

Montana Agriculture in 2014: Prospects for Growth, Future Challenges, and the Role of Cooperatives



Speaker Biographies



Jill Martz

Jill T. Martz earned a BS in Education: Vocational Home Economics from Bowling Green State University, Masters of Science in Vocational – Technical Education from Middle Tennessee State University and Ph.D. in Human Ecology with a concentration in Child and Family Studies from The University of Tennessee. She began as a seventh and eighth grade Family Living teacher in Ohio. After ten years of teaching, she began her career with the University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service (UT Extension) as a 4-H Agent and ended her Tennessee career as a Youth Development Specialist on the Tennessee State 4-H Staff. Dr. Martz became the Curriculum Specialist at the Montana 4-H Center for Youth Development in 2006 and in 2007, became the Center Director. While there, the Center received \$3,000,000 in new grant dollars. In 2012, Dr. Martz was asked to serve as Interim Extension Director, the position she currently holds. Presently she is Co-PI on a USDA - NRI grant totaling \$1.5 million over a 5-year period and Co-PI on a NIH Bioscience MT grant of \$1.2 million. She has served as a lead author for national and regional publications. Dr. Martz has received the George S. Foster Outstanding Agent Award, NAE4-H Distinguished Service Award, Epsilon Sigma Phi Early and Mid-Career Awards, National Communicator Award, numerous other state awards and is a member of the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents, Phi Kappa Phi, Epsilon Sigma Phi, and Phi Gamma Delta.



George Haynes

George is an Agricultural Policy Specialist with the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University. Prior to his current position, George was a professor with the MSU Department of Health and Human Development. George earned a doctorate in consumer economics and housing from Cornell University in 1993. His contributions to the field of consumer finance and economics have been in the area of family business finance. These lines of research have produced over 45 refereed journal articles, five book chapters, over 50 presentations and over 85 other reviewed monographs. An important contribution of George's family business finance work has been examining the intermingling of family and business financial resources. This research has been supported by funding from the National Science Foundation, U.S. Small Business Administration, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station.



Vince Smith

Vincent H. Smith is Professor of Economics in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University and co-director of MSU's Agricultural Marketing Policy Center. He received his Ph.D. from North Carolina State University in 1987 and his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Manchester in 1970 and 1971. Professor Smith's current research program examines agricultural trade and domestic policy issues, with a particular focus on agricultural insurance, agricultural science policy, domestic and world commodity markets, risk management, and agricultural trade policy. He has authored nine books and monographs, including his widely known work with Dr. Barry Goodwin on *The Economics of Crop Insurance and Disaster Aid*, and published over 100 articles on agricultural and other policy and economic issues. His contributions have been recognized nationally through multiple national awards for outstanding research programs. In 2008, he became a *Distinguished Scholar* of the Western Agricultural Economics Association. From January through July of 2010, he spent a sabbatical in the USDA Office of the Chief Economist examining the supply side of the U.S. federal agricultural insurance program.



Anton Bekkerman

Anton Bekkerman joined the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University as an Assistant Professor of Economics after receiving his Ph.D. in Economics from North Carolina State University in 2009. His research interests include price analysis in grain markets, the economics of agricultural marketing, and applied econometrics with a concentration on spatial modeling. Anton's recent works focus on evaluating market-based risk management of invasive species, modeling grain price behavior in spatially separated markets, improving producers' price hedging ability using futures markets, and understanding the impacts of consumers' quality perceptions on bull prices. He has also performed research in information economics and across disciplines, investigating consumer behaviors in bull auctions and assessing the benefits of adopting cover crop farming practices. On campus, Anton teaches Econometrics and the Economics of Agricultural Marketing; he is also the advisor to the Collegiate Young Farmers and Ranchers student organization.



Eric Belasco

Eric Belasco joined the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University in August 2011. Prior to this appointment, he was an Assistant Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at Texas Tech University from 2007 - 2011. He received both his M.S. and Ph.D. in Economics from North Carolina State University in 2005 and 2007, respectively. His main research interests are in the areas of agricultural marketing, risk management, and applied econometrics. The bulk of his research is focused on characterizing variability in cattle profits, production, and marketing. Examples of this research include evaluations into grid pricing risk, the use of forward contracts in mitigating profit risk, modeling multivariate risk in cattle production, and characterizing the link between weather and cattle production indicators. His research also extends to health economics, where he conducts cost/benefit analysis for different medical treatments using simulation to evaluate issues associated with cancer, chronic kidney disease, and nutrition.



Gary Brester

Gary Brester is a Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University. He was raised on an irrigated sugarbeet and malting barley farm near Laurel, Montana. He has two degrees from Montana State University -- a B.S. in Agricultural Business and an M.S. in Applied Economics. He received his Ph.D. degree in Economics from North Carolina State University.

Dr. Brester was a faculty member at Kansas State University from 1990-1997. Since 1997, he has been a Professor at Montana State University. His teaching responsibilities include farm and ranch management, agribusiness management, introductory economics, and agricultural marketing. Brester's applied research program includes risk management, international trade, agribusiness management, and farm management issues.



Mike Boland

Michael Boland (Mike) holds the Koller endowed Professorship in agribusiness management at the University of Minnesota where he has teaching, research, and outreach responsibilities in agribusiness management, food marketing, and in particular, agricultural cooperatives.

In addition, he is director of the University of Minnesota Food Industry Center which is funded by General Mills, Kellogg's, SuperValu, and other food companies. He teaches classes in cooperatives, business strategy, and institutional economics. The Koller Professorship was funded by agricultural cooperatives and Koller friends, family, and colleagues.



Mark Nonnemacher

Mark Nonnemacher is responsible for managing Northwest Farm Credit Services' Agribusiness division, which specializes in providing credit to large, vertically integrated and complex customer operations. Mark recently joined Northwest FCS, but his experience includes over 26 years in the Farm Credit System.

Mark most recently served as Western Region President for CoBank. His responsibilities included management of the agribusiness lending operations of CoBank's Sacramento and Spokane regional banking centers, and managing the wholesale lending relationship with Northwest FCS. Mark served at CoBank for 10 years, and prior to that he served in various direct lending and middle management positions with sister Farm Credit organizations in the western U.S.

Mark earned a bachelor's degree in forestry from the University of Montana and a master's degree in finance from the University of Oregon.



Carl Casale

Carl Casale is president and chief executive officer of CHS Inc., a leading energy, grains and foods company and the nation's largest member-owned cooperative. He assumed his position with CHS in January 2011. He previously was executive vice president and chief financial officer for Monsanto Company.

Casale, 52, is a native of Oregon's Willamette Valley who, along with his wife, Kim, operates a family-owned blueberry farm near Aurora, Ore., which has done business with area supply and marketing cooperatives for generations.

He holds a B.S. degree in agricultural economics from Oregon State University and an executive M.B.A. from Washington University, St. Louis, Mo. The Oregon State University College of Agriculture named Casale its 2009 alumni fellow.

He has served on the board of the National 4-H Council. Carl currently serves on the boards of National Cooperative Refinery Association, Ventura Foods, National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, Greater Twin Cities United Way and the Minnesota Business Partnership.