



THE FREE RIDER

THE USDA ECONOMISTS GROUP
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<http://www.usdaeconomists.org>

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FROM THE PRESIDENT – BILL JANIS

My rewarding tenure as President is drawing to a close. Let us review our achievements during 2009. The Group sponsored 13 seminars, ranging in topics from carbon trading to the changing composition of students at land grant universities. Our Board and I have expanded the scope of the Group. The Board authorized collaborating with the Farm Foundation and the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association to sponsor a December 7 symposium, "The Economics of Structural Change and Competition in the Food System." Focusing on the dairy, food retailing, livestock, and seed industries, this conference at USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) attracted almost 100 registrants. Nine renowned professors shared their views on evolving market structure, while representatives from Farm Foundation, ERS, and I moderated the panels. Colleagues from the Department of Justice's Anti-Trust Division expressed their appreciation for the conference.

On January 5, your Board convened its monthly meeting. With a quorum, Board members approved five major items—the program for our January 21 awards ceremony and luncheon, funds for the luncheon after the ceremony, plaques for our award recipients, an exhibit table at the 2010 USDA Outlook Forum on February 19-20, and 500 business cards for the Group.

During the award ceremony, USDA Chief Economist Joe Glauber will present the four awards. He will recognize recipients of the Fred Woods Award, USDA Economist of the Year Award, John Lee Teamwork Award, and the Bruce Gardner Award.

Until January 21, members in good standing may nominate individuals to serve on the Board. You may notify me of your nominations at William.Janis@fas.usda.gov or 202-720-2194.

Current nominees to the Board as of January 12 are:

Steve Neff — President
William Janis — Treasurer
Janet Perry — Vice President for Programs
Martin Zhu — Vice President for Membership and E-Journal Planner
Heather Velthuis — Secretary and Newsletter Editor
Skip Hyberg — At Large Director
James Wilkus — Web Master
Barbara Wojcik-Betancourt — Membership and E-Journal Coordinator
Petra Schultze, Petra — Happy-Hour Coordinator

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HAPPY HOUR:

Please join us for our next Networking Happy Hour at Jaleo's DC location. It's a great opportunity to meet with your colleagues from various parts of USDA, as well as a chance to at least dream of a warmer climate while sipping fruity Spanish sangria!

When: Thursday, February 4th, 5:30-7:30

Where:
Jaleo Tapas Bar
480 7th Street
Washington, DC 20004

Happy hour specials until 7pm: \$4 tapas and drink specials, sangria and draft beer.

Closest metro: Yellow line - Archives

Please RSVP to: petra.schultze@wdc.usda.gov or 202-720-8832

IN FOCUS

In late November, China, the world's largest rice producer and consumer, approved a locally-developed strain of genetically-modified rice, paving the way for large-scale production in two to three years, according to Chinese scientists. Trials showed that the rice benefited poor farmers and decreased their exposure to harmful pesticides. While this is just another example of China using advanced technology in the agricultural sciences, see what else they have been up to in what is being called the new geography of science.

<http://researchanalytics.thomsonreuters.com/grr/>

MORE UPCOMING

Justice Department and USDA Set Dates for Workshops to Explore Competition and Regulatory Issues in the Agriculture Industry.

Workshops to be Held in Alabama, Colorado, Iowa, Washington, D.C. and Wisconsin

The Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the dates and locations of joint public workshops that will explore competition and regulatory issues in the agriculture industry. The

workshops, which were first announced by Attorney General Eric Holder and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on Aug. 5, 2009, are the first joint Department of Justice/USDA workshops ever to be held to discuss competition and regulatory issues in the agriculture industry. The all-day workshops, which will begin in March 2010, will be held in Alabama, Colorado, Iowa, Washington, D.C. and Wisconsin.

The goals of the workshops are to promote dialogue among interested parties and foster learning with respect to the appropriate legal and economic analyses of these issues, as well as to listen to and learn from parties with experience in the agriculture sector.

The current schedule for the workshops is as follows:

March 12, 2010 - Issues of Concern to Farmers - Ankeny, Iowa

This event will serve as an introduction to the series of workshops, but also will focus specifically on issues facing crop farmers. Specific areas of focus may include seed technology, vertical integration, market transparency and buyer power.

