

Organized Symposia Abstracts

Annual Meetings

TITLE: **Promoting Nontraditional Alternative Enterprises for Small Farmers** (Moderator: Albert Allen, Mississippi State University).

Organizers: Safdar Muhammad, Tennessee State University.

Participants: Safdar Muhammad, Surendra Singh, Souleymane Kebe, Fisseha Tegegne, and Enefiok Ekanem, Tennessee State University; Albert Allen, Mississippi State University; Omoanghe Isikhuemhen, North Carolina A&T State University.

The main purpose of this symposium was to evaluate alternative enterprises as an opportunity to enhance economic and environmental sustainability and well being of small farmers. Small farms represent a significant proportion of U.S. farms, and current trends in agriculture pose new challenges for their viability and survival. Innovative approaches such as introducing nontraditional and high value alternative enterprises are needed to meet such challenges and competition. Symposium panelists addressed key issues in promoting alternative enterprises, including importance of small farms; identifying research, education, and outreach needs; using information technology; and examining economic and environmental benefits and costs associated with these enterprises.

TITLE: **Estimating Economic Losses Incurred by Agriculture from Natural Disasters** (Moderator: C.W. "Bill" Herndon, Mississippi State University).

Organizers: John Anderson, C.W. Herndon, and Gregory Ibendahl, Mississippi State University.

Participants: John D. Anderson, C.W. Herndon, and Gregory Ibendahl, Mississippi State University; Kurt M. Guidry, Louisiana State University; James L. Novak, Auburn University.

The purpose of this symposium was to examine crucial issues related to estimating economic losses suffered by agricultural enterprises from natural disasters. Catastrophic events are usually caused by droughts, hurricanes, and flooding that affect relatively large geographic areas. These agricultural losses have both direct and indirect impacts while affecting continuous production (livestock) enterprises much differently than discrete production (row crop) agribusinesses. This symposium reviewed difficulties encountered gathering information and discussed techniques and procedures employed to calculate economic damages related to natural disasters. An overview of public sector responses was reviewed and critiqued to summarize mechanisms used in disaster assistance programs.

TITLE: **Price and Quality Differentiation: Implications for the U.S. Beef Market** (Moderator: Darren Hudson, Mississippi State University).

Organizer: Sayed Saghaian, University of Kentucky.

Participants: Dawn Thilmany and Wendy Umberger, Colorado State University; Amanda Ziehl, University of Tennessee; William Hahn and Kenneth Mathews, Jr., USDA-ERS; Sayed Saghaian, Mike Reed, and Kenny Burdine, University of Kentucky.

Beef safety scares have created an opportunity for branding of quality differentiated

beef. Using quality assurance labels can effectively restore consumer confidence and create niche markets to increase markups and premiums. The symposium examined: (i) Factors that affect consumers' willingness to pay a premium for beef products with specific production and process attributes; (ii) how taste, technology, and seasonal pattern shifts affect demand for different types of quality categories of beef; and (iii) vertical product differentiation and substitutability among different cuts of beef. The future economic and policy implications of beef safety and security, and product differentiation were also discussed.

TITLE: The WTO and Its Potential Impacts on U.S. Agricultural Policy (Moderator and Respondent: Darren Hudson, Mississippi State University).

Organizers: C. Parr Rosson, III, and Flynn J. Adcock, Texas A&M University.

Participants: C. Parr Rosson, III, Flynn Adcock, and John Robinson, Texas A&M University; and Larry Sanders, Oklahoma State University.

The purpose of this symposium was to discuss the potential impacts of the WTO and the Doha Work Program on domestic agricultural support. In the United States, the current WTO negotiating round, coupled with uncertainty surrounding the challenge to the U.S. cotton program brought by Brazil, has the potential to affect U.S. domestic agricultural policy. Farm program crops, grains, oilseeds, and cotton are vitally important to Southern agriculture. The current status of the negotiations and potential impacts on U.S. farm policy were presented in this symposium. Other factors such as the tight U.S. budget situation and dissension in Europe were discussed.

TITLE: The Economic Impacts of CAFTA-DR on Southern Agriculture (Moderator and Respondent: Stanley Fletcher, University of Georgia).

Organizers: Flynn J. Adcock and C. Parr Rosson, III, Texas A&M University.

Participants: Flynn Adcock, Sarah McMahan, and C. Parr Rosson, III, Texas A&M University; Jaime Malaga, Texas Tech University; and Lynn Kennedy, Louisiana State University.

The United States recently negotiated trade agreements with Central America and the Dominican Republic. The purpose of this symposium was to examine the estimated economic impacts resulting from increased exports and competition from imports, including business activity, income, and employment. An examination of the potential gains due to increased beef, rice, and soybean product exports showed that the southern United States benefited most from increased rice exports to Central America. The benefits of increased exports may be offset by losses due to increased sugar imports. In cotton, the potential impacts of Chinese market actions will likely overshadow those associated with CAFTA-DR.

TITLE: Lessons from the Tobacco Buyout (Moderator: Thomas Capehart, ERS/USDA).

Organizer: Kelly Tiller, University of Tennessee.

Participants: William Snell, University of Kentucky; Kelly Tiller, University of Tennessee; Blake Brown, North Carolina State University; Nathan Smith, University of Georgia.

Tobacco farming has played an important role in the economy and culture of major southeastern tobacco states for generations. Ironically, the very program credited for much of tobacco's profitability and stability for decades eventually became a source of tremendous strain on the competitiveness of U.S. tobacco. This culminated in passage of legislation in 2004 terminating the federal tobacco price support and quota programs, and providing \$9.6 billion in compensation (buyout) payments for quota owners and growers. This symposium explored the massive buyout, its impacts on producers, the tobacco industry, and tobacco communities, while also looking toward tobacco's postbuyout future.