

2024 Agricultural Economics Conference

Speaker Bios

Cody Stone

MSU Extension, Executive Director

For 25 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 served three years as the Associate Director of MSU Extension and one year as the Interim Director. After a nationwide search Cody was selected in August 2018 as the Executive Director of Montana State University Extension.

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

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.

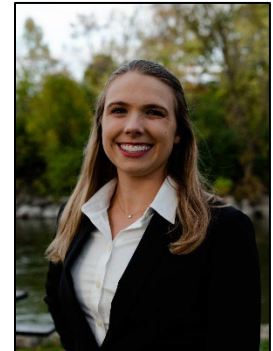
Nicole Karwowski

MSU Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, Assistant Professor

Nicole is a second-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 analyzing 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 Economics of Agricultural Marketing 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.



Sreekala Bajwa

MSU College of Agriculture, Vice President, Dean and Director



Dr. Sreekala Bajwa has served as MSU's vice president of agriculture since 2019. She has an extensive background in agricultural engineering and precision agriculture and has provided international leadership for research and education in applying remote sensing and unmanned aerial systems to agricultural systems.

Her technological accomplishments include four inventions in digital agriculture and bio-based materials, and she is the author of five book chapters and more than 60 journal articles. Before arriving at MSU, she served as chair of North Dakota State University's Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering.

Bajwa received her bachelor's degree in agricultural engineering from Kerala Agricultural University in India, her master's degree in agricultural engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur in India and her doctorate of agricultural engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Joel Schumacher

Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, Extension
Associate Specialist

Joel Schumacher is an Associate Extension Specialist in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics. He also serves as the Agriculture & Natural Resources Program Leaders and the Family & Consumer Science Program Leader for Montana State University Extension.



He holds a master's degree in applied economics and a bachelor's degree in business from Montana State University. Joel is also an Accredited Financial Counselor.

His research and outreach programs focus on consumer economics, agricultural finance and rural economics. Joel has authored or co-authored more than two dozen educational guides and presented more than 400 educational outreach programs across Montana. He has served as principal investigator on over 20 externally funded projects.

Prior to his current position, Joel worked as a pension analyst for a full-service third-party administration firm.

Christy Clark

Montana Department of Agriculture, Director

Christy Clark, Director at Montana Department of Agriculture, is committed to strengthening Montana's number one industry and expanding value-added opportunities for producers and businesses.

A fifth-generation rancher from Choteau, Christy understands the challenges and opportunities producers face as she advocates for robust markets and promotes Montana's high-quality ag products domestically and abroad.



Since 2015, Clark has served Montana producers at the department in various roles, including deputy director, agricultural sciences administrator, and agricultural development and marketing bureau chief.

Christy served three terms in the Montana House of Representatives before choosing to follow her passion for agriculture by working for the Montana Department of Agriculture.

She graduated from California State University Sacramento and raised three children on the family ranch alongside her husband.

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.

Greg Gilpin

MSU Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, Professor



Greg Gilpin is a Professor of Economics at Montana State University. He earned his PhD in Economics from Indiana University in 2009.

Dr. Gilpin has established a national reputation in the fields of labor economics and community development.

Over the past twelve years, he has published 16 peer-reviewed academic articles and several invited articles.

Dr. Gilpin has taught a wide range of courses, with a particular focus on Macroeconomics at both the introductory and graduate levels, as well as Urban Economics and Money and Banking.

Justin Gallagher

MSU Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, Associate Professor

Dr. Justin Gallagher joined the Montana State University Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics (DAEE) in 2018. Dr. Gallagher's primary research field is environmental economics, with a broad interest in household finance, labor economics, and public economics.



Dr. Gallagher has published studies examining the impact of housing markets from cleaning up hazardous waste as part of EPA's Superfund Program, and at how US residents use flood insurance to financially protect themselves from natural disasters. Current research examines how land use policies, such as urban growth boundaries, affect the spatial pattern of new development and housing prices.

Dr. Gallagher received a BA from Middlebury College, an MA in Public Policy from the University of Chicago, and a PhD from the University of California, Berkeley.

Seunghyun Lee

MSU Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, Assistant Professor



Seunghyun Lee is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University, where he has been since 2023.

Originally from South Korea, he earned his PhD in Agricultural Economics and Economics from the University of California, Davis.

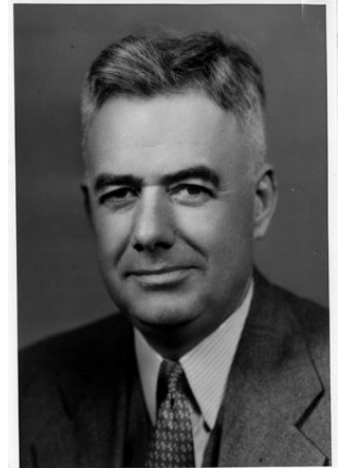
His research aims to address challenges related to agricultural production in the context of a changing climate while deepening our understanding of adaptive behaviors.

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

Gary Schnitkey

Professor of Farm Management, Soybean Industry Chair in Agricultural Strategy, University of Illinois

Dr. Gary Schnitkey is a Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

He got his B.S. on Agricultural Finance from the Ohio State University and received his M.S. and Ph.D. on Agricultural Economic from the University of Illinois.

Dr. Gary Schnitkey's goal is to make farms more financially efficient while increasing the quality of environmental outcomes.

He works extensively with financial data from Illinois Farm Business Farm Management and production data from Precision Conservation Management.

