put together a group of highly competent and qualified candidates for this years WAEA officer elections. Please take time to evaluate each of the candidates’ opinions, and vote by mailing the enclosed ballot to Bruce Godfrey. Strong leadership will result in a bright future for our Association. I am pleased to welcome Steve Blank as our incoming President for 2001-2002. I am confident that Steve will do an excellent job of leading the WAEA.

— Andy Barkley
NOTICES

Future Meetings

2001 - Keystone, Colorado, June 12-14 Young Professionals Conference

2001 - Logan, Utah, July 8-11, WAEA Annual Meeting (Hosted by the Department of Economics, Utah State University.)

2002 - A joint meeting with AAEA, July 28-31 in Long Beach, California

2003 - A tentative meeting with WEAI, July 11-15 in Denver, Colorado

Membership and Dues

Most of you will find in this mailing a certificate of your membership in WAEA. If a certificate is not included do not have a record that you have paid your dues for 2001. If you believe this is an error, please let me know ((435) 797-2294 or bruceg@ext.usu.edu). This is especially important if you believe you paid your dues through AAEA because this is the only way I have of checking payments paid through that office.

I have enclosed a membership form that you can use to recruit another member. The cost for students has been set low enough to encourage most students to become a member.

E. Bruce Godfrey
Secretary, Treasurer

Young Professional Conference

The Western Agricultural Economics Association (WAEA), together with the AAEA, Farm Foundations, Southern Agricultural Economics Association (SAEA), Northeastern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association (NAREA), and the National Association of Agricultural Economics Administrators (NAAEA) is hosting a conference for agricultural economists in the early stages of their careers (assistant professors) to interact with established faculty members who have had success in teaching, research, and extension in the agricultural economics profession. The goal of the conference is "to provide early academic professionals a productive and innovative forum for planning and discussing career and professional development" by bringing them together with successful, experienced agricultural economists "to engage in a discussion on strategies to achieve success in our profession, our institutions, and in our personal lives." The conference is set for June 12-14, 2001 in Keystone, Colorado. For further information about the Young Professionals Conference, see the WAEA website (http://dare.agsci.colostate.edu/thilmany/waea.htm). For more information, please contact Andrew Barkley at barkley@ksu.edu.

Make Plans Now to Attend the WAEA Meetings in Logan, Utah

July 8-11, 2001

See the meeting web page at

http://www.econ.usu.edu/events/WAEA.asp

Ballots

Ballots are enclosed for those who have paid their dues in 2001. If you believe this is in error, we will double check the status of your membership and if paid, your vote will count. All ballots must be post marked by 1 June 2001 to be counted or email to bruceg@ext.usu.edu by June 1, 2001
Biographical Information for WAEA Candidates

President
Myles Watts
Ray Huffaker

Vice President
Dillon Feuz
Rhonda Skaggs

Directors
Jill McCluskey
Roger Dahlgren
Cynda Clary
James Mintert

Myles Watts

Myles Watts is a Professor and the Department Head of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University. The Department has a large teaching program, a strong commitment to public education supported by extension and non-extension funded faculty, as well as a well recognized emphasis on scholarly research. Dr. Watts has been a member of WAEA for over 20 years. He has served: as an Association Director for several years, as chairman of the Master’s Thesis Awards Committee, as editor (with Jeff La France) of the Journal of Agricultural Economics and Economics, and on various committees.

Myles Watts has published and reviewed for all major agricultural economics journals, taught a variety of undergraduate and graduate classes, presents 40 to 50 outreach programs annually (including state legislature and congressional briefings), and regularly interacts with various private industries entities.

WAEA Direction  “The WAEA has a long history of providing a quality journal and annual meeting. The Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics is well recognized as a rigorously reviewed, professional and scholarly publication. Annual meetings provide members an additional scholarly outlet. These meeting provide an opportunity for agricultural economists to discuss a wide variety of topics. The WAEA’s focus on the journal and the annual meeting are appropriate and should be continued. It is the responsibility of the President to continue to foster both venues of scholarly exchange.

Annual meeting workshops provide an opportunity to discuss a broader variety of topics than usually discussed in selected/invited paper formats. The President should encourage those interested in these broader topics or concerns to organize workshops, discussion groups or other mechanisms to facilitate an open exchange of ideas, opinions and skill enhancement. Appropriately constructed workshops may appeal to a broader spectrum of agricultural economist, which may enhance meeting attendance and association membership.

Membership in the association is affected by many factors. A declining number of faculty over the last several years in many departments has made maintaining membership difficult. Conducting an annual meeting with a quality agenda, at a desirable and accessible location is important to attracting and maintaining the membership.

The Awards program is an important activity of the Association. Recognition of those who excel (including students) not only encourages the awardees, but also implicitly challenges others to higher levels of performance. Continuing the awards program is high priority for the Association.”

