

2025 Agricultural Economics Conference

Speaker Bios

Cody Stone

MSU Extension, Executive Director

For 26 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.

Andrew Swanson

MSU Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, Assistant Professor

Andrew Swanson is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University. He also serves as a Farm Management Specialist for Montana State University Extension. Andrew grew up on a corn, soybean, and cattle farm in rural Nebraska. His research covers the impacts of federal and state policies on agricultural commodity markets with a focus on biofuel and low-carbon fuel policies.



He received his bachelor's degree from Hillsdale College in Michigan, his master's degree from Montana State University, and his doctorate from the University of California, Davis. Prior to joining Montana State, Andrew was a postdoctoral scholar at UC Davis in cooperation with the USDA, Office of the Chief Economist.

Joel Schumacher

Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, MSU 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 Leader 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.

Nick Hagerty

MSU Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, Assistant Professor

Nick Hagerty is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University. Nick's research studies how people respond to environmental change and how policy design can help people to better adapt, with a focus on water and agriculture in the western United States.



Nick was raised in Oregon, earned a Ph.D. in economics from MIT, and completed an S.V. Ciriacy-Wantrup Postdoctoral Fellowship at UC Berkeley.

Eric Belasco

MSU Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, Department Head



Eric Belasco is a Professor and Department Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University. He holds a PhD and MS in Economics from North Carolina State University and a BS in Economics from Saint Mary's College of California. His research explores agricultural technology, financial engineering, crop insurance, farm policy, and risk management, resulting in 36 peer-reviewed journal articles and two book chapters. His work has been featured in major outlets such as the Washington Post, New York Times, MarketWatch, as well as many regional publications.

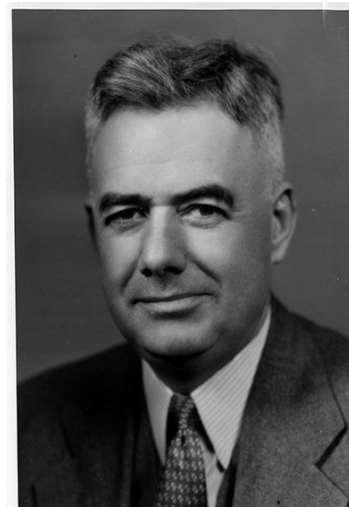
In the classroom, Eric teaches courses on agricultural policy, financial engineering, and agricultural marketing. He has directed more than \$4 million in federally funded, interdisciplinary projects, ranging from the development of online risk management tools and weather-based agricultural policy programs to research on biodegradable mulches and the economics of organic labeling. He currently serves on the Board of the Council on Food, Agriculture, and Resource Economics, is a Visiting Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, a former President of the Western Agricultural Economics Association, and an Associate Editor for the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*.

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 Lecture

Cortney Cowley

Assistant Vice President and Oklahoma City Branch Executive for the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City



Cortney Cowley serves as Oklahoma City Branch Executive and Assistant Vice President for the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City. Cortney joined the Bank in 2015 as an economist and was promoted to senior economist in 2021.

In 2025, Cortney began her role as Branch Executive. As Oklahoma City Branch Executive, Cortney is the Bank's lead officer and economist in Oklahoma. She recruits and works closely with the Oklahoma City Branch Board of Directors and is responsible for briefing Kansas City Fed President Jeff Schmid, a member of the Federal Open Market Committee, on economic trends in the state. She also serves as a special advisor on agriculture to Governor Miki Bowman at the Federal Reserve Board of Governors. Cowley's team conducts research and surveys on key regional issues, including energy, manufacturing, and migration.

Cortney holds a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Oklahoma State University, as well as a master's degree in civil engineering from Colorado State University and a bachelor's degree in Biosystems Engineering from Oklahoma State University, where she was named a Harry S. Truman Scholar.

She is a member of the Economic Club of Oklahoma, Downtown Club of Oklahoma City, and the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association, and serves as an economic advisor on the campaign cabinet of the United Way of Central Oklahoma.

Jillien Streit

Montana Department of Agriculture, Director



Jillien Streit, Director at Montana Department of Agriculture, is committed to strengthening Montana's number one economic driver and expanding opportunities for the next generation to thrive in this vital industry. A native of Chester, Jillien and her husband operate a 5th generation family farm. She understands the challenges and opportunities producers face as she advocates for valuable markets and promotes Montana's high-quality ag products domestically and abroad.

In 2014, Jillien and partners founded Stricks Ag, a merchandiser of high-quality, high-demand grains that went public in 2024. Prior to joining the department, she worked as the financial controller for Flat Acres Farm in Chester while being involved in the daily operations where her family rotates up to 18 different crops along with the recent integration of cattle and sheep.

She has been a long-time advocate of agriculture while raising three children on the family farm alongside her husband. She has served on the USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council, the American Farm Bureau Advisory Council as well as substitute teaching agriculture classes at the local school. In her free time, Jillien enjoys skiing, running, and chasing kids to sporting events.

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.

Kelsey Larson

MSU Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, Assistant Professor



Kelsey Larson is an Assistant Professor of Agricultural Economics and Extension Specialist at Montana State University. Her research studies programs like carbon credits, agricultural practice incentive programs, and conservation easements that support protecting environmental value on private and agricultural land.

She received her PhD in economics from MIT, where she was a NSF GRFP Fellow, a Martin Fellow for Sustainability, and a Lincoln Institute of Land Policy C. Lowell Harriss Dissertation Fellow. She teaches MSU's class on economics and the environment.

Gregory Gilpin

MSU Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, Professor

Gregory 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 fifteen 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

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.