

# 2023 Agricultural Economics Conference



## Speaker Bios

### **Carrie Ashe**

MSU Extension, Associate Director

Carrie Ashe serves as the Associate Director of Montana State University Extension. In her role, Carrie works with the Executive Director to provide leadership that shapes the strategic direction and priorities of MSU Extension.

Prior to serving as Associate Director, Carrie has worked with MSU Extension since 2009 in various roles including as the Director of the statewide Extension Nutrition Education Program and as a Project Director on multiple federal grants. Carrie holds a Bachelor's of Science from the University of North Dakota and a Master's in Educational Leadership from North Dakota State University.



## **Eric Belasco**

MSU Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, Department Head



Eric Belasco is a professor and department head in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University.

He received his PhD and MS in Economics from North Carolina State University and his BS in Economics from Saint Mary's College of California. His research focuses in the areas of agricultural technology, financial engineering, crop insurance, farm policy, and risk management, which includes 34 peer-reviewed journal articles and two book chapters.

This research has been highlighted in outlets including the Washington Post, New York Times, MarketWatch, as well as many regional news outlets.

Eric's teaching has included courses in agricultural policy, financial engineering, agricultural marketing, and microeconomics.

He has managed over \$4 million in federal grants working on interdisciplinary topics including education and communication efforts related to agricultural production and weather risk, the development of engineering biodegradable mulches, the value and barriers associated with organic labeling, and the design of weather-based agricultural policy programs, among others.

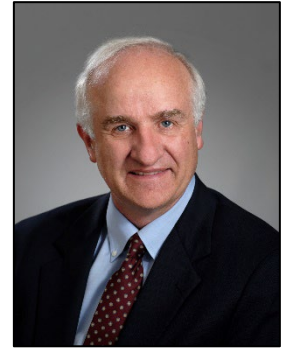
Eric currently serves as a Visiting Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, is the former President of the Western Agricultural Economics Association, and is an Associate Editor for the American Journal of Agricultural Economics and the Agricultural Finance Review.

## **George Haynes**

MSU Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, Extension  
Agricultural Policy Specialist

George Haynes is a Professor and Extension Specialist in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University.

His primary line of research is in small business finance, where he studies the financial structure of small businesses, the lending behavior of depository institutions, and the response of small businesses to disasters and disaster assistance.



His instructional responsibilities include delivering the Montana agricultural outlook, conducting training for low-resource borrowers, and educating farmers and ranchers on agricultural policy issues. His research has been supported by the National Science Foundation, and U.S. Small Business Administration, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station.

## **Yang Yu**

MSU Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, Assistant  
Professor



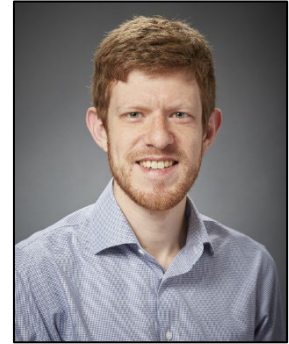
Yang Yu is an assistant professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University. He graduated with a PhD in Agricultural, Environmental, and Regional Economics from Penn State University in 2020.

His research focuses on consumer decision-making, industrial organization, and food marketing. He is currently working on calibrating household food waste in widely used consumer datasets and studying the role of food waste in evaluating food policies.

## Nick Hagerty

MSU Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, Assistant Professor

Nick is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University. His research studies the role of natural resources in how societies around the world cope with environmental change, and how policy design can help people to better adapt. Most of his work focuses on water and agriculture in the western United States.



Prior to Montana State, Nick earned a PhD in economics from MIT and completed an S.V. Ciriacy-Wantrup Postdoctoral Fellowship at UC Berkeley. He also has worked for the Council of Economic Advisers and was raised in Oregon.

## Ian Foley

Montana Department of Agriculture, Administrator, Ag Sciences Division



Ian Foley, Administrator at Montana Department of Agriculture's Ag Sciences Division, is committed to strengthening Montana's number one industry and providing agricultural producers and consumers, both commodity and environmental protection.

Originally from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Ian found himself in Montana for graduate school at Montana State University where he earned a M.S. in Entomology. Since 2008, Foley has served Montana producers at the department in various roles, including state entomologist, pest management program manager, and commodity services bureau chief. Before his work for the Montana Department of Agriculture, Ian worked in international export certification starting in 2001 for the USDA in different roles from St. Louis, Missouri to the Mexican border in South Texas before coming back to Montana to follow his passion for insects and agriculture by working for the Montana Department of Agriculture.