FFA Enrichment Center
1055 Southwest Prairie Trail Parkway
Ankeny, Iowa

May 21, 2010 - Poultry Industry - Normal, Ala.

Specific areas of focus may include production contracts in the poultry industry, concentration and buyer power.

Alabama A&M University
Auditorium, James I. Dawson Cooperative Extension Building
4900 Meridian St.
Normal, Ala.

June 7, 2010 - Dairy Industry - Madison, Wisc.

Specific areas of focus may include concentration, marketplace transparency and vertical integration in the dairy industry.

University of Wisconsin
Great Hall, Memorial Union
800 Langdon St.



Madison, Wisc.

Aug. 26, 2010 - Livestock Industry - Fort Collins, Colo.

Specific areas of focus will address beef, hog and other animal sectors and may include enforcement of the Packers and Stockyards Act and concentration.

Colorado State University
Fort Collins, Colo.

Dec. 8, 2010 - Margins - Washington, D.C.

This workshop will look at the discrepancies between the prices received by farmers and the prices paid by consumers. As a concluding event, discussions from previous workshops will be incorporated into the analysis of agriculture markets nationally.

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Jefferson Auditorium
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C.

Each workshop may feature keynote speakers, general expert panels, and break-out panels that will address more narrowly-focused issues. At each workshop, the public will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments.

The attendance and participation of the public is encouraged throughout the series of workshops. With the goals of generating further dialogue and understanding the issues, the workshops will involve farmers, ranchers, processors, consumer groups, agribusinesses, government officials, and academics. This collection of stakeholders will create a forum for discussion and will ensure various industry perspectives.

The Department of Justice and USDA are also asking for comments in advance of the workshops. Interested parties should submit written comments in both paper and electronic form to the Department of Justice no later than Dec. 31, 2009. All comments received will be publicly posted. Two paper copies should be addressed to the Legal Policy Section, Antitrust Division, U.S. Department of Justice, 450 5th Street, NW, Suite 11700, Washington, D.C. 20001. The electronic version of each comment

should be submitted to
agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov.

Additional updates and information, including agendas and speakers, will be posted on the Antitrust Division's events website at
<http://www.justice.gov/atr/events.htm>

RECENT RELEASES BY DC AREA AGRICULTURAL ECONOMISTS

China Using More Corn for Industry

China's rapid growth of industrial processing of corn makes its corn market difficult to assess. About one-fourth of China's corn now enters industrial processing. ERS reviews estimates of corn use and summarizes export and price trends.

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/FDS/2009/12Dec/FDS09K01/>

Addressing India's Ag Marketing Efficiency

ERS examines the performance of India's agricultural marketing system and analyzes economywide implications of improved marketing efficiency that might stem from future reforms.

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/err89/>

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We have 46 paid members for 2010, including the following 13 new members:

Chengxia You — ERS
Linwood Hoffman — ERS
Tatiana Borisova — University of Florida
Anna Harris — Interior, FWS
Cathy Jabara — USITC
Anita Regmi — ERS
Charles Kerchner — AgRefresh
Shawn Bucholtz — FSA
Richard Gilmore — GIC Group
Anh Vo — NASS
Michael Adjemian — ERS
Neil Conklin — Farm Foundation
Mickey Paggi — Fresno State University



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JOBS FOR AGRICULTURAL ECONOMISTS AND RELATED PROFESSIONALS

USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Economist

Noted below are the links to the announcement for two full-time, permanent Economist positions (at Doctorate and Master's levels) on the Policy Analysis and Development Staff (PAD) at USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's headquarters in metropolitan Washington, DC – near the University of Maryland, College Park campus. Both the positions are announced on January 4, 2010 at the official Federal jobs website

www.usajobs.gov.

[Link for GS-11/12/13 Economist Position](#)

[Link for GS-9/11 Economist Position](#)

APHIS Economist positions are especially attractive to “applied” economists because of the opportunity it provides to serve on multidisciplinary teams to prepare Regulatory Impact Analyses in support of developing regulations and formulating policy options to improve program performance in addressing animal and plant health, biotechnology, wildlife, and animal care issues in the U.S. PAD Economists also provide economic expertise in enhancing program effectiveness, developing performance measures, leading special economic studies, coordinating focused economic analysis initiatives with universities and other Federal and State agencies.