Ray Huffaker

Ray Huffaker is a Professor of Agricultural Economics at Washington State University. He received A.B. degrees in economics and Italian, a J.D. degree specializing in natural resource and agricultural laws, and a Ph.D. in agricultural economics from the University from California at Davis. He teaches doctoral courses in microeconomic analysis and mathematical bioeconomics, and an undergraduate course in natural resource law. His research interests include mathematical bioeconomics, dynamic optimization, techniques, and natural resource
and agricultural law and policy. Dr. Huffaker’s WAEA activities include member, JARE Editorial Council (1994-present); Director (1996-98); Chair, Annual Meeting Selected Papers Committee (2000, 1993); and Member, Outstanding Published Research Award Committee (1992, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998).

WAEA Direction  “The WAEA annual meetings are an important service provided by the WAEA. They facilitate the development of enjoyable and useful professional connections in the western region, and the interchange of disciplinary information. Unfortunately, given that shrinking departmental operating budgets force many AAEA/ WAEA members to select one summer meeting a year, the WAEA meetings are increasingly competitive with the AAEA and other professional summer meetings. The key to continually attracting a wide diversity of members to the WAEA meetings is to avoid competition with the AAEA meetings for attendees when possible, (e.g., hold joint meetings when the AAEA meetings are in the West), and to compete successfully against them when necessary. I believe that the following means can be used to compete successfully on a consistent basis: First, the WAEA should hold summer meetings in highly attractive and accessible locations in the western continental U.S., Hawaii, and Canada. Second, the WAEA should organize invited and selected paper sessions to satisfy the wide variety of interest held by western agricultural and applied economists (i.e., basic/applied research and extension activities). Occasionally holding meetings jointly with the Western Economic Association is another way to accommodate a wide variety of interest. Third, the WAEA should aggressively recruit the attendance of top scholars in western Agricultural Economics Departments by, for example, formalizing their participation in invited papers or panel sessions. I would focus my efforts on testing these means of promoting the viability of the summer meetings.”

Dillon Feuz

Dillon Feuz is an Associate Professor of Agricultural Economics and Livestock Marketing Specialist with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Dillon was previously a faculty member at South Dakota State University. He received a B.S. in Agribusiness and an M.S. in Agricultural Economics from the University of Wyoming and a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Colorado State University. Dr. Feuz has served the WAEA as a Council Member 1995-96 and 1999-present; Thesis Awards Committee Member, 1995; Extension Award Committee Member, 1998; JARE contributor and reviewer, multiple years; Selected Paper contributor and reviewer, multiple years; and was a recipient of the Outstanding Extension Program Award, 2000 and Outstanding Extension Project Award, 1997.

WAEA Direction  “I joined the WAEA as a graduate student and have been an active participant in the association since that time. I believe the association offers substantial benefits that far exceed the cost of membership and would like to ensure that this continues. A few of my priority areas would be: (1) JARE is a reputable, scholarly journal. I am pleased that the number of articles published in each volume has increased from an average of 28 in 1995-97 to 37 in 1998-2000. The 2000 volume had 40 articles. I would encourage the current editors to continue to accept high quality articles, and particularly those that may have greater applicability to the West. (2) I always enjoy the annual meeting. My personal preference is to meet independently or with the Canadians when the AAEA meetings are not in the West. However, if a majority of you favor meeting with other organizations, such as WEAI, then I would work to ensure our independence within those meetings. When we do meet with the AAEA, I believe we need some distinct WAEA sessions (invited papers, symposiums) and that our presidential address and awards program need some prominence and must not be consumed by the AAEA. (3) The financial position of WAEA is very strong. I favor using some of our financial resources to provide travel scholarships for graduate students. If we can provide a positive experience for graduate students at our meetings, we will likely retain a new WAEA member for some time. Perhaps we could also provide a monetary reward to the WAEA member who recruits the most new members each year. (4) I am interested in your opinions as to adding poster sessions to our meetings, and to having pre-, regular, or post-sessions that directly involve non-academics in our meetings. (5) I would look forward to serving with other elected officers and council members and to serving you the WAEA members.”
Rhonda Skaggs

Rhonda Skaggs is a Professor in Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Business at New Mexico State University. She received her B.S. and M.S. degrees from Colorado State University, and her Ph.D. from Utah State University. She was employed as a Research Associate at the University of Wyoming, and has been with NMSU since the fall of 1989. Dr. Skaggs has served the WAEA as a Council Member since 1995, Director (1998-2000), Chair of the Awards Committee (1999), author of articles in the JARE, and reviewer for WAEA Selected Papers (2000).

WAEA Direction  “The WAEA is my professional organization of choice. My association with the WAEA has been both personally and professionally rewarding. The Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics has an excellent and well-based reputation, and I believe that the journal should continue to serve the interests of the western agricultural economics profession. Membership in the WAEA has declined over several years, largely due to reductions in faculty members at several departments in the region. Unfortunately, the WAEA is not the professional organization of choice for many agricultural economists at western universities. Many of our co-workers do not perceive the WAEA to be an organization of their peers. Thus, I believe the WAEA should seriously evaluate and change some of our practices and policies so as to spark new interest in the organization among our non-member colleagues.”

