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## Candidate Statements – President



**Eric Belasco**  
*Montana State  
University*

### **Background**

Eric J. Belasco is an Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University, where he is also a Research Fellow

in the Initiative for Regulation and Applied Economic Analysis. He earned his M.S. and Ph.D. from North Carolina State University and a B.S. from Saint Mary's College of California. Dr. Belasco's research and teaching activities are in the areas of risk management, livestock marketing, and agricultural policy. He has been a dedicated member of the WAEA since his first annual meeting in 2008. In addition to serving as a member of the WAEA, he served as a Director from 2015-2018, continually publishes and reviews journal articles in the JARE and reviews paper abstract submissions for the annual meetings. In addition to this service, he currently serves as the Incoming Chair for the AAEE Applied Risk Analysis section.

### **WAEA Vision Statement**

Throughout my career I've received incredible value from participating in the WAEA, which makes the opportunity to continue serving this group an honor. As Director, I oversaw the re-establishment of the Western Economic Forum under a new set of editors, which have already published their first edition. Publications like WEF provide a means of communication for western agricultural economists to communicate important research to a broader audience and I am happy to see publications like that reinvented. To me, the value in participating in WAEA comes in the form of being able to work amongst peers with similar interests and questions. Annual

meetings provide an opportunity to discover that researchers within this region face many of the same issues, but approach the solution in different ways. These issues being discussed and disseminated through JARE, annual meetings, and Western Economics Forum present the largest value to most members. That being said, the main issue facing the WAEA is to find innovative ways to create value to its many users. This value is increased by finding new ways to incorporate graduate students and young researchers into WAEA in order to provide a strong foundation for the future of the organization.

Finding ways to incorporate early career professionals into the WAEA will increase the likelihood of maintaining membership as those members will start to identify the WAEA as their organization. Encouraging young faculty members to participate in WAEA through organizing symposia and other sessions/events is a good way to improve the value of the sessions, especially to newer members. Recruiting early and mid-career members to take leadership roles in WAEA will be an important priority of mine. If elected, I will be committed to finding new ways to add value to WAEA membership through improved annual meetings and WAEA outlets in an effort to strengthen the organization as well as its members.

Additionally, WAEA needs to continue strengthening its traditional foundations in extension and teaching through its publications and annual meetings. In the past few years, WAEA has realized these benefits through extension tours, holding joint meetings with the Western Extension Committee, and having track sessions explicitly for teaching and extension delivery. WAEA holds a comparative advantage to other national and regional membership groups when it combines teaching, extension, and research. Finding ways to integrate these entities needs to be a priority for WAEA in order to continue to provide value for its members and continue to broaden the membership audience.

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## Candidate Statements –President



**Stephen Devadoss**  
*Texas Tech University*

### Background

I am currently the Emabeth Thompson Endowed Professor of Agricultural & Applied Economics at Texas Tech University. I

teach graduate courses at the Ph.D. level in Mathematical Economics, Microeconomics, and International Trade & Policy, as well as International Trade at the M.S. level. I also teach Agricultural Trade at the undergraduate level. My research interests include trade, econometrics, natural resources, production economics, policy, and industrial organization.

I received my Ph.D. from Iowa State University, and I have been a member of WAEA for more than 30 years. I became a **WAEA Fellow** in 2010, and a recipient of the WAEA Teaching Award in 2009. I have served on the JARE Editorial Council (1998 – 2000), WAEA Fellows Selection Committee (2013, 2015), served as a member of the WAEA Thesis Award committee in 2015 and chaired it in 2013. I also served as a member of the WAEA Teaching Awards Committee in 2010 and 2011. Several of my students have participated in WAEA graduate paper competitions, and one of my students has received a second prize award. I have also served AAEA and SAEA at various capacities: Editorial Board of AEPP (2015-2018), JAAE (2016-2019), member (2016, 2017) and chair (2018) of the AAEA Thesis Award Committee, and member (2012-2014) and chair (2015) of the AAEA Teaching Award Committee.

I have received 14 research awards (including outstanding journal articles), 17 teaching awards (including WAEA and AAEA Undergraduate, and AAEA Graduate Teaching Awards), and 21 graduate advising awards. I have published more than 120 refereed journal articles, and guided my graduate students to

publish more than 70 journal articles. I have helped my graduate students to receive 50 awards (including 10 AAEA Outstanding Dissertation and WAEA & AAEA Outstanding M.S. Thesis awards).