To those interested in applying (both with M.Sc. and/or Ph.D. degrees as well as eligible Federal employees) please note that both of these positions close on **January 25, 2010**.

If you have any questions you may contact:

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USDA/APHIS/PPD
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CME Group, Economist, Chicago, Illinois

CME Group www.cmegroup.com is the world's largest and most diverse derivatives exchange. Building on the heritage of CME, CBOT and NYMEX, CME Group serves the risk management needs of customers around the globe. As an international marketplace, CME Group brings buyers and sellers together on the CME Globex electronic trading platform and on trading floors in Chicago and New York. By acting as the buyer to every seller and the seller to every buyer, CME Clearing virtually eliminates counterparty credit risk. CME Clearing also offers \$7 billion in financial safeguards to help mitigate systemic risk, providing the security and confidence market participants need to operate, invest and grow. CME Group offers the widest range of benchmark products available across all major asset classes, including futures and options based on interest rates, equity indexes, foreign exchange, energy, agricultural commodities, metals, and alternative investment products such as weather and real estate. CME Group is listed on NASDAQ under the symbol "CME."

Position Purpose

Economists within the Commodity Research & Product Development (RPD) Department work per the direction of the Associate Director, RPD; Director, RPD or Managing Director, RPD. The primary role is to identify and develop new exchange traded and over-the-counter (OTC) product opportunities, maintain viability of current product offerings, and contribute insight into market and business development in global commodity products.

Principal Accountabilities

1. Research and identify new commodity product opportunities with an emphasis on domestic and international grains and oilseeds markets.
2. Develop those products into viable, working markets by actively engaging externally with market participants, government regulatory agencies, i.e. CFTC, cash and OTC market participants and technology and other service providers as well as information licensors.
3. Coordinate existing product support and new product launches internally with Products & Services, Marketing, Market Regulation, Legal, Operations and Technology, and Corporate Communications.



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4. Maintain viability of existing commodity products by monitoring global market trends, identifying areas to improve and pro-actively expand the existing product line, and pursuing necessary product and rule modifications where required.

5. Provide marketing support by supplying data, writing product related materials, and submitting articles for publication.

6. Prepare and deliver presentations on commodity products and derivatives markets.

7. Actively solicit feedback from industry participants through various means including trade calls, surveys, industry events, trade shows and conferences to stay abreast of changing demands and market needs and utilize customer relationship management tools to report feedback to impacted stakeholders in a systematic fashion.

Experience

3 to 8 years in agricultural commodity markets – cash or futures

Problem Solving

1. Identify new commodity product possibilities by monitoring developments in relevant cash and OTC markets and by making contact with others who may provide insight.

2. Develop insightful analysis of market trends, trading strategies, and new business opportunities for the company.

Decision Making

1. Expected to be able to develop new contract specifications with direction from supervisor that are relevant to marketplace and in sync with cash market practices and operationally workable internally.

2. Expected to be able to evaluate and recommend suitable market models for new contracts.

Technical

1. Expected training in economic and statistical analysis necessary to conduct relevant analysis of new and existing commodity cash and futures markets. Programming skills a plus.

2. Expected written and oral communications skills necessary to present results of analysis to senior management and market participants.

3. Multiple language skills are an advantage.

Education

Minimum of a Bachelor's Degree; Master's or MBA highly desired

Interested parties contact Louise Coffelt, LSC Enterprises, Inc. at lscrecruiting@bellsouth.net

Associate/Assistant Professor in Energy Economics

Candidates must be familiar with energy policy and related environmental and climate change debates at the local and global levels. Familiarity with bioenergy issues is also desirable. Candidates should have a PhD in Economics, Resource Economics, Agricultural Economics, or a related field. They may show evidence of scholarly excellence in any subfield of economics and policy research, provided that the research is relevant to public decision-making on sustainable energy. Their primary responsibility will be to develop a world class research program in this field. They will also have undergraduate and graduate level teaching responsibilities.

