

Purdue University  
**AGRICULTURAL  
ECONOMICS**



**KEEPING  
TRACK**



**PURDUE  
UNIVERSITY®**

College of Agriculture

WELCOME TO

# KEEPING TRACK



After a decade of strong and impactful leadership under Mitch Daniels, we are excited about working with our new incoming president, Mung Chiang, who currently serves as Dean of the College of Engineering. We've been fortunate to have outstanding leaders both at the University and College level, several of whom are on loan from the Agricultural Economics Department. The one constant is change, but I have little doubt we will continue our focus on student affordability, entrepreneurship and innovation, and impactful engagement and partnerships.

In the pages that follow, you'll read of the stories of the many accomplishments of faculty, staff, and students in the department over the past year. Here, I want to focus on some of the facts and figures.

As a department, we continue to establish ourselves as the leading agricultural economics department in the country. The number of peer-reviewed journal articles per faculty has increased by 50% in the past three years, and the amount of external funding per faculty has increased 80% over the same period. Our department is the #3 academic department in the world in terms of number of articles published in the American Journal of Agricultural Economics from 2017-2021, and we are tied as #1 for the academic department with the most publications in the Agricultural Economics & Policy Category in Web of Science from 2017-2021.

We continue to attract students from across Indiana and the country. Applications to our undergraduate programs in the Department increased 26% last year, and we had an uptick in number of Department majors in 2021 as well.

We have the largest enrollment ever in our online executive MS-MBA program (67 students). We have 57 in-residence MS and PhD students, and we are on path to increase to about 70 in Fall 2022. We completed all the approvals to move our Professional Masters in International Agriculture online starting in the Spring 2023, and we are looking forward to attracting new students through this program.

In 2021, Department faculty and staff were associated with 274 unique extension workshops or learning events yielding 53,407 direct contacts. The Center for Food and Agribusiness conducted their every-four-year Large Commercial Producer (LCP) survey, unveiled at the National Conference on Agribusiness. A new outreach publication, Consumer Corner report was launched, and we hosted numerous presentations on carbon markets. Legacy programs, such as Top Farmer, Farm Management Tour, and Ag Economy Barometer continue to attract high attention.

It's been an honor and privilege to serve as the Head of the Agricultural Economics Department for the past five years. It has been an exciting time of change, growth and development. As you will see in the stories that follow, it is a great time to be an Agricultural Economist at Purdue!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jayson Lusk". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Jayson Lusk**  
*Department Head and Distinguished  
Professor of Agricultural Economics*

◀ **From the Cover:** Grain Bins located at Tip Top Farms, owned by Purdue AgEcon alums, **Eric** and **Bruce Brown**.

# AGEC BY THE NUMBERS

THE DEPARTMENT WELCOMES

**2** NEW  
FACULTY  
MEMBERS  
+ **1** NEW LECTURER

**67** ENROLLED -  
THE LARGEST  
IN MS - MBA HISTORY

FALL 2021

**100** % ONLINE

PURDUE MASTERS IN INTERNATIONAL  
AGRIBUSINESS - LAUNCHES FULLY ONLINE  
OPTION FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

**2** FUTURE  
ENDOWED  
CHAIRS  
BOEHLJE (M.S., 1968; PH.D., 1971)  
AND MIERS (B.S., 1970)

CONGRATS

## EDITORIAL TEAM

Produced by the Departments of  
Agricultural Communication and  
Agricultural Economics

**Editors:** Kami Goodwin and Nyssa Lilovich

**Writers:** Nancy Alexander, Jillian Ellison,  
Kami Goodwin, Stacey Mickelbart, and  
Torrie Sheridan

**Designer:** Krystle Goldsberry

**Photographers:** Tom Campbell, Jon Garcia,  
Kami Goodwin, and Rebecca McElhoe

## UNDERGRADUATE NEWS

► **102**  
GRADUATES

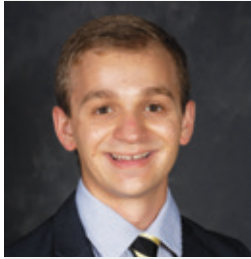
- **99%** EMPLOYED OR  
CONTINUING EDUCATION
- **\$51,277** BEGINNING  
AVERAGE SALARY

MAY 2021

SUPPORT  
AGECON  
TODAY!



# OUTSTANDING STUDENTS



## COLE PEARSON • SENIOR

**2021-22 David and Stacey Hefty Agricultural Economics Outstanding Senior**

**Hometown:** Delphi, Indiana

**Major:** Agribusiness Management, Collaborative Leadership Certificate

- ▶ Barbara Cook Chapter of Mortar Board, 2021-22
- ▶ Ag Ambassador, College of Agriculture
- ▶ Study abroad in Uzbekistan and Peru
- ▶ Purdue Foundation Student Board
- ▶ AFA Leader Fellowship Program
- ▶ College of Agriculture Purdue Student Government Senator
- ▶ Mark Donahue Award for Leadership, Purdue Cooperative Council



## HALEE FISHER • JUNIOR

**2021-22 Outstanding Junior**

**Hometown:** Millersburg, Indiana

**Major:** Agricultural Economics (Quantitative Analysis) and Political Science (International Relations), minors in Psychology and Global Food and Agricultural Systems

- ▶ College of Agriculture Outstanding Junior, 2022
- ▶ College of Ag Ambassador
- ▶ Agricultural Student Council member
- ▶ CATE Washington D.C. Public Policy Program
- ▶ Issues 360 Fellow Program
- ▶ AAEA Quiz Bowl team member
- ▶ Purdue Rising Professional's President



## ABBY MEIER • SOPHOMORE

**2021-22 Outstanding Sophomore**

**Hometown:** Elizabethtown, Indiana

**Major:** Agribusiness Marketing, Political Science

- ▶ CATE Washington D.C. Public Policy Program
- ▶ Agricultural Council officer, Secretary
- ▶ Ag Week Task Force
- ▶ Agribusiness club member
- ▶ Rising Professional host
- ▶ College of Agriculture representative, Ag Voices of the Future conference



## SYDNEY HEFTY • FRESHMAN

**2021-22 Outstanding Freshman**

**Hometown:** Auburn, Indiana

**Major:** Agricultural Economics, Agricultural Law and Policy, minor in Political Science

- ▶ College of Agriculture Outstanding Freshman, 2022
- ▶ Purdue Cooperative House Outstanding New Member, 2021
- ▶ Twin Pines Cooperative Alumni Chair and Parliamentarian
- ▶ Purdue Grand Prix Foundation, Junior Board
- ▶ Air Seeding Product Sales and Marketing Internship, John Deere

# COMMENCEMENT STUDENT RESPONDERS

## SENIORS CHOSEN TO REPRESENT THE PURDUE STUDENT BODY AT 2021-2022 COMMENCEMENT

For both the winter 2021 and spring 2022 commencement ceremonies, a Department of Agricultural Economics graduating senior was chosen as the student responder.

The December 2021 Division I Student Responder, **Austin Berenda**, discussed his journey as a non-traditional student and provided an uplifting message about the importance of hard work and perseverance when faced with challenges.



**EE** As a boilermaker for life, it represents a proof of community, a sense of unity, and a symbol of family we will have with us no matter where we go. This world has a lot of problems that need solving and the Purdue degrees that we earn today signify that we are more than able to be the ones to solve those problems."

— *Austin Berenda, B.S. Agricultural Economics,*  
DECEMBER 2021 DIVISION I RESPONDER

**Grace Hasler** was the May 2022 Division I Student Responder. In her message "one brick higher," Grace recounts the major events that took place over her 4 years at Purdue which included the Purdue football team's win over #2 ranked Ohio State and the tragic loss of beloved Purdue student and football fan, Tyler Trent. It was through that lens that she asked the audience to "look ahead, anticipate and overcome future challenges and pursue their purpose."

**EE** Our time at Purdue isn't defined by the details of our story - it was where we learned how to think. We learned to have grit, to network and develop, while taking care of ourselves and our community. We will be the innovators, the World Food Prize winners, the engineering entrepreneurs, and the parents of future Boilermakers. Purdue has given us the tools and the network to pursue our purpose outside of this great university. Together, we will confidently join fellow Boilermakers to reach one brick higher!"