Jill McCluskey

Jill J. McCluskey is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Washington State University. She received her Ph.D. in Agricultural and Resource Economics from the University of California, Berkeley in 1998. She received her M.A. in Economics from Georgetown University and a B.A. in Business Economics and Political Science from the University of California, Santa Barbara. She has contributed to JARE as both a reviewer and an author. She has also served as a reviewer for WAEA Outstanding Master’s Thesis Competition.

WAEA Direction  “JARE should continue to build on its strong reputation. A way to encourage new membership is to promote the annual meeting and make it more attractive. The annual meeting should be held in desirable western locations, such as San Francisco, Phoenix, Seattle, and San Diego, to encourage the strongest program possible. An honorary lecture should be established to attract a leading scholar to attend, which would then be advertised in the annual meeting registration packet. An E-mail announcement about the meeting should be sent to members and potential members. Finally, awards should be established at the meeting for the overall best selected paper, the best selected paper by a young faculty, and the best selected paper by a graduate student, to encourage all interested agricultural and applied economist to attend and submit their best work.”

Roger Dahlgran

Roger Dahlgran is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the University of Arizona. He received his B.S. degree from Iowa State University, and his Ph.D. from North Carolina State University. He was previously at Iowa State University.

Dr. Dahlgran has been a member of the WAEA since 1980 and his activities include serving as a reviewer of manuscripts for the WJAE/JARE, a selected paper reviewer, and author/presenter and moderator at WAEA meetings.

WAEA Direction  “The WAEA fills a unique niche for scholarly interaction among agricultural economists in the western United States and Canada. As such, the WAEA should continue to focus on its members’ needs to communicate with each other on the economic issues relative to this niche. The association must focus on providing an annual meeting environment that will attract individuals working on agricultural and resource economic problems that are important to the western region. Such meetings foster communication among WAEA members.

The JARE with its reputation for scholarly excellence ably serves to showcase our products for the profession. At the same time, the WAEA must also focus on the needs of the larger community so that economic perspectives on issues important to the region enter into public discussion and policy prescriptions. New technologies for communication and outreach make this an opportune time to communicate in meaningful ways with those outside of our circle of scholars. Such communications should stress the importance of economics in agricultural and resource issues. As a WAEA director, I would help our association focus on these issues.”
Cynda Clary

Cynda Clary is an Associate Professor in the Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Business Department at New Mexico State University. She also has a part-time appointment as an Assistant to the Associate Dean and Director of Academic Programs in the NMSU College of Agriculture and Home Economics. Cynda received her B.S. degree in Agricultural Business Management from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, her M.S. in Management from Purdue University, and her Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from North Carolina State University. She has twice served on the Teaching Awards Committee and has also served as a reviewer for WAEA Selected Papers.

WAEA Direction  “Our profession is experiencing a time of significant change—and significant opportunity. Impending faculty retirements stretch our short-term resources, but also lead us to question curriculum, extension, and research directions. Our increasingly non-traditional student population also opens up ideas for new programs. The pressure to obtain population also opens up ideas for new programs. The pressure to obtain grant funding motivates collaboration across institutions and disciplines. In addition, the rapid pace of technological change can lead to new ways of communicating with our research, extension, and teaching clientele. However, all of these opportunities result in less time available for association involvement. This means that we must work to increase value to our members if we are to remain a viable organization.

How can we help our members remain competitive in a rapidly changing environment? Journals, summer meetings, and newsletters have their place, but we need to look at alternative ways of facilitating research, teaching, and extension interaction. Can we use web-based delivery of ‘short courses or seminars’ to provide convenient and timely research or teaching development to our members? Web-based tools may also prove useful in increasing interaction between our members in academic and industry.

Another area of member value would be to design a mentoring program to assist the newer members of our profession. Many of our current members have strong research, teaching, and/or extension programs. By matching up mentor/mentees across institutions, we could see benefits to all program areas. Creating member value is the primary goal of any organization. I am sincerely interested in helping our association meet this goal and would appreciate your vote.”

James Mintert

James Mintert is a Professor and an Extension Agricultural Economist specializing in livestock marketing in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Kansas State University. He earned his B.S. and M.S. degrees at Purdue University, and his Ph.D. at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Jim has been a member of the WAEA since joining the Kansas State faculty in the mid-1980’s, regularly attends the WAEA meetings, has served as a reviewer for JARE, and chaired the WAEA’s Outstanding Extension Program Awards Committee.

WAEA Direction  “The WAEA had provided valuable services to its members over the years by offering forums for dissemination of high quality research and discussion of topics relevant to its members at the WAEA annual meetings and via publication of JARE. But there are a growing number of agricultural economists that believe the professional agricultural economics associations (including the WAEA) have little to offer them. Many of these agricultural economists do not belong to any agricultural economics association. The WAEA should learn more about the need of these potential members and determine whether the WAEA can develop programs and/or publications targeted to meet their needs. Doing so will help ensure that WAEA remains a vibrant organization in the future.”

All ballots are must be postmarked by June 1, 2001