

# Agricultural Production Trends & Changing Food Systems

Procrastinator Theater, November 11, 2016



Department of Agricultural  
Economics and Economics



## Speaker Biographies



### Jeff Bader

Jeff came to Montana from New Mexico where he worked for New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service. He began his career in Extension in 1987 as a 4-H Agent then moved on to be an Agriculture Agent in a small rural county, County Director in a large metropolitan area and the Northern District Department head all with the NMSU Cooperative Extension Service. Jeff received a doctorate in higher education administration, with an emphasis in educational leadership, and his master's and bachelor's degrees in animal science, all at New Mexico State University.



### 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.



### 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.



## **Jayson Lusk**

Jason currently serves as Regents Professor and Willard Sparks Endowed Chair in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Oklahoma State University and also serves as the Samuel Roberts Noble Distinguished Fellow at the Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs. After earning a B.S. in Food Technology from Texas Tech University in 1997, he received a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Kansas State University in 2000. Jason's first job out of graduate school was as an assistant professor at Mississippi State University, where he stayed for three years before moving to Purdue University as an Associate Professor. In 2005, Jason accepted his current position at Oklahoma State. In 2011, he

and his family lived in Paris while I served as a visiting researcher at the French National Institute for Agricultural Research and worked on a research fellowship awarded by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development.



## **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.



### **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.



### **Nina Zidack**

Nina is the Managing Director of Montana Seed Potato Certification at Montana State University, more commonly referred to as the “Potato Lab”. Raised on a grain and cattle operation on the edge of the Missouri Breaks north of Winifred, MT, she went on to receive a B.S. in Horticulture at MSU in 1987 followed by a Ph.D. in Plant Pathology from Auburn University in 1993. After returning to Montana, she operated a commercial vegetable farm in Billings with her husband Walt and worked as a research scientist at MSU. Nina became director of the seed potato program in 2008 where she oversees certification activities including disease testing and field inspection, and serves as a liaison between MSU and the Montana Potato Improvement Association.



### **Joel Schumacher**

Joel Schumacher is an Extension Economics Associate Specialist in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University. He earned a bachelor’s degree in business (finance option) and master’s degree in agricultural economics from Montana State University prior to joining MSU Extension in 2006. Joel’s research and outreach programs focus on personal finances, poverty and energy economics. Prior to working at MSU Joel worked as a pension analyst, finding retirement plan solutions for small to medium sized businesses.



### **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.



### **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.



### **Colter Ellis**

Colter Ellis is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at Montana State University. He received his PhD from the University of Colorado at Boulder in 2011. His research focuses on the way people understand and interact with the environment and animals. He has studied the human dimensions of unconventional oil and gas exploration, animals and animal agriculture, and invasive species management. Colter's work takes both an applied perspective—focusing on local perception and action—and a theoretical approach that connects local perspectives to larger historical contexts. His work with the MREDI agricultural project examines the decision-making processes of agricultural producers in adopting new technology and production management approaches.



### **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.

### **Michael Bestwick**

Mike Bestwick has a Master's of Science from the Land Resources and Environmental Sciences Department at Montana State University. Mike has been involved in Montana agricultural research and extension for the past five years. He is currently leading a statewide participatory project to identify how producer management is affecting protein content in yellow peas. With an emerging yellow pea protein market, identifying which management strategies produce consistently high protein levels could increase producer revenue and benefit the Montana economy.