— *Grace Hasler, B.S. Agricultural Sales & Marketing,*  
*Agricultural Communications,*  
MAY 2022 DIVISION I RESPONDER



# BREAKING

FUNDRAISING & BEYOND

# RECORDS



MEMBERS OF THE GRAND PRIX RACE'S SENIOR BOARD SHARE WHY THE ORGANIZATION IS ABOUT MORE THAN JUST RACE DAY. ENTIRELY STUDENT-LED, THIS GROUP RISES TO AMBITIOUS FUNDRAISING GOALS, LEADS BY EXAMPLE AND UNITES THE COMMUNITY BEYOND MOTORSPORT.

*Written by: Kami Goodwin,  
Senior Communication and Marketing Specialist,  
Department of Agricultural Economics*

**Makinzie France** (Agricultural Economics; Macy, IN) is Co-Director of Sales on the Purdue Grand Prix executive team which puts her, along with her co-director, in charge of developing community partnerships to raise funds. This year their ambitious goal was to raise \$65,000 for the 65th Purdue Grand Prix Foundation (PGPF). The team met their goal weeks before the race.

"This year marks the 65th running of the race, so we wanted to raise \$65K," said Makinzie. "It was getting close, but a donor came in with \$15,000 at the last minute to bring us to our goal. It is the most we've ever raised as an organization. Those funds support all the activities of the organization including scholarships for students, which is one of the main reasons I joined the team."



**At Grand Prix, it's more than just a race day," said Makinzie. "For me, it's about the scholarship program that allows students to be impacted by the race, the queen program that gives confidence, life skills and a community to women at Purdue, the board members who work relentlessly to put on one of the biggest student-led events in the college, and the long-standing tradition of Purdue Grand Prix."**

— *Makinzie France, Agricultural Economics student*

Both **Kaleb Rulon** (ASM/AGEC; Arcadia, IN) and **Austin Conrad** (ASM/AGEC; Alexandria, IN) could not agree more with Makinzie. They are also members of the Grand Prix senior board and part of a trio that co-directs the race. "These positions put us in charge of the rules, regulations, and really anything that has to do with racing and karts," said Kaleb.

"I see Grand Prix as a community," said Kaleb. "Everyone involved in the race, teams and PGPF members, are united under a common interest and passion for engineering, speed, and motorsports. But outside of the race it is so awesome to hear how people without those passions and interests still feel like they are a part of the Grand Prix tradition and experience. It is more than a race because of the way that it brings everyone together, regardless of degree programs or interests and can unite people through its many branches like scholarship, philanthropy, motorsports, and Purdue tradition."

"The fact that our directors of sales were able to raise \$65k this year was a huge deal," said Kaleb. "The funding allows the race directors to expand and improve things pertaining to the race outside of what we normally would be able to. An example of this is our new membership into SFI, a safety standard foundation that is able to review our rules and provide certifications to our officials to make the race safer and more homogenized for future years."

"Our motto at Purdue Grand Prix is students helping students," said Austin. "To me, this demonstrates what grand prix really is. We raise money to give back to students through scholarships and host many other events to get people of all interests and specialties involved with the race. Using opportunities like the queen

program, scholarships, and many other philanthropic programs help us to reach students outside of the immediate race while hosting the greatest spectacle in college racing."

**Ashley Porter** (Agribusiness; Livermore, CA) is the Vice President of the Grand Prix Senior Board which puts her in charge of the organizations, budget, contracts, and possible grants, but her main goal is to improve upon the scholarship program.

"Students helping students is one of the many reasons I have a strong passion to serve on the Grand Prix Senior Board," said Ashley. "The foundation provides all students, including myself, with many different opportunities where anyone can find their place. We were excited when the sales team met their goal of \$65k for the 65th year and were able to use those funds to support the Race 65 operations as well as set the foundation up for success in Race 66. The amazing job by the sales team and foundation members means we will be able to provide even more to student scholarships in the coming year."



The 2022 Grand Prix Senior Board includes five agricultural economics students. Pictured (*top, left to right*): Kaleb Rulon, Austin Conrad, Makinzie France, Ashley Porter, and (*not pictured*) Noah Berning.

# TACKLING GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES

FACING AGRICULTURE IN GLASSNET CONFERENCE



Global change drivers, including population, income growth and trade, underpin many of the local sustainability stresses observed in the present day. Yet the way in which these stresses evidence themselves varies by locality, and depends on local soils, water, community governance and other factors. Furthermore, local responses can feed back to regional and global levels.

In April 2022, fifty scientists and policy makers gathered at the Purdue University *Managing the Global Commons: Sustainable Agriculture and the use of the World's Land and Water Resources* conference to discuss potential solutions to the global sustainability challenges facing agriculture in the 21st century.

The conference was hosted by the GLASSNET project, based in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Purdue University, and sponsored by the Provost's Committee on Reputational Stewardship and USDA-NIFA.

"This event was three years in the making," said Thomas Hertel, distinguished professor and Global to Local Analysis of Systems Sustainability project lead, in reference to the multiple conference delays due to the pandemic. "It was wonderful to bring together some of the best minds from across the US, as well as Asia and Latin America, to brainstorm solutions to the sustainability challenges facing the world today."

GLASSNET places particular emphasis on the development of early career researchers capable of spanning disciplines and continents to lead the next generation of research project in this field, while also bridging the science-policy interface. Pictured above: Ankita Raturi (center). Left to right, Melba Crawford, Jackie Boerman, John Evans and Vipin Kumar.

Each theme was comprised into a panel, featuring four invited speakers along with four discussants. The findings from each panel will be published in a special issue of *Environmental Research Letters*.

In addition to these six panels, there were three presentations on the global-local-global theme, inspired by the new GLASSNET project. This five-year, NSF-funded project is designed to forge a network of networks bringing together a variety of different disciplines represented by ten global research networks (including the GTAP network, based in the Department of Agricultural Economics) to identify solutions to global sustainability challenges threatening the world's land and water resources.



Scientist and policy makers meet for the *Managing the Global Commons: Sustainable Agriculture and the use of the World's Land and Water Resources* conference held at the Purdue University Memorial Union.

The GLASSNET community of scholars participating in the conference seek to understand and quantify global-local-global interactions in the context of six different themes: climate change, water resources, digital agriculture, biodiversity, governance and cyberinfrastructure.





# INSIGHTS INTO DECISION-MAKING

## THE STUDY OF PREFERENCES FROM LARGE-SCALE COMMERCIAL PRODUCERS



*Written by: Torrie Sheridan, Marketing Manager, Center for Food and Agricultural Business*

With 36 years of experience, the Purdue University Center for Food and Agricultural Business has watched history unfold over time, it has listened and it has continued to bring the most impactful continuing education offerings to the industry since 1986 through professional development workshops, applied industry research and advanced degree programs.

In 2021, the center conducted its seventh iteration of the Large Commercial Producer (LCP) survey, its largest, longest-standing research project taking place every four years. The survey provides a national scope across crop and livestock operations, exploring the fundamental attitudes of commercial producers and how they affect buying decisions. Each iteration of the survey focuses on producer strategies, buying preferences, information and salesperson preferences. In 2021, the survey newly placed a large focus on e-commerce, data/tech adoption and sustainability — three increasingly popular and important topics of interest in today's industry.

"The 2021 the LCP survey was the largest version of the survey ever done," said Brady Brewer, associate director for research in the center and associate professor in the AgEcon department. "Over 1,700 U.S. farmers representing 43 states responded to the survey, allowing the center to bring agribusiness professionals the opinions, preferences and results that matter most to them. Additionally, we had a record number of survey responses from agricultural retailers, giving us a better understanding of how farmers view and interact with agribusinesses."



**While issues such as those at the core of the LCP survey will always be important to farmers and agribusinesses, the center prides itself in pairing these key topics with current issues the industry faces in order to shed light on the agricultural supply chain and aid agribusinesses in better serving their customers!"**

*— Dr. Scott Downey,  
Director of the Center and AgEcon professor*

More than three and a half decades ago, the center was born with a mission to provide food and agribusiness professionals innovative and relevant solutions and strategies to navigate the complex dynamic of the agri-food system. The LCP survey has served as an instrumental resource and will continue to expand its touch for years to come.

View the [Large Commercial Producer Survey Themes report](#), which provides a summary of key findings and insights of the 2021 research.