### WAEA Vision Statement

I am honored to be nominated to serve as President of WAEA. I have benefited greatly from the WAEA, and I would like to give back to the Association. I regularly attend the WAEA meetings, and I very much enjoy the great locations, academic interaction with colleagues, friendly atmosphere, and intellectual contribution of the members.

WAEA conferences offer a great venue for graduate students to present their work, particularly by participating in paper competitions. I would like to continue this competition and attract more graduate students to become members, present papers, and participate in academic discussions at the meetings.

The Association currently has roughly 340 members. I envision increasing the number of memberships by contacting new faculty members and graduate students. These members can serve the Association for a longer period, thus maintaining and/or expanding the membership. Jointly meeting with the Western Extension Committee has brought visibility to the Association. In a similar vein, I would like to augment the membership by contacting faculty members at non-land grant institutions. WAEA is in good financial standing, and I would like to maintain the fiscal stability of the Association by increasing the membership.

JARE has been one of the premiere agricultural economics journals in the world, and I would like to continue this tradition by supporting the Editorial Board, modernizing the WAEA website, and improving the JARE manuscript submission software.

In summary, the Association has served its members well regarding professional development opportunities related to research, teaching, extension, and graduate education, and I want to preserve and enhance these opportunities offered through the WAEA.

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## Candidate Statements – Director



**Kynda R. Curtis**  
*Utah State  
University*

### **Background**

Kynda Curtis is a Professor and Extension Agriculture and Food Marketing Specialist in the Department of Applied

Economics at Utah State University (USU). She received her PhD in Economics from Washington State University in 2003, an MS in Financial Services from The American College in 1998, and a BA in Economics from Whitman College in 1993. Prior to obtaining her PhD she served as a corporate trainer for the Frank Russell Company in Tacoma, WA and a financial advisor for New York Live in Bellevue, WA. Her research interests include international agriculture/food marketing, consumer demand for specialty foods and behavioral economics. As an Extension Specialist, Dr. Curtis assists small-scale growers in developing new markets for their products and assessing the feasibility of new food products and value-added processes.

Dr. Curtis has received several awards including Extension group program awards from the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) and the Western Agricultural Economics Association (WAEA), as well as the 2014 AAEA President's Award for her contributions in starting the AAEA Early Career Mentoring Program. She received the Food Distribution Research Society (FDRS) award for best journal article in 2016.

Dr. Curtis has served as the Chair of the AAEA Early Career Committee, the President of FDRS, Chair of the Western Extension Marketing Committee, President of the AARES-North American Branch, and Chair of the S-1050. She is currently the Editor of *Choices* Magazine.

### **WAEA Vision Statement**

I am honored to be nominated for WAEA Director. I have been a member of the WAEA since I was a graduate student at Washington State University. I believe the WAEA has always been an excellent venue for graduate students and early career professionals to

present their work and network with colleagues in the West. However, as director I would like to work with the WAEA leadership and membership to expand and implement programs for graduate students and early career professionals. Such programming might include special sessions at annual meetings, topic based professional development opportunities related to success in primary roles such as handling R&Rs, Extension program impact assessment, grant opportunities and management, mentoring programs, and similar. These programs will provide valuable benefits to WAEA members and enrich the current offerings of the association.

Additionally, I would like to work with WAEA leadership to encourage the inclusion of industry professionals in the association. Industry members can bring realistic perspectives to current issues that can inform important and usable applied research and Extension programs. Also, interactions between industry and academia can provide great value to developing relevant undergraduate and graduate majors that graduate students with the skills industry needs and networks for students to access during the job search post-graduation.

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## Candidate Statements – Director



**Lisa Elliott**  
*South Dakota State  
University*

### **Background**

Lisa Elliott is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Economics at South Dakota State University. She received her Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from the University of Missouri. Recently, her research and

and extension programming has focused on enabling producers to quantify and manage their value-at-risk (VaR). Calculations of VaR are made in the context of larger, more volatile farm portfolios and use of complex grain marketing contracts. Lisa's extension programming has included workshops hosted in the First Dakota Bank e-trading Lab, along with educational webinars, publications, online-videos, and risk management tools.

