

Speaker Biographies



Cody Stone

For 20 years, Cody Stone has engaged clientele and faculty through his work with Extension in Texas and Montana. In Texas, he served as an Extension Agent, 4-H Specialist, and Regional Program Director. Cody and his wife Mary moved to Montana in 2005 to begin work at the Montana 4-H Center for Youth Development where he served as the Volunteer and Leadership Development Specialist before becoming the Director of the 4-H Center and State 4-H Program Leader. Cody has served three years as the Associate Director of MSU Extension and is currently serving as the Interim Director. He holds a Bachelor's and Master's degree from Texas A&M University and a Doctorate in Adult and Higher Education from Montana State University.



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.



Anton Bekkerman

Anton Bekkerman is an Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University. His research interests include price analysis in grain markets, agricultural marketing, and the economics of production and management in the agricultural industry. Anton's recent research focus on improving wheat price predictions for the northern United States, identifying the economic impacts of changes in the grain handling industry, and—as part of the MREDI agricultural project—understanding the market-level impacts of increase pulse production in Montana. On campus, Anton teaches the Economics of Agricultural Marketing and Managerial Economics and is the faculty advisor to the Collegiate Young Farmers and Ranchers student organization.



Kate Fuller

Kate joined the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University as an assistant professor and extension specialist in July 2014. She studies the economics of agricultural pests and diseases, farm policy, and farm management decision-making. She received her Ph.D. and also worked as a post-doctoral researcher in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the University of California, Davis. Her dissertation and post-doctoral work examined the economics of various agricultural pests and diseases as well as the costs and benefits of programs and technologies to address them. She grew up in rural Vermont.



Richard Ready

Richard is Professor of Economics at Montana State University and Associate Director of the Montana Institute on Ecosystems. Dr. Ready's area of expertise is economic analysis of environmental and natural resource issues, with particular focus on impacts of and adaptation to climate change, invasive species, outdoor recreation, and landscape change. His research has been supported by grants from the National Science Foundation, Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and several state agencies. Dr. Ready is currently serving as a member of the EPA Science Advisory Board's Environmental Economics Advisory Committee.



Bruce Maxwell

Bruce Maxwell is a Professor in the Land Resources & Environmental Sciences Department at Montana State University. Bruce is the lead PI on the On-Farm Precision Experiment (OFPE) framework aspect of the MREDI Ag study, bringing 20 years of experience in precision agriculture to the study. He has extensive experience in analytical approaches to improving farmer decision on input management and is dedicated to producing tools that will allow farmers to see their decisions in the context of the many uncertainties of crop production. Maxwell has received national awards for outstanding teaching, best peer reviewed papers and outstanding graduate student from the Weed Science Society of America. During his career he has published over eighty scientific journal articles and book chapters, chaired and been a member on numerous agricultural and ecological research grant review panels and been a member of two National Academy of Science - National Research Council Committees.



Joe Janzen

Joe is an assistant professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University. He was raised on a grains and oilseeds farm near St. Francois Xavier, Manitoba, Canada. Prior to joining Montana State, Joe completed his Ph.D. in Agricultural and Resource Economics at the University of California, Davis in 2013. His research interests include agricultural price analysis, commodity futures markets, and agricultural policy. Joe's recent publications explore the quality of price discovery in agricultural futures markets, the influence of speculation on commodity prices, the measurement of global agricultural supply response to price, and influence of government payments on farmland rental rates.



Vincent 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.

Anne Boothe

Anne Boothe is a lifelong Montanan, born, raised and still a resident in Malta, a HiLine town with a current population of just less than 2000 residents. Her career has been devoted to rural community and economic development with nearly 20 years as the Executive Director of a local economic development organization in Phillips County and 8+ years in her current position as Economic Development Specialist for Triangle Communications. Telecommuting from a home office, Anne travels Triangle's 16 county region regularly and shares her wealth of experience, resources and industry connections with individuals, groups and local governments. Anne serves on many local boards and committees and is a long-time board member for the Montana Economic Developers Association. She lives, works and understands "rural."



Jan Brown

Janice Brown has served as executive director of the Montana Cooperative Development Center (MCDC) since July 2015. She supervises three full-time staff based in Great Falls and a network of 10 technical advisors who organize and support new cooperative businesses across Montana. Her expertise relevant to co-op development includes board governance, public participation, natural resource policy, and strategic and regional planning.

Over her 40-year career, Ms. Brown has held executive and management positions with private businesses, nonprofit organizations, federal contractors, and state and local governments across the Northern Rockies. A graduate of Oregon State University's School of Forestry, she has worked exclusively in Idaho and Montana including 10 years of operating her own guest lodge near Yellowstone National Park.



Paddy Fleming

Paddy Fleming is a 5th generation Montanan whose family first came to Montana in 1862. He was raised on a small farm and ranch near Charlo, MT. He is currently the Director of the Montana Manufacturing Extension Center (MMEC) which is part of the College of Engineering at Montana State University. He has been associated with MMEC for the past 17 years where he has consulted with hundreds of manufacturers throughout Montana.

MMEC's goal is to grow Montana's economy by helping manufacturers succeed. MMEC has a staff of 8 industry professionals located throughout the state that assist Montana's manufacturers in the areas of growth, innovation and profit enhancement. MMEC has assisted more than 1200 manufacturing businesses in Montana including over 800 rural manufacturing businesses.

Paddy has over 27 years of experience in leading, managing and improving manufacturing businesses. was named the 2015 Montana Manufacturing Advocate of the Year by the Montana Manufacturing Association.

In his early career, he worked for several companies in the industrial machinery manufacturing and the paper converting industries including BW Paper Systems, International Paper and Tenneco. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering from Montana State University and a Master's Degree in Business Administration from Olivet Nazarene University.

Managing Land Resources In the Context of Variable Weather

Procrastinator Theater, November 3, 2017

M.L. Wilson Lecture



M.L. Wilson *Biography*

M.L. Wilson came to Montana in 1909 with a B.S. degree from Iowa State College. He was a homesteader and then became the first Montana agricultural extension agent. Subsequent to completion of a M.S. degree in agricultural economics from the University of Wisconsin, he was the first head of the Department of Agricultural Economics at Montana State College. He made major contributions to public policy and programs designed to meet the problems of drought, depression and low farm family income. He is considered one of the architects of the original Federal agricultural commodity programs.

M.L. Wilson left Montana in 1933 to serve as chief economist in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. He then served as Assistant and Under Secretary from 1934-1940 in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He later served several foundations that focused on world agricultural issues.

M.L. Wilson was president of the American Farm Economics Association in 1925 and was awarded an honorary doctorate from Montana State College in 1935.



Paul Jakus Professor, Utah State University

M.L. Wilson Lecturer Biography

Paul Jakus grew up in Las Vegas, NV and graduated with a degree in Agricultural and Resource Economics from the University of Nevada, Reno. After receiving his MS degree from Colorado State University, he spent two years in West Africa as a Peace Corps Volunteer. His Economics Ph.D. was received from North Carolina State University. He spent nine years on the faculty at the University of Tennessee before returning to the mountain west at Utah State University in 2001. He is a Professor former Head of the

Department of Applied Economics at Utah State. He is currently Director of the Center for Society, Economy, and the Environment. His research interests have included the economics of solid waste management, water contamination and pollution, and the role of risk in dangerous recreation activities. More recently he has been focused on how public lands management affects rural economic development in the west.