TRACKING THE

# DRIVERS OF DEMAND



AS A PUBLIC RESOURCE, THE CENTER FOR FOOD DEMAND CREATES, INTERPRETS AND COMMUNICATES DATA ABOUT CONSUMER PREFERENCES AND FOOD MARKETS

*Written by: Stacey Mickelbart*

Launched in 2021, the [Center for Food Demand Analysis and Sustainability \(CFDAS\)](#) at Purdue tracks consumer insights and the economics of the food system. As a public resource on the drivers of consumer demand, it will help guide farmers, businesses and policymakers in their decision-making and inform research into nutrition and sustainability.

In February 2022, CFDAS introduced the first of its Consumer Food Insights reports, identifying trends and changes in consumer food purchases and preferences. Each month, CFDAS surveys 1,200 households from across the U.S., measuring food security and spending, consumer satisfaction and values, support of agricultural and food policies, and trust in information sources.

Along with the report, Lusk shares video summaries of key findings and trends on YouTube. A Consumer Food Insights survey dashboard provides access to data on a number of shopping and eating habits, which can be filtered for specific time frames, as well as by region, education or income level, age, race and sex.

“We are taking a pulse of consumers to help guide farmers and retailers along the food supply chain as we all adapt to changing circumstances,” said Jayson Lusk, head and distinguished professor of agricultural economics, who leads the center. “Consumers significantly influence the direction of food and agricultural systems, and we need a timely way to track trends in what people are buying and eating, and how this is affected by events like inflation, climate change and COVID-19.”

The CFDAS website also shares a number of other dashboards, including average U.S. food prices and changes in those prices over time, as well as indexes

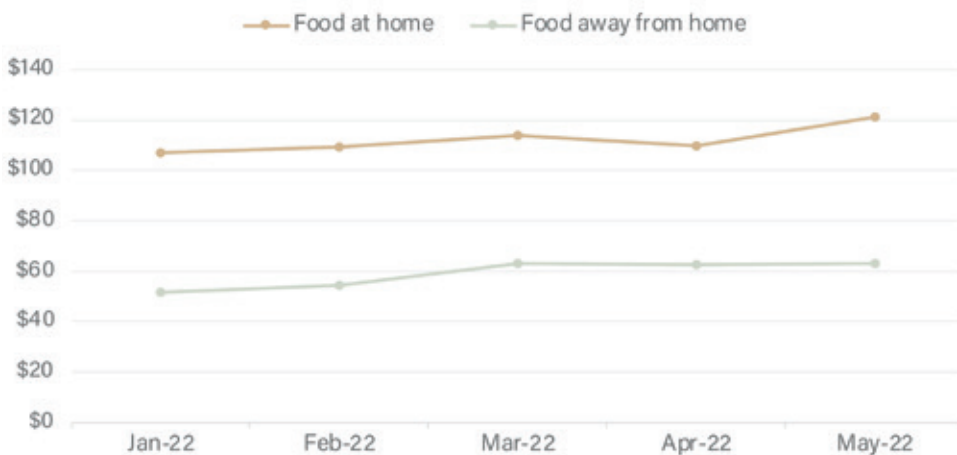
monitoring supply and production in segments of the U.S. food system. Data include food and ag workers with COVID-19, the value of food production and food service industries by state, and vulnerabilities in the national food system based on the potential shortages of upstream inputs in the production chain.

CFDAS is part of Plant Sciences 2.0, one of Purdue’s Next Moves — distinct strategic initiatives designed to advance the University’s competitive advantage in its continuing quest for leadership among the world’s top research and teaching institutions.

Next moves for CFDAS include forming an industry consortium. Members can add questions to the consumer insights survey and access information on market size and trends. Survey data can also help industry partners tailor products for consumer needs or identify new market opportunities.

## FOOD EXPENDITURES

Weekly Household Food Expenditures, January - May 2022



Source: Center for Food Demand Analysis and Sustainability, Purdue College of Agriculture

**FOOD SPENDING**  
**\$184** /WEEK

May 2022 Issue of Consumer Food Insights

**FOOD INSECURITY**  
**16%**

May 2022 Issue of Consumer Food Insights

For more information, please visit: [ag.purdue.edu/cfdas](http://ag.purdue.edu/cfdas)

# FOSTERING INNOVATION

IN THE AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY



Written by: Kami Goodwin

In agriculture, the journey from farm to fork is often inefficient, fragmented, wasteful, and exposed to environmental and safety issues. Born with that mission at heart, the *Digital Innovation in Agri-food Systems Lab (DIAL)* set out to impact the agri-food industry by launching innovative startup companies that make a marked difference in our lives and lifestyles.

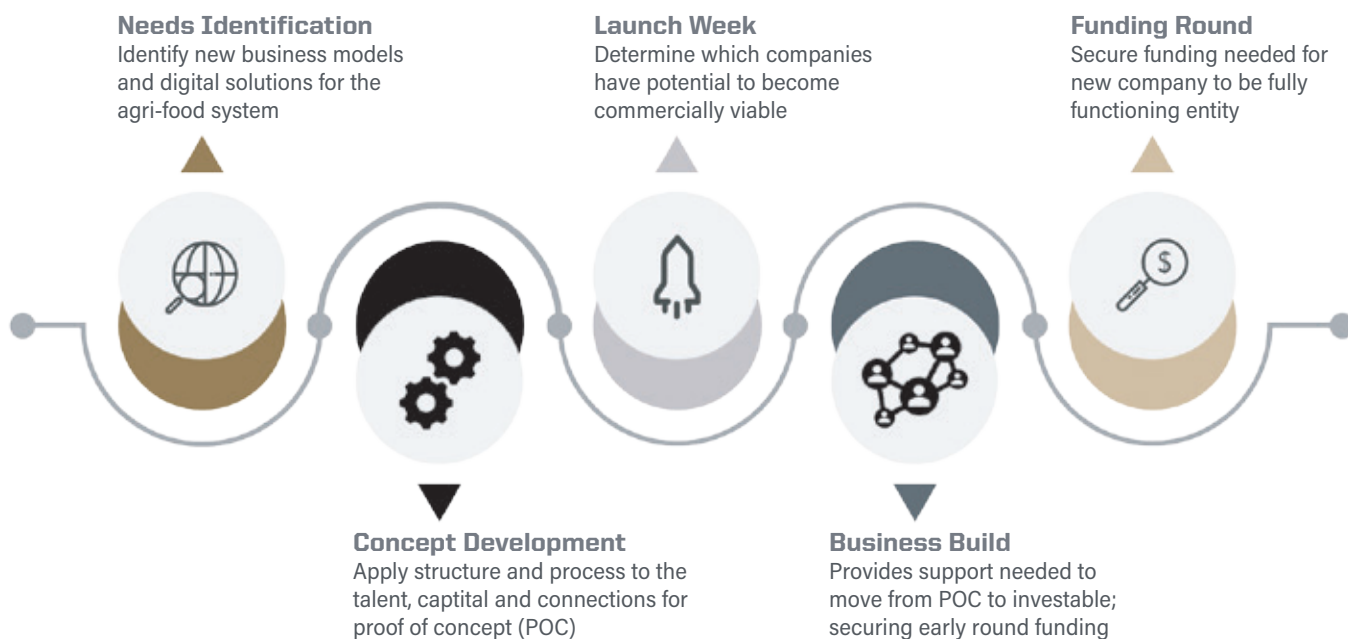
"Agriculture and food systems are behind the digital evolution seen in other industries," says Allan Gray, Executive Director of the Digital Innovation in Agri-food Systems Lab (DIAL), AgEcon professor, and Land O'Lakes Chair in Food and Agribusiness. "DIAL is serving as a catalyst for advancing the agri-food system through the development of a unique venture studio platform."

DIAL's Venture Studio, located at Purdue, drives startup development from ideation to company exit, including business resource support, seed funding, and access to customers and markets.

The entire process is driven by the center's entrepreneurship-minded fellows who identify and define strategic opportunity areas, develop and prioritize ideas, create pitch decks and product mock ups, and use stakeholder feedback to ultimately develop a business plan and launch their new company. This concept phase takes approximately 6-months. The companies then move to a 12-month business build phase as they drive toward first product sales.

## The DIAL Venture Studio Process

When creating a new company, there is inherent risk in each step. The DIAL Venture Studio process is designed to reduce risk during all phases of company development.