Lisa attended her first WAEA Annual meeting in 2010, and has attended the vast majority of annual meetings since. She joined the WAEA Council in 2016, and has presented, reviewed, and coordinated reviews for selected paper abstracts for the WAEA meetings.

### **WAEA Vision Statement**

It is an honor to be nominated to serve as a WAEA Director. It would be my privilege to serve as a WAEA Director. WAEA has provided me with opportunities to further my own professional development. I specifically realized the regional focus was unique and provided members with more intimate opportunities to network and gain feedback from peers for professional development.

As a Director, I would seek ways for the WAEA to capitalize and promote the regional focus. The western United States and Canada have unique challenges, yet the members of the organization possess a common understanding of regional issues. The common understanding allows for a greater focus on issues important to us and provides more opportunities to discuss topics that are of most interest to members of our organization and the stakeholders we serve.

As a Director, I would focus on meeting the greater demands of research, teaching, and extension of

expected of us with increasingly limited budgets and/or resources. Here, I would like to identify areas that WAEA can help agricultural professionals gain efficiencies. My objective would be to leverage WAEA to provide education, tools, and other forms of technology to improve the impact of our research, teaching, and extension where we use less resources than previous professionals.

**As a Director, I would be committed to continuing the long tradition from previous leadership teams of the following:** i) hosting vibrant, relevant WAEA annual meetings, ii) providing a respected, broad-based awards program, iii) maintaining high-quality and relevant journals, (e.g. Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Western Economics Forum), iv) providing vast enriching professional opportunities for all members, including students and young professionals, and v) providing oversight and management to continue fiscal viability of our organization.

As a Director, I would seek ways to visibly highlight the critical work and accomplishments of our members. Communicating our work effectively, using the latest mediums, I believe is paramount for people to understand the importance and relevance of our work to society.

As a Director, I will seek to develop strategic alignments, membership opportunities, and professional development using new technology where all individuals could benefit through greater efficiencies and awareness of other members work. An example would be to develop an online-sharing portal where members could share professional work-- other than published papers-- whether they are PowerPoint presentation/lectures, webinar recordings, etc. This type of sharing system is expected to reduce duplication in efforts across our members, and foster greater collaborative products (teaching, research, or extension) where we build off previous work.

Finally, as a Director, I would seek to engage other agriculture economics and non-economic organizations, as well as industries in the private sector that could provide members with collaborative partnerships. I would also seek feedback from members to gauge what organizational benefits they desire, and work towards providing those opportunities.

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**As a Director, I would seek new ways to:**

-Highlight members' critical work (*e.g., providing more visibility on WAEA website and specifically inviting the public, non-members, to some strategic events (e.g., farm policy and outlook), specific symposium that the public may have an interest in attending and providing an opportunity for the public to engage with our members*)

-Embrace technology to enhance members' abilities to be effective and impactful scholars, researchers, and educators (*e.g., recording a strategic session that all members who may not be able to attend could access and allow public viewing*)

-Foster opportunities for members to capture efficiencies through member's responsibilities to research, teaching, and extension

-Foster opportunities for members to connect with individuals from the Ag- and non-ag private sector, as well as academics from non-ag areas such as, data science and computer science that could result in productive, collaborative partnerships and/or professional development opportunities. (*e.g., hosting a panelist discussion in areas driven-by member interests and hosting a speed-networking event*).

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## Candidate Statements – Director



**James Sterns,**  
*Oregon State  
University*

### **Background**

James Sterns is an Associate Professor in the Department of Applied Economics at Oregon State University. He completed undergraduate

degrees in Agricultural Economics, and Feed Science and Management at Kansas State University, and MS and PhD degrees in Agricultural Economics at Michigan State University. His current teaching and research focus areas are agribusiness management and the performance of agri-food systems in the Pacific Northwest, and most recently he has been working closely with the Oregon wine industry as they develop strategies to grow and sustain their economic viability. His prior work experiences include 12 years as a faculty member of the Food and Resource Economics Department at the University of Florida. During his career, he has served in a range of leadership and service roles, including the executive committees of the Agribusiness Economics and Management (AEM), Teaching, Learning and Communication (TLC) and the Institutional and Behavioral Economics (IBES) sections of the AAEE. He also has served as the Chair of the multi-state WERA-72 Coordinating Committee on Agribusiness and Competitiveness, and as Chair of the Southern Agricultural Economics Association's Undergraduate Committee. He also has worked internationally, including extended work assignments in Cameroon, France, Ecuador and Haiti. He has been a member of the WAEA since 2013, has served as a member of the WAEA Council, and was the 2017 recipient of the WAEA Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award – More than 10 Years Experience.