Ian understands the challenges and risks Montana producers face. Through the facilitation of the export of Montana's high-quality ag commodities internationally and the administration of Montana laws, he preserves the Montana producer's value and way of life.

## **Mike Honeycutt**

Montana Department of Livestock, Executive Officer

Mike Honeycutt has served as the Executive Officer for the Montana Department of Livestock since February 2016.

Prior to this appointment, Mike served in various roles with Cargill, the National Council for Agricultural Education, and the National Future Farmers of America (FFA) Organization.



Mike is a native of North Carolina and earned both a bachelor's and master's degrees in Agricultural and Extension Education from North Carolina State University.

He currently resides in Helena with his wife Raylee, a proud MSU College of Agriculture alumnus, and their two daughters.

## **Paul Nugent**

MSU Precision Ag Faculty



Paul Nugent received his PhD in Engineering from Montana State University in 2016 with a focus on optical remote sensing and data analysis.

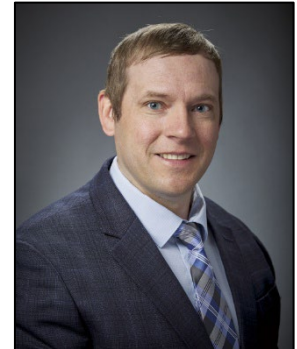
After graduation, he built a business with funding through the USDA Small Business Innovative Research program. His background in agriculture was gained by growing up on his family's farm in Fairfield, Montana.

He has since returned to academia to be part of the precision agriculture team at Montana State University. His research combines on-farm and remote sensing data with machine learning to address problems facing Montana farms, such as soil acidification. He is also interested in understanding the potential impact of forward-looking technologies such as sensor networks, vehicle electrification, and automation.

## Sam Wyffels

MSU Department of Animal and Range Sciences, Assistant Professor

Sam is an Assistant Professor and Extension Beef Cattle Specialist who works in grazing beef cattle nutrition and precision livestock management at Montana State University.



He worked five years for the Natural Resources Conservation Service developing conservation plans for producers participating in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Conservation Stewardship Program prior to completing a PhD program in Animal and Range Sciences at Montana State University.

His research interests include incorporating precision ag. technology to beef cattle production, grazing beef cattle nutrition, and environmental factors that influence grazing behavior and nutritional requirements of cattle.

## Nicole Karwowski

MSU Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, Assistant Professor



Nicole is a first-year assistant professor in the Agricultural Economics and Economics department at Montana State University.

She finished her Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin Madison with a dissertation looking at the impacts of the Wetland Reserve Program on agricultural risk, flood mitigation, and water quality.

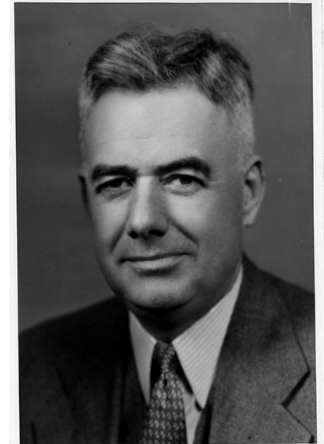
Her research focuses on land-use change, conservation, and agricultural productivity. She teaches Introduction to Economics as well as the Farm and Ranch Management course. She looks forward to learning more about the interactions between agriculture and the environment in Montana.

## M.L. Wilson Lecture

### M.L. Wilson

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.

## ***M.L. Wilson Lecturer***

### **Mykel Taylor**

Associate Professor and Alfa Eminent Scholar, Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, Auburn University

Mykel Taylor is an Associate Professor and the Alfa Endowed Eminent Scholar in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology at Auburn University. She holds a B.S. in Agribusiness and an M.S. in Applied Economics from Montana State University and a PhD from North Carolina State University. Mykel was raised on a cow-calf operation in Roberts, Montana, and is actively raising three kids with her husband Justin.



Mykel's research fields include farm management, farmland markets, and land leasing. She has presented her research at numerous events including the USDA Outlook Conference in Washington, DC, and the Kansas City Federal Reserve Bank Agricultural Symposium. Mykel has served in several leadership roles in the agricultural economics profession including Director of the Western Agricultural Economics Association and Academic Vice President of the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers. Her previous experience includes extension and research positions at Washington State University and Kansas State University.

Currently, Mykel serves in a teaching and research role at Auburn where her 12 years of experience working with stakeholders in extension roles has translated into an applied economics teaching program focused on farm management, land values, and a global issues class for incoming freshmen in the college of agriculture.