◀ The DIAL Executive team, pictured (left to right): Ben Van Nostran, Lourival Monaco, Dave Corcoran, Allan Gray, Erica Cottrell, and Tim Dixon.



## Fellows as Founders

Throughout the process, DIAL's fellows learn from each other, industry leaders, and key educators in a hybrid remote and residency-based executive education and studio experience. Fellows then graduate to founders as they transition to the business build phase.



*Pictured (left to right): DIAL's first cohort of fellows, Travis Douce, Shane Steinl, and Craig Zamary.*

**EE** I was able to apply past management experience and combine that with new learning in DIAL's studio innovation process to develop our first minimum viable product and garner sales with leading industry partners."

—Travis Douce, DIAL fellow

## The DIAL Executive Team

The fellows interact with DIAL's executive team throughout the process. Led by Allan Gray, the DIAL executive team designs and teaches specialized courses in the fellows education program. They also provide insight and feedback as the entrepreneurs move through the development process.

The DIAL fellows also build robust connections with industry experts and are connected to investors, foundation program offices, policy specialists, and other entrepreneurs to help grow and inform their businesses. To further reduce risk, they engage with industry to identify critical needs and challenges, then work closely with Purdue faculty, staff, and students to discover potential ways to address those challenges.

"Purdue has more than 150 years of leadership in the agriculture industry," says Gray. "The deep corporate relationships we've built allow startup companies access to key industry needs and impact areas. Industry partners can also help in vetting ideas during the concept validation and field trial phases. Select corporate partners will then continue their support through pre-seed funding, being the first customers of the product, and potentially becoming long-term partners if the startup decides to enact an exit."

## 4 Year Goals

**TALENT**  
**40+**  
FELLOWS GRADUATED FROM DIAL

**PARTNERSHIP**  
**6**  
ENGAGEMENT EVENTS PER YEAR

**INNOVATION**  
**12**  
COMPANIES CREATED

**FINANCIAL RETURN**  
**3x**  
MONEY OVER INVESTED CAPITAL

## A Purdue Next Moves Initiative

DIAL is the second center in the Department of Agricultural Economics created under the Purdue Next Moves Initiative. The \$11 million total investment created several cross disciplinary centers across the College of Agriculture. DIAL's focus is on finding connections across in fragmented agricultural ecosystems to deliver digital innovation and new businesses that meet specific industry needs, and in turn, provides consumers with access to healthy, affordable, sustainable, and transparent food.

► For more information about DIAL and the fellow program, visit [dialventures.com](http://dialventures.com).



FROM SMALL-TOWN TEXAS TO

# CONSULTANT, MENTOR AND ADVISOR



Written by: Torrie Sheridan

Raised in a small town in West Texas, obtaining a graduate degree was not a thought that often crossed **Courtney Hodges'** mind. It wasn't until she attended Texas A&M studying agribusiness and agricultural economics and working for Danny Klinefelter, founder of The Executive Program for Agricultural Producers (TEPAP) and the Association of Agricultural Production Executives (AAPEX), that she had the opportunity to listen into several presentations given by Allan Gray and Mike Boehlje at association conferences. First learning about the MS-MBA in Food and Agribusiness Management Program from Gray in January 2010, Hodges realized her future plan was about to change, little did she know just how much.

A short six years later, Hodges entered into the 2016 MS-MBA cohort to receive her dual degree of a Master of Science in Agricultural Economics from Purdue University and a Master of Business Administration from Indiana University's Kelley School of Business. Hodges said the program equipped her with analytical tools and helped her expand her thinking and approaches to navigating complex issues in the workplace in several ways, directly playing a part in her career advancement.

Post-graduation in 2018, Hodges was promoted in her role at the ECOM Group to the newly created position

of Operational Review Manager. In 2021, she took a hard look at what she deeply valued and envisioned for her life, electing to take a self-imposed sabbatical to spend more time with family, travel and gain clarity on her next career move. During a month-long adventure in the Cusco region of Peru, that next move came to light. With the nine years of excellent learning experience from ECOM and a dual degree under her belt, Hodges' decision to start her own consulting firm, C. Hodges Consulting, LLC, was clear.

**Building a consulting business is one of the most rewarding, challenging and vulnerable things I've faced. I know it was the right decision, and I am excited to see what the future holds."**

— Courtney Hodges, MS-MBA in Food and Agribusiness Management alumna, 2018

"I chose to form a consulting practice because over the course of my life, I've witnessed many attempts at building new businesses (many of them unsuccessful). I love seeing good people succeed in work and life. Supporting innovative, forward-thinking founders in recognizing and achieving their visions for their businesses is the ultimate purpose for the work I do."

While leaving the comforts of a well-understood work situation required a leap of faith, Hodges says the MS-MBA played an instrumental role in her decision and career choice. She uses strategic decision-making practices learned in the program to directly contribute to her business, which is based on a framework she's developing to support new ventures (particularly agricultural, beverage, and food companies) in establishing solid foundations of growth.

"Building a consulting business is one of the most rewarding, challenging and vulnerable things I have faced. I know it was the right decision, and I am excited to see what the future holds. There are many exciting developments in the agricultural/beverage/food space, and I am thankful for the opportunity to work with people contributing to these shifts."

According to Hodges, it was the top-notch MS-MBA faculty and staff and getting to know her fellow students, their perspectives and the unique experiences they brought to the classroom and beyond that played a key role in furthering her career to new heights.

For more information about this program, please visit: [agribusiness.purdue.edu/ms-mba](http://agribusiness.purdue.edu/ms-mba)

# NEW FACULTY & STAFF



**DIEGO CARDOSO** • ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Diego Cardoso joined the department as an assistant professor after earning his PhD from Cornell University and completing a post-doc with the University of Geneva. Cardoso's research focuses on the design and analysis of environmental policies, especially those related to climate change and water resources. He is also interested in the intersection of applied welfare analysis and risk modeling for environmental issues and human health. His research to date has studied the design of carbon taxes, the affordability of water services, and the impact of climate change in hydropower planning.



**VALERIE KILDERS** • ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Valerie Kilders joined the department as an assistant professor in August 2022. Her research focuses on food marketing and agribusiness related issues and includes evaluations of consumer preferences and demand for specialty crops, novel food products and new food technologies. Prior to joining Purdue, she completed her PhD in Agricultural Economics at Michigan State University, a double degree master's in Agricultural Economics and Rural Development from the University of Arkansas in conjunction with five different European institutions, and a B.Sc. in Agricultural Sciences at Humboldt University in Berlin.



**LEEANN MOSS** • LECTURER

LeeAnn Moss joined the department in August 2022 as a lecturer and will be teaching a variety of undergraduate courses. Prior to joining Purdue, she had her own agribusiness consulting company and served as a lecturer in the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. LeeAnn holds a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from the University of Illinois and a B.Sc. from the University of Guelph in Animal and Poultry Science.

## NOW AVAILABLE 100% ONLINE: PROFESSIONAL MS IN INTERNATIONAL AGRIBUSINESS

The Department of Agricultural Economics is now offering a [Professional Master of Science in International Agribusiness program](#) in two different modes of delivery, either in-residence or fully online.

The non-thesis degree program is for individuals looking to obtain a high-profile marketing and management position in the agribusiness sector.

The fully online option also includes two certificate options that are built directly into the program. Students can choose between an Online Graduate Certificate in Biotechnology Quality and Regulatory Compliance or Spatial Data Science.

Students in the program are motivated to establish their career in international agribusiness. Many are multilingual and have international exposure. Students are trained with the same rigorous core requirements as the Agricultural Economics Department's existing and reputable master's degree programs.

Graduates from the program find fulfilling careers working with international clientele in the dynamic and rapidly growing international Food and Agribusiness Industry.

More information visit, [purdue.ag/pmia](http://purdue.ag/pmia).



**MANAGING RISK & RESEARCH WITH A**

**\$2.5 MILLION INVESTMENT**

*Written by: Kami Goodwin*

**Mindy Mallory** is an associate professor in Purdue's Department of Agricultural Economics and the Clearing Corporation Charitable Foundation Endowed Chair of Food and Agricultural Marketing. The relatively new endowed chair was created in 2018 when the Clearing Corporation Charitable Foundation donated \$1.5 million to create endowments to fund both the chair and a student support fund. The \$1 million gift for the chair was matched through the College of Agriculture Endowed Chair Challenge Matching Gift Program to create a \$2 million endowment, while the remaining \$500,000 created the student fund.