### **WAEA Vision Statement**

I am honored to have this opportunity to stand for election to be a Director on the WAEA's Executive Council. If elected, I would serve with three goals in mind. First, sustain success – I have always been impressed with the strength and enduring success of the WAEA. Like all regional associations, there have been challenges, but the cohesive, supportive network of scholars within the Western Association, its relevant and timely programming at its annual meetings, and its support of graduate students and early career faculty members are testaments to the vitality and relevance of this organization. Second, I would encourage the organization's leadership and members at large to focus on our value proposition – we exist to provide timely, vibrant, scholarly platforms to highlight research, outreach and teaching that reflects strengths and challenges of the western United States and its rich resource base and diverse agri-food systems. Our efforts, our priorities, our vision for the future needs to be intently focused on delivering this value proposition. Third, I pledge to listen closely – to our members, to our wide range of regional stake-holders (for example, the Western Extension Committee, with whom we have shared meetings), and when necessary to potential partners and collaborators beyond our geographic boundaries. The WAEA is in good standing, and that's an opportunity for the Executive Council to look to the future with optimism and creativity.

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## Candidate Statements – Director



**Hernan Tejada**  
*University of Idaho*

### **Background**

Hernan Tejada is an Assistant Professor, Extension specialist in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology at the University of Idaho. He has an undergrad degree in Industrial Engineering from the Catholic

University of Chile, an MBA from the University of Notre Dame and a Ph.D. in Economics from North Carolina State University. His research is in risk analysis and price transmissions/discovery among agricultural markets, crop insurance and federal support programs, agribusiness, applied econometrics and time series analysis. His Extension/outreach programs seek to improve the dairy and livestock industry's viability and long term profitability in Idaho and the western region. Part of his latest work addresses price transmission among dairy products, and determining the dynamic market structure of the cheese market. Other recent studies investigate increased cattle basis volatility, and relevant bull traits in Idaho and the Pacific Northwest.

He has regularly attended and presented at WAEA annual meetings, reviewed selected paper abstracts and served as topic leader for these meetings; as well as reviewed submitted manuscripts for the *Journal of Agricultural and Economic Resources*. In 2017 he joined the WAEA council, and is guest co-editor of the *Western Economic Forum* journal for the fall 2018 issue. In addition he is currently Vice Chair of the Western Extension Committee, and began in 2018 a three year term as Western Region Director for the AAEA Extension section.

### **Vision Statement**

Thank you very much for the possibility to serve you as a Director of the WAEA, an honor and privilege.

WAEA serves a broad array of agricultural economic stakeholders and members. A non-exhaustive list includes researchers, specialists, educators, students, policy makers, agricultural agents/directors, producers and agribusiness agents. A main avenue for this purpose is accomplished through the association's annual meeting. The presentation and examination of new research and extension studies, including off-presentation discussions, enriches all participants - providing useful information and suggestions, in addition to opportunities to generate new ideas and/or projects. Other avenues of collaboration closely linked to the WAEA are the JARE, the Western Economics Forum and the Western Extension Committee, all of which contain and provide insightful, valuable and pertinent findings and contributions to our discipline.

My vision is to assist in fortifying and strengthening the goals of the WAEA. Day to day, agriculture economics continues to study and tackle new, relevant matters pertinent to the agricultural sector and community well-being. Collaborating with colleagues in identifying these topics, as well as reaching out to agricultural stakeholders that may have a timely policy or educational role, will contribute in the enhancement and completion of fruitful, valuable annual meetings. A critical aspect is to continue to foster, facilitate and attract graduate students and their studies/projects to these meetings, as well as promoting their membership in WAEA. This will enable the organization to maintain and/or grow its numbers, and increase the overall contributions it keeps making. Another aspect will be to continue collaboration with the Western Extension Committee and the Canadian Agricultural Economics Society, and open channels of possible collaboration with other organizations, be regional or national, that may share common or related interests and/or activities - helping to augment/enrich the activities of members and the overall contributions of the WAEA. If chosen, I will work in collaboration with the WAEA leadership addressing the association's objectives through these matters and where needed. Thank you very much once again for your consideration.

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