This position is part of a major commitment to energy research by Rutgers. This commitment is demonstrated by the fact that Rutgers is hiring a cluster of 10 new faculty members focused on energy science and policy, and has made a major commitment of resources to the Rutgers Energy Institute during a period of severe budget constraints. In addition to the Energy Economist in this department the cluster of hires includes one faculty member in public policy and a new Endowed Chair in Business and Geology (see <http://www.rei.rutgers.edu/>)

The research strengths of the Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics include land use economics, the economics of innovation and entrepreneurship, and food management and policy. As a component of the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences, many of our faculty collaborate in multidisciplinary research and teaching with the biological and environmental scientists. Faculty members of the Department also serve on the board of the Rutgers Energy Institute, are leaders in the Food Policy Institute at Rutgers, and helped found the Rutgers Center for Innovation Studies.

Assistant Professor in Horticultural Economics

Location: Mid-Florida Research and Education Center, University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) Apopka, Florida



Salary: Commensurate with Qualifications and Experience

Review Date: To ensure full consideration please apply online and submit additional materials by March 1, 2010. Position will remain open until a viable applicant pool is determined.

This is a 12-month tenure-accruing position that will be 60% research (Florida Agricultural Experiment Station) and 40% extension (Florida Cooperative Extension Service), located at the Mid-Florida Research and Education Center, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, at the University of Florida. This assignment may change in accordance with the needs of the unit. Duties will include conducting research in horticultural economics and developing an extension (outreach) program for clientele in the commercial nursery and landscape industries. The incumbent will be expected to work closely with faculty in the Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology in areas such as the determination of impacts of horticultural practices, including fertilizer and water use, and policies in the urban environment. The successful candidate will secure external funding to support his/her research program, publish in national and international journals, and thus develop a nationally recognized research program. Tenure will accrue in the Food and Resource Economics Department. The faculty member will participate actively in undergraduate and graduate education by chairing and serving on graduate committees, supervising thesis, dissertation and undergraduate research, and publishing research results with students. Faculty are encouraged to participate in professional development activities related to teaching and advising and may teach courses and seminars. The faculty member will engage in Extension activities in his or her program area. All IFAS faculty are expected to demonstrate commitment and responsibility to the three functions of the Land Grant mission.

Please refer to Requisition # 0803686
Bob Stamps
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2725 South Binion Road
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Telephone: (407) 884-2034, extension 164
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Assistant/Associate Professor

The Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics at Michigan State University is seeking an assistant/associate professor to develop an outstanding research and teaching program in international economic development. This is a tenure system position that will normally involve teaching two courses. The successful candidate will be expected to develop a well-funded nationally and internationally recognized research program and journal article publication record in international economic development, with emphasis on the broad changes in food systems and related policies, technologies, and institutions occurring in world and national economies as a result of domestic and international market forces, urbanization, climate change, and other factors. Research experience in developing regions is desirable, especially but not necessarily in Africa. Applications will be accepted until January 31, 2010. See our website <http://aec.msu.edu/facposition.htm> for full position details and the application process.

FARMERS MARKET

The USDA Winter Market is back. Stop by the market to purchase delicious locally grown produce, maple products, meats, fresh made pasta, herbs, homemade soaps, and more. Be sure to take some of these wonderful items home with you and support the folks who make and grow our food. The market is held every Wednesday, from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., until March 31st, in the back of the South Building cafeteria.

The following vendors are at the market:

Calvert Kettle Corn
C&T Produce
Hondo Coffee Company
Ole Pioneer's Kitchen
So Very Special
Union Street Soapworks

The logo for the USDA Economists Group features the text "USDA Economists Group" in a large, bold, green font. Below the text is a horizontal banner with a light blue background, containing various icons related to economics and agriculture, such as a dollar bill, a gold coin, a piggy bank, and a scale of justice.

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YOUR USDA ECONOMISTS GROUP TEAM

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FEEDBACK?

Do it here!
<http://myblog.usdaeconomists.org>

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**PLEASE REMIT THIS FORM AND \$15 ANNUAL DUES
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**STEVE NEFF, TREASURER
USDA ECONOMISTS GROUP
USDA FSA
ROOM 3756 SOUTH BUILDING, MAIL STOP 0515
1400 INDEPENDENCE AVENUE SW
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250-0515**

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