"The guiding principle of the Clearing Corporation Chair is to support research, education, and extension efforts in the area of agricultural commodity markets, risk management, and food and agricultural systems," said Mallory.

"The ability to manage risk is among the most important jobs for both commodity producers and end users. My research program focuses on understanding factors that contribute to a variety of risks, whether they be price risk resulting from market fundamentals or market structure to systemic risks that arise from macroeconomic factors, geopolitical risks, or climate change. This mission drives my research program to look for policy and/or market structures that help market participants mitigate these risks to the degree possible."

Currently professor Mallory is examining how volatility spillovers between Brazil and U.S. soybeans and corn markets have evolved over time. Hypothesizing that the rise of the corn after soy cropping system, along with the increasing importance of the Brazilian crop, has led to volatility spilling over from Brazilian markets to U.S. markets.

In future research, Mallory mentions that there has not been enough attention on hedging and marketing decisions as they interact with crop insurance choices. Her next research project will explore different hedging strategies and explore their effectiveness when coupled with different crop insurance choices.

The Clearing Corporation Charitable Foundation also set up a student support fund to increase the number of transformational educational experiences available to agricultural economics students. The fund supports student participation in

academic competitions, research, and conferences. It also facilitates the creation of unique learning environments like the Boilermaker Markets Club, that professor Mallory initiated last year.

"We're just getting the Boilermaker Markets Club off the ground," said Mallory. "So far, we have brought in outside speakers and competed in trading competitions. Some students are also preparing for the Series 3 - National Commodities Futures Examination which will open the door for them to become a commodities and futures professional. With the student support fund, we were able to support some of the club's activities and buy supporting materials for students taking the Series 3 exam."



**The ability to manage risk is among the most important jobs for both commodity producers and end users. My research program focuses on understanding factors that contribute to a variety of risks, whether they be price risk resulting from market fundamentals or market structure to systemic risks that arise from macroeconomic factors, geopolitical risks, or climate change. This mission drives my research program to look for policy and/or market structures that help market participants mitigate these risks to the degree possible."**

— *Mindy Mallory, associate professor and Clearing Corporation Charitable Foundation Endowed Chair of Food and Ag Marketing*



# AWARDS

## **MALISSA ALLEN**

Departmental Service Award

## **BRADY BREWER**

PUCESA Early Career Award

## **AMY COCHRAN**

Outstanding Service to Students Award,  
College of Agriculture

## **SCOTT DOWNEY**

Innovation and Entrepreneurship  
Ambassador, College of Agriculture

## **RYAN GOOD**

Departmental Service Award

## **KAJAL GULATI**

2021 Showalter Early Career Award

## **THOMAS HERTEL**

Honorary Lifetime Member  
(2018-2021 triennium) International  
Association of Agricultural Economists;  
Alexander von Humboldt Research Prize,  
2022

## **TODD KUETHE**

2021 Outstanding Research Award, AFM

## **MICHAEL LANGEMEIER**

PUCESA Career Award

## **JAYSON LUSK**

2022 Publication of Enduring  
Quality, AAEA;  
2022 Choices Magazine Outstanding  
Article Award

## **MINDY MALLORY**

2021 Best Article in Agricultural  
Economics, IAAE

## **MARIA MARSHALL**

named Jim and Lois Ackerman  
Professor in Agricultural Economics;  
Innovation and Entrepreneurship  
Ambassador, College of Agriculture

## **FARZAD TAHERIPOUR**

Engineering, and Medicine's Board on  
Environmental Studies & Toxicology,  
National Academies of Sciences

## **NICOLE OLYNK WIDMAR**

Purdue University Faculty Scholar;  
Outstanding Graduate Mentor and  
Teacher, College of Agriculture

## **DOMINIQUE VAN DER MENSBRUGGHE**

EPA's Science Advisory Board

# PROMOTIONS

**MICHAEL DELGADO**, *Professor*

**JAKE RICKER-GILBERT**, *Professor*

**JUAN SESMERO**, *Professor*

**FARZAD TAHERIPOUR**, *Clinical Full Professor*

**URIS BALDOS**, *Research Associate Professor*

**BRADY BREWER**, *Associate Professor*

**BHAGYASHREE KATARE**, *Associate Professor*

**CARSON REELING**, *Associate Professor*

**NATHAN THOMPSON**, *Associate Professor*

**ARIANA TORRES**, *Associate Professor*

# CHANGING THE WAY WE PURCHASE AND VALUE

STUDYING THE FOOD IMPACTS OF COVID



Written by: Kami Goodwin



**Brenna Ellison** (left), associate professor of agricultural economics, is researching changes to consumers' food purchasing

behaviors as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We wanted to understand how the pandemic altered consumers' shopping behaviors and food values," said Ellison. In the early weeks of the pandemic, shelter-in-place orders meant many people were no longer going out to restaurants. While many individuals resorted to restaurant carry-out, others took to the grocery stores, stocking up on items and preparing meals at home. During this same time, consumers' use of online grocery shopping also increased (Ellison, et al, 2021).

"Online grocery shopping has grown in popularity and could reshape access and food choice. In particular, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) expanded access to online shopping options for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit recipients during the pandemic to provide greater flexibility in shopping."

While online grocery shopping has increased, it does not appear to be at the expense of in-person shopping. During the pandemic, Ellison's research found that 33% of consumers reported that they shopped online for groceries in the last two weeks and 91% reported shopping for groceries in person (Ellison and Ocepek, 2021). This suggests there is a growing class of hybrid shoppers who blend online and in-person shopping.

Ellison has also examined the pandemic's impact on how consumers

value different food attributes, such as taste, price, appearance, etc., when making a purchase decision (Ellison et al., 2021; Ellison and Ocepek, 2021).

"Taste is a driving factor of food purchases, which is in line with previous studies. While there have been some small shifts in the importance of other attributes throughout the pandemic, the top four values are taste, safety, price, and nutrition. So, while the COVID-19 pandemic has upended how consumers acquire food; their underlying food values remain relatively stable."

More in: Ellison, B. D., McFadden, B., Rickard, B. J., & Wilson, N. L. 2021. Examining Food Purchase Behavior and Food Values During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*. 43(1): 58-72. Ellison, B.D., & Ocepek, M. 2021. "Have Consumers' Food Values Changed During the Covid-19 Pandemic?!" *farmdoc daily* (11):10

## Top Cited 2021 Faculty Publications

1 Lai, J., & Widmar, N. J. O. 2021. Revisiting the Digital Divide in the COVID-19 Era. *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 43(1): 458-464

2 Chenarides, L., Grebitus, C., Lusk, J. L., & Printezis, I. 2021. Food Consumption Behavior During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Agribusiness: An International Journal*, 37(1): 44-81

3 Ellison, B. D., McFadden, B., Rickard, B. J., & Wilson, N. L. 2021. Examining Food Purchase Behavior and Food Values During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 43(1): 58-72



# SUPPRESSING RUNAWAY MEAT PRICES WITH PRODUCTION SUBSIDIES AND SUBSTITUTES



Written by: Kami Goodwin

When African Swine Fever broke out in China in 2018, it caused a substantial loss to China’s hog industry. Pork is the dominant meat in the Chinese diet and its price is a critical component of China’s Consumer Price Index. Over the next year, the country saw large increases in the pork price as a result of the sharp reduction in pork supply. In an effort to suppress pork prices, restore hog inventory, and boost pork production, large amounts of subsidies were provided by the government to build large-scale hog farms.

students Yizhou Hua, Fei Qin, and Jing Yang (Zhejiang University) examined the phenomenon and argue that only subsidizing the impacted hog industry may not be the most efficient way to achieve short-run reductions in the price. Instead, they suggest allocating some of those subsidies to the producers of a major substitute, in this instance chicken, as a more efficient and effective way.

pressure off the impacted market and lower pork prices.”

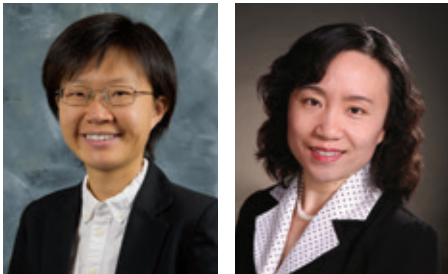
The study also found that spreading funds across industries and not building too many new farms in one industry, would decrease the risk of pushing prices too low in later years and leave farmers less likely to experience losses in the longer horizon due to oversupply.

“We examined prices for the most commonly consumed meats in China, the cost to bring a new farm into operation, and the risk to the market from an influx of new farms in one industry over another,” said Meilin Ma, assistant professor of agricultural economics.

“This study has provided a policy alternative for curbing substantial meat price increases caused by a significant livestock loss, without increasing additional risks to the already impacted industry,” said Holly Wang, professor of agricultural economics. “It is broadly applicable to other countries that may suffer from severe livestock losses due to a future animal epidemic.”

“Our findings suggest the cost to bring a subsidized chicken farm into to full production was significantly lower and would take less time to become fully operational compared with a hog farm. Further, as more consumers switched to the lower cost alternative meat, it would take

This study entitled “African Swine Fever in China: Impacts, Responses, and Policy Implications” was published in *Food Policy* (2021).



Purdue AgEcon researchers **Drs. Meilin Ma (left) and Holly Wang (right)** as well as their graduate

Fernandes, A., Hillberry, R. H., & Mendoza Alcantara, A. 2021. Trade Effects of Customs Reform: Evidence from Albania. *World Bank Economic Review*, 35(1): 34-57

Lusk, J. L., Tonsor, G. T., & Schulz, L. L. 2021. Beef and Pork Marketing Margins and Price Spreads during COVID-19. *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 43: 4-23

# GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

MEGAN HUGHES



Written by: Nancy Alexander

**Megan Hughes'** curiosity about how people make choices — and her desire to help them make more informed ones — led her to agricultural economics. The native of Woodstock, Illinois, grew up on a corn and soybean seed farm before earning a bachelor's degree in agribusiness management at Michigan State University (MSU). "I always enjoyed my economics classes as an undergraduate," she says. "I like using math and numerical methods to explain the behavioral phenomena we see in the world." Her MSU advisor suggested that Hughes apply to graduate programs in AgEcon, and a visit to Purdue confirmed her choice to come to West Lafayette in 2018: "I liked the atmosphere in the department, how friendly and collaborative it all was," she recalls.

After completing her MS in 2020, she began doctoral studies under co-advisors Carson Reeling, associate professor of agricultural economics, and Meilin Ma, assistant professor of agricultural economics — "some of the best mentors I could ask for," Hughes says. "It's an extension of my master's work but it builds on it in new and exciting ways." She is taking this summer off for an internship with John Deere, where she will work on data analytics with the company's sustainability team. She was excited to learn of the placement:

"I think the work I'm going to get to do is tangential to the work I'm doing toward my degree and will be reinvigorating after four straight years at Purdue."

**I'm interested in the line between production and environmental economics — finding solutions that are profitable for farmers but also sustainable for the environment."**

— Megan Hughes, PhD student,  
Department of AgEcon

Hughes' research focuses on the structure of the carbon market and the gap between payments to farmers and their costs to generate the carbon credits. Her goal is to contribute to solutions that balance profitability for growers with environmental benefits: "I hope we can provide decision tools to farmers to help them decide if they should undertake sustainable practices," she explains. The work involves economic theory, writing models, and meeting with farmers, policymakers, and intermediaries in the carbon market system.

As a result of being named a 2022 Farm Foundation Ag Scholar, "I've had opportunities to attend interesting networking events that from a professional development

standpoint, may be influential on my career," Hughes says. She will further develop her teaching skills as lead instructor for the Data Analytics in Agribusiness course this fall. She is chair-elect of the Graduate Student Section of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA), an elected position in which she organizes AAEA conference sessions as well as other programming to provide graduate students with professional development and career advancement opportunities. Hughes laughingly calls herself "Co-Chair of the Biter Off of More than I Can Chew Club."

Hughes likely will complete her degree in 2024. "I would very much enjoy a balanced academic career where I could have research, teaching and extension," she says, but she also remains open to insights her internship may provide into careers in industry. Away from the computer, Hughes takes time for a walk, run, bike ride or hike with friends. She also enjoys painting, especially landscapes. "Screen-free days are important to well-being in general," she says.

# CONCEPTUALIZING THE AG JOB MARKET

## KEEPING TABS WITHIN A MONTHLY DASHBOARD

Written by: Jillian Ellison

Any undergraduate inching closer to graduation thinks about possible jobs. Searching by specific job titles or particular skill sets, job seekers will apply for several, casting their resume out to find the best fit for their interests.

But **Doug Abney**, a graduate student in agricultural economics, said upon completing his bachelor's degree, he wasn't simply curious about a potential first job for himself. He wanted to know what the entire agricultural job market looked like.

Abney said his goal was to create an [Ag Jobs Dashboard](#) that would provide a monitoring system to validate the current job market and see what was available around the U.S. in real time. The idea of scraping the entire internet, roughly five billion gigabytes of data, for open jobs within one area of the labor market would be daunting to many, but Abney said from the start of collecting data to the final

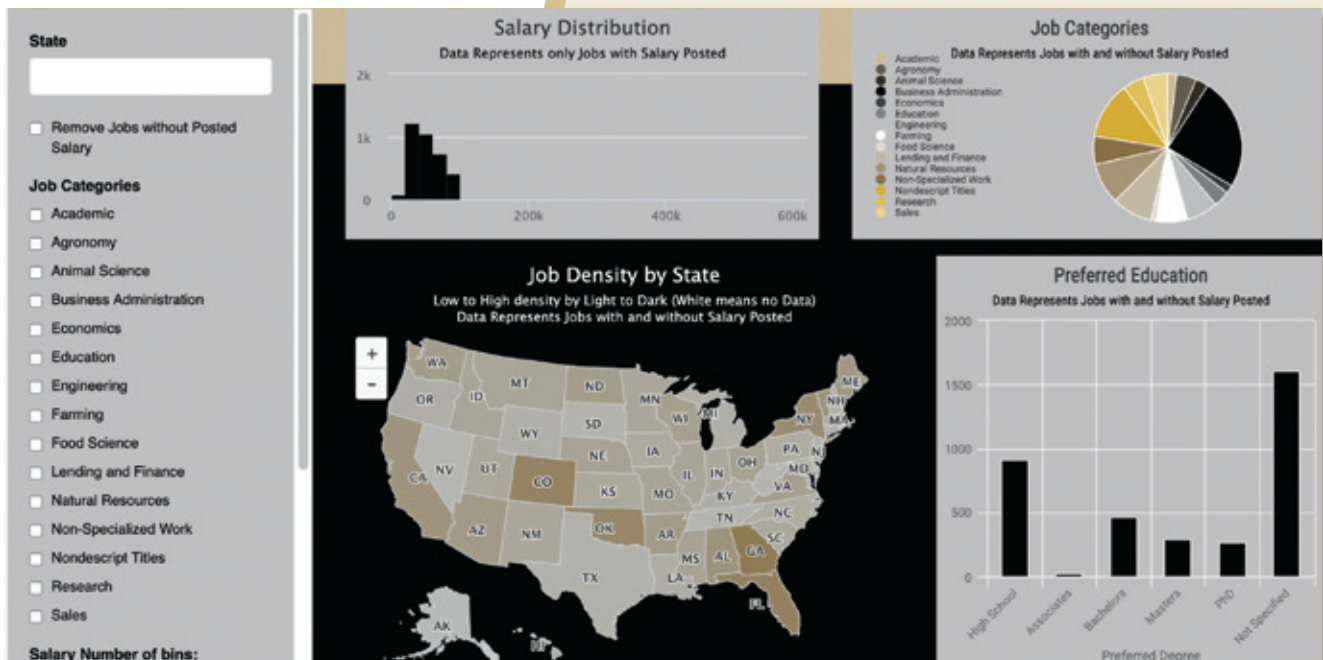
steps in creating the dashboard only took him about 10 months.

"When I started my grad program, creating a dashboard for this felt like more of a fluke idea, but my research role was to collect data on how skills and salary compare over time," he said. "I wanted to see where the ag job market was going,"

Brady Brewer, assistant professor of agricultural economics, said Abney's dashboard takes a snapshot of the current ag job market, differing from the five-year report released by the USDA offering a projection of what the job market could look like.

"The USDA ag jobs report gives a high-level overview of the ag market while we go much more granular in our analysis," Brewer said. "Our dashboard is updated monthly to reflect the current market."

## AG JOBS DASHBOARD



For more information, please visit: [purdue.ag/agjobs\\_dashboard](http://purdue.ag/agjobs_dashboard)

# WHERE ARE THEY NOW

Written by: Kami Goodwin

We caught up with three alumni making moves in their industries.



**Jeremy Adamson**, (B.S. Sales and Marketing, 2010), is a Senior Policy Advisor with the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS). While the

position places him in Washington, DC, his career began in Indiana.

"After graduating from Purdue, I worked for Crop Production Services (CPS), now Nutrien, where I consulted with farmers on fertilizer, chemical and seed inputs. Even though I grew up in Indiana, I did not grow up on a farm. The position gave me an appreciation and passion for the important work that we do throughout the ag channel. It was the most invaluable professional experience that I've had."

From there Adamson took on roles at Dow AgroSciences, now Corteva Agriscience, working in commercial roles in crop protection and urban pest management as well as Certis Biologicals, managing the company's portfolio of biopesticides. Now as a Senior Policy Advisor with FAS, his portfolio primarily involves leading the agency's climate change work.

"My degree has helped me throughout my career. Our mission at FAS is to link US agriculture to the world to enhance export opportunities and global food security. From understanding the World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE), interpreting import and export data, relationship management, to in-country marketing

of commodities. I feel very equipped and my degree is a big part of that."

He thanks early mentors for helping build his confidence and open his eyes to opportunities in agriculture.

"I don't think that I would be here without professor Frank Dooley. We would talk before and after his Intro to AgEcon course, and one day he asked me what I wanted to do. Like most students, I was still figuring it out. But then he said, we also need kids like you in the industry and that I could have a bright future. At that moment I realized that he actually believed in me. That carried me through Purdue and it's still with me today."

"Additionally, professor Pamela Morris and her leadership in Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS) was instrumental in providing me with a positive environment and resources to supplement my education, ultimately helping me to better understand opportunities in the industry."

**Build yourself a tribe of mentors, value all relationships, and stay present in what you're doing at the moment. I'd like to say that this was all planned, but it's really a result of me having people who I can turn to for guidance and having gained experiences that have been invaluable - even when I didn't think they made sense at the moment."**

— Jeremy Adamson, senior policy advisor with the FAS



**Emily Lord King** didn't grow up in agriculture, but through her experience in the produce industry, she quickly learned how crucial production agriculture is to all consumers.

After graduating with a M.S. from Purdue's Department of AgEcon in 2013, Emily made her way to south Texas to start her career as the director of marketing for a grower, packer, and shipper of onion transplants and cantaloupes. Emily quickly grew within the company, taking over post-harvest operations adding packing, compliance, and management to her responsibilities.

"Being involved in the daily operations, getting my hands dirty, and helping navigate long-term business strategy keeps my passion for fresh produce fueled. In the post-harvest management role, I continued to gain leadership experience and was able to bring my production economics knowledge from Purdue to the table when making production decisions."

"Food safety is a top priority at Fagerberg Farms. I am responsible for the marketing and compliance of their farms, crops, and packinghouse. As research and food safety data gets published, I am able to apply that information to our operation thanks to my research experience from Purdue. With consumers becoming more interested in where their food is grown and who produces it, I strive to build a brand that consumers are familiar with

◀ Pictured (left to right): Sunny King, Brian King, Harvest King, and Emily Lord King

by providing full transparency in our crops, farms, and employees to help build their trust in Fagerberg Produce onions."

For those looking to follow in her footsteps, King suggests a hands-on approach.

"My biggest piece of advice to those wanting to become movers and shakers in the produce industry would be to spend time learning and doing the tasks that actually make production agriculture happen. These tasks are rarely glorious but are crucial. Working one on one with each person on the packing line to better understand their role and value they add to the process has provided me with a true understanding of the production process. Without this perspective, I would lack the knowledge to make the decisions that impact it."

She also attributes her success to first-hand experiences at Purdue.

**Growing up in Texas, there were many components of Midwest agriculture that I was not familiar with. Whether it was farm tours or extension events with producers, professor Nicole Widmar included her graduate students in these events ensuring they entered the real world as well-rounded ag economists. Bringing my education and first-hand experiences from Purdue has provided me with the best toolkit I could bring to any production agriculture table."**

— Emily Lord King, marketing and compliance manager at Fagerberg Produce Company

**Jeff Young** (M.S., 2014; Ph.D., 2018) is an assistant professor of agribusiness economics at Murray State University. In an unusual step for an AgEcon graduate, he's in a "teaching first" position focused on teaching statistics, natural resource and environmental economics, econometrics, sales and marketing, and ag finance to undergraduate and graduate students.



"I was trained 95% in how to conduct research with only a little teaching exposure," said Young. "Before taking the position at Murray State, I spent a year in industry as an applied economist/data scientist, but it didn't have that "home" feeling for me. The best part of this role is the flexibility. Giving me more time to spend with my wife and daughter."

Even with a teaching first focus, that hasn't stopped Young from building his research portfolio.

"I am approaching a new record for most research presentations and publications in the Department of Ag Science. I have a 2-page section from my 163-page PhD dissertation that either intrigued or infuriated the audience. That rabbit trail grew into a 15-page article in Food Policy (2021) titled 'Measuring palatability as a linear combination of nutrient levels in food items'"

He thanks several faculty members in the department who helped mold him into the who he is today.

"My PhD advisor, Jim Binkley – referred to as my 'academic father' by another faculty member – spent countless hours teaching me his decades of experience, wisdom, and perspective. He also taught me not to take things too seriously, letting 'the perfect become the enemy of the good enough.'"

"Michael Wetzstein was a key individual that impacted how I approach teaching. I sent my first ever journal publication to him for critique. The article covered two things: catching cheating students and game theory, where he was a fantastic teacher. The article, 'No Honor Among Cheaters: A "Prisoner's Dilemma" approach to reduce cheating in online classes' was accepted to AETR in 2020. I've had exactly zero instances of cheating since I put a clause in my syllabus offering a 'confession reward.'"

He leaves with a lesson to those looking to follow in his footsteps.

**Don't sacrifice your wellbeing just because you got an offer from a place that will get you the farthest, the fastest. I'll avoid the cliché of 'do what makes you happy' because that's a gross misrepresentation of constrained utility maximization, but find that place, that position, that role where you can wake up in the morning and think to yourself, 'I'm happy I get to work today' I've been blessed to have found mine."**

— Jeff Young, assistant professor of agribusiness economics at Murray State University

# CELEBRATING RESEARCH

AND ALL THINGS PURDUE AGECON

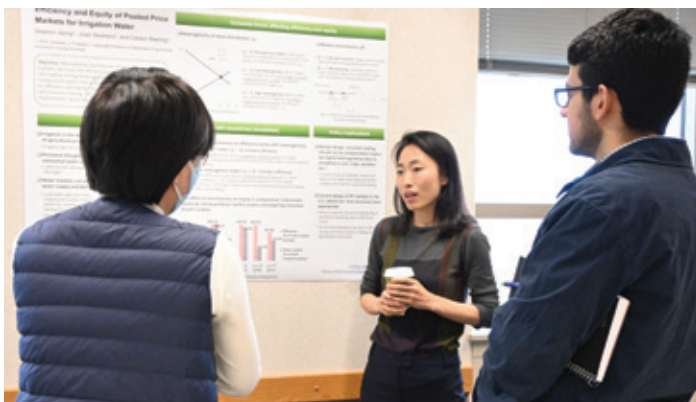


JAMES C. SNYDER  
MEMORIAL LECTURE 2022

The James C. Snyder Memorial Lecture is the signature annual event for the Department of Agricultural Economics. It was established in 1975 in honor of James C. Snyder, who served as a professor and researcher in the department. The purpose of the lecture is to stimulate the intellectual environment of the department, enhance the mission by bringing together individuals with unique contributions to the field, and broaden the perspectives of students by exposing them to professionals from other institutions.

While the lecture is the main event, it is the last stop on a day full of events meant to highlight the research and endeavors of faculty, staff, students, and alumni.

The Snyder Memorial Lecture kicks off with a celebration of graduate student research during the Purdue AgEcon Graduate Student Poster Competition. This year, six students took part in the competition with PhD student **Dawoon Jeong** earning first place honors and the \$500 prize for her poster entitled, "Efficiency and Equity of Posted Price Markets for Irrigation Water."



Pictured: Dawoon Jeong (*center*) discussing her poster with Dr. Meilin Ma (*left*) and Mario Ortez (*right*).

The department would not run without the hard work of staff members. During the morning session, Jayson Lusk presented **Ryan Good** and **Malissa Allen** with the department's Service Award. Ryan is the department's Graduate Student Administrator and Building Deputy which requires him to manage multiple relationships across campus. Malissa Allen is the Undergraduate Office Coordinator, where she manages scheduling, space coordinating, textbook reminders and final grade reports.

Jayson Lusk announced the 2022 Outstanding Master's Thesis and Doctoral Dissertation Awards. **Vivek Bist's** thesis entitled, "Labor Migration and Agricultural Production in Nepal," was chosen as the department's Outstanding Master's Thesis. Bist's committee included: Gerald Shively (chair), Jacob Ricker-Gilbert, and Shrinivas Gautam. **Francisco Scott's** dissertation entitled, "The Economics of Labeling Credence Goods: Theory and Measurement," was chosen as the department's Outstanding Ph.D. Dissertation. Scott's committee included: Juan Sesmero (chair), Joseph Balagtas, Steven Wu, and Timothy Cason.



Pictured (*left-to-right*): Department members Ryan Good and Malissa Allen; 2022 Outstanding Master's Thesis and Doctoral Dissertation award winners Vivek Bist and Francisco Scott.





▲ Apex award winners take questions during special ceremony. Pictured (left to right): Blondel Brinkman, John Dillard, Rob Dongoski, and Jayson Lusk.

The Department of Agricultural Economics was proud to welcome the 2022 Apex Award Winners: Blondel Brinkman, John Dillard, and Rob Dongoski. The trio discussed their time at Purdue, issues facing their industries, and provided advice to students. **Dr. Blondel Brinkman** (PhD, '06) is a senior staff economist with the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service in Washington, DC. **John Dillard** (MS, '07) is a principal attorney at Olsson Frank Weeda Terman Matz PC (OFW Law) in Washington, DC, a boutique law firm that assists clients regulated by USDA and U.S. Food and Drug Administration. **Rob Dongoski** (MS/MBA, '17) leads EY's Agribusiness sector globally and focuses on strategy, innovation and mergers and acquisitions for clients in the agribusiness and food sectors.

To officially open the 2022 James C. Snyder Memorial Lecture, Dean Karen Plaut took a moment to honor **Dr. Michael** (MS '68; PhD '71) and **Rita Boehlje**. The Boehlje's generous gift will establish a future Boehlje Endowed Chair in Managerial Economics for Agribusiness.

It was then AgEcon Distinguished Professor and Department Head, Jayson Lusk's turn to introduce and welcome the 2022 James C. Snyder Memorial Lecturer, Dr. John List. List is the Kenneth C. Griffin Distinguished Service Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago, a best-selling author and expert in economics field research. Throughout the lecture, List offered details of his unique contribution to the field of economics. He also shared insights from his work as an economist at Uber, Lyft, and the University of Chicago. Many of the examples were detailed in his latest book, "The Voltage Effect" which was given as a gift to those who attended the lecture.



Pictured (left-to-right): Dr. Jayson Lusk, Dr. Michael Boehlje, and Dean Karen Plaut.



Dr. John List delivering the James C. Snyder Memorial Lecture.

# GROWING IMPACT

*SERVING THE COMMUNITY & BEYOND*

## **NATASHA COX**

*B.S. Agricultural Economics, 2004  
2022 Distinguished Agriculture Alumna*

Speaking at the Distinguished Agriculture  
Alumni award ceremony, March 2022



In 2003, she was an intern at Farm Credit Mid-America. Now Natasha Cox is a regional vice president for the financial services cooperative – and her impact goes far beyond the workplace.

Cox has served on boards for the Indiana Corn Marketing Council, Ag Alumni Seeds, the Indiana State Department of Agriculture, Indiana Certified Livestock Producers, Ivy Tech Community College's agriculture program, and the Wabash Heartland Innovation Network.

"As a director, Natasha has brought an enhanced level of financial professionalism to the board and to our organization," said Jay Hulbert, President and Chief Executive of Ag Alumni Seeds. "She has a gift for cutting to the core of financial and operational issues that are before the board. She quickly organizes and analyzes data into actionable information, which she uses to ask penetrating questions that challenge me, the company management team, and indeed our other directors."

"Her work on the board has directly improved financial reporting and control systems and the management compensation system. She has helped to raise the bar in accounting and human resources."

Natasha earned a bachelor's degree from the Purdue's Department of Agricultural Economics, and 15 years later received the department's highest honor, the Apex Award. As a recipient of the Purdue Women in Agriculture Award, Cox has participated in the Purdue Agricultural Alumni Mentor program, and she's worked with Annie's Project through Purdue Extension.

"Her engagement in multiple agricultural and community organizations is an impressive demonstration of her commitment to serve her community and beyond," said Marshall Martin, Professor Emeritus. "Her track record at mid-career suggests that she will continue to serve higher education and the agricultural sector well into the future."

# FOREVER GRATEFUL

## DEFERRED GIFTS CREATE TWO FUTURE ENDOWED CHAIRS

*Written by: Kami Goodwin*

The Department of Agricultural Economics is forever grateful to the Miers and Boehlje families for their tremendous generosity in establishing two future endowed chairs.

A deferred gift from David and Mary Miers will establish the future David L. Miers Chair in Agricultural Economics and a deferred gift from Michael and Rita Boehlje will establish the future Boehlje Endowed Chair in Managerial Economics for Agribusiness.

**David Miers** earned a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Economics from the department in 1970, and in addition to farming in Decatur County, he has served in many leadership roles around the state, including as the Deputy Commissioner of Agriculture. In 1997, he hosted the department's Farm Management Tour and in 1999, he was honored with the College of Agriculture's Distinguished Agriculture Alumni award. He is also an inductee in the ROTC Hall of Fame at Purdue.

**Dr. Michael Boehlje** received a master's and doctoral degree in Agricultural Economics from the department in 1968 and 1971. He has held faculty positions at Oklahoma State University, Iowa State University, and the University of Minnesota (professor and head), before becoming a professor at Purdue in 1992. In 2006, he was appointed a Distinguished Professor of Agricultural Economics at Purdue.

Michael has received many awards throughout his illustrative career, including the Frederick L. Hovde Award of Excellence, the Morrill Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Land Grant Mission, American Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA) Fellow, and International Food and Agribusiness Management Association (IFAMA) Fellow, as well as many national and university awards for his distinguished research, Extension and outreach programing. He has held administrative roles with AAEA and IFAMA, in addition to consulting roles with various agricultural industries, firms, legislative groups, and government agencies.

While at Purdue, Michael has worked extensively with the Center for Commercial Agriculture, the Center for Food and Agricultural Business, and the department's undergraduate and MS/MBA programs in developing and teaching financial and management programing in demand by current and future commercial agriculture producers and business leaders.



**David Miers** (pictured left) and his wife, **Mary Miers** (right).

## AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT'S

### Established & Deferred Endowed Chairs

James and Lois Ackerman Chair in Agricultural Economics,  
**Professor Maria Marshall**

Boehlje Endowed Chair in Managerial Economics for Agribusiness, *deferred*

Clearing Corporation Chair in Agricultural Marketing,  
**Professor Mindy Mallory**

Halderman Chair in Farm Management, *deferred*

Land O'Lakes Chair in Food and Agribusiness,  
**Professor Allan Gray**

David L. Miers Chair in Agricultural Economics, *deferred*

Schrader Family Chair in Farmland Economics,  
**Professor Todd Kuethe**



**Dr. Michael Boehlje** (pictured left) and his wife, **Rita Boehlje** (right).



[ag.purdue.edu/agecon](http://ag.purdue.edu/agecon)

**AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS**

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EMAIL: [agecon1@purdue.edu](mailto:agecon1@purdue.edu)

EA/EO

**FALL 2022**

AGEC/ASEC dual majors, **Claire Baney** and **Laura Barrett** excited to enter Elliot Hall for the Spring Commencement Ceremony.

**BOILER UP!**

