

Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness

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October Birthdays

- Rodolfo Nayga 10/2
- Nathan Kemper 10/15

The *AEAB Newsletter* is a monthly publication of the University of Arkansas, Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness. Contributions from faculty, staff, students and alumni are most welcomed and should be submitted to Melinda Dunlap (AGRI 217) by the end of the month preceding the month of publication.
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Notes from the Department Head

How do you balance consumer demand for local foods with specific attributes with global food security? This question was posed to a group of agricultural economists by a wise congressional staffer during my recent visit to Washington, D.C. The question was designed to make us aware of the many conflicting objectives policy makers must attempt to reconcile when making policy decisions. There are many of these policy dilemmas in the public discourse today. Do biofuels really reduce carbon dioxide emissions? Is biotechnology good or bad for the environment? How do we define sustainable?

As Sandra Batie noted last spring in her lecture, these are “wicked” problems. They are complex, value laden and can’t be “solved” with our standard set of tools. The best we can do is approach these problems from many directions and do good, transparent research that addresses some facet of the issue. And if we communicate that research clearly to policy makers, we will have made a positive contribution to the policy process.

Please remember these upcoming lectures.

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| October 15 | George Hoffman, CEO, Restaurant Services, Inc.
(cooperative supplier for all Burger King franchisees)
1:30 p.m. – Plant Science 09 |
| October 22 | Jeff Conrad, President, Hancock Agricultural Investments Group
2:30 p.m. – Plant Science 09 |
| November 5 | Greg Heying, Senior Vice President – Distribution, SuperValu
1:30 p.m. – Plant Science 09 |

Steve A. Halbrook

Agribusiness Club

- The first meeting of the Agribusiness Club was held October 1. Club members attended the seminar given by Mr. Robin Kornmeyer, Vice President and Controller, Corn Products International. Then club members had a question/answer session with Mr. Kornmeyer. Thanks to all of the members that came. It was very informative. A special thank you to Mr. Kornmeyer for taking time to answer our questions.
- Club dues are \$20 per year or \$12 per semester and they can be paid to Bailey Bodenhamer, club treasurer or in AGRI 217.
- The Annual Honey/Pecan sale starts October 14 and continues through November 6. Order forms will be forthcoming. The top seller will receive a monetary prize at the annual banquet in April.
- Please remember that the Agribusiness Club meets the first Thursday of the month. The next meeting will be November 5. Watch for future notices about the meeting.



Honey/Pecan Sale

It's almost time for the annual honey-pecan sale. The sale will begin October 15 and continue through November 6. House of Webster products will also be sold. Please contact one of the Agribusiness Club members or Melinda Dunlap in AGRI 217 if you are interested in ordering. You can also email Melinda at mdunlap@uark.edu or call the main office at 575-2256.

Ragland Completes Lincoln Summer Internship

Washington – Fendley Ragland of Harrison recently completed a 10-week internship with U.S. Senator Blanche Lincoln in her Washington, D.C. Senate office. Ragland recently graduated from the University of Arkansas with an agribusiness degree and a minor in finance. He is the son of Gerald and Yvonne Ragland of Harrison.

“Giving young students an opportunity to serve the state through my Senate offices is one of the great joys of my job,” said Lincoln. “Congressional internships allow students to see the behind-the-scenes workings of the federal legislative branch.”

During his internship, Ragland served as the Spitze Public Policy Intern sponsored by the University of Arkansas and the Dale Bumpers College of Agriculture, Food and Life Sciences. Ragland assisted the agriculture and trade advisor on researching and monitoring current legislative issues pertaining to agriculture, including domestic and international food insecurity issues, various international trade agreements, and all matters pending before the Senate Agriculture Committee. Ragland also aided Lincoln's constituent services staff by conducting U.S. Capitol tours for visiting Arkansans, as well as assisted the communications office.



Fendley Ragland with Senator Blanche Lincoln

TRAVEL

Rudy Nayga traveled to Athens, Greece on September 1-7 and worked with collaborators at Agricultural University of Athens and participated in a European Association of Agricultural Economists' Seminar.

Terry Griffin traveled to Pennsylvania, Delaware and Washington D.C. on September 12-17 for the 2009 Leadership Institute hosted by the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers sponsored by Pioneer and DuPont.

Terry Griffin delivered an invited presentation to the UAMS College of Pharmacy Seminar Series entitled "Usefulness of Meta-Analysis in Pharmacoepidemiologic Studies" on September 18, 2009.

Rudy Nayga traveled to Moscow, Idaho on September 24-26 and gave a seminar at University of Idaho.



Athens, Greece

Publications

Drichoutis, Andreas C. Panagiotis Lazaridis and **Rodolfo M. Nayga, Jr.** 2008. "A Model of Nutrition Information Search With an Application to Food Labels." *Food Economics Acta Agriculturae Scandinavica*, Section C, 5:3, 138-151. [Http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/16507540902944874](http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/16507540902944874) July 2009.

Gracia, Azucena, Maria L. Loureiro and **Rodolfo M. Nayga, Jr.** 2009. "Consumers' Valuation of Nutritional Information: A choice Experiment Study." *Food Quality and Preference* 20:463-471.

Welcome to the Department



Faical Akaichi became an engineer in agricultural economics in 2003 (Tunisia). Then he moved to Spain where he obtained a master in Agribusiness from the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Saragossa (2005). In 2007, he got the Diploma of Advanced Studies in applied economics from the University of Barcelona. At present, he is finishing his PhD in agricultural economics, which is expected to be completed in February 2010. He joined the University of Arkansas to work with Dr. Rudy Nayga as an assistant researcher for two years. His research is focused on topics such as: agribusiness, consumer's behaviour, and experimental auctions.



COMP-U-TIP:

Occasionally check your **Junk E-Mail** folder to be sure nothing is sent there by mistake. If you find e-mail which SHOULD have come to your Inbox, right-click on the message, select "Junk E-Mail" from the drop down list of options, and specify the appropriate way for Outlook to handle mail from this sender or sender's domain. You can look at your **Junk E-Mail** options from the main menu "Tools/Options/Preferences". Click the "Junk E-Mail" button to see all of your "safe" and "blocked" senders.

GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Megan Norton

Where are you from and tell us about your family?

Lincoln, Arkansas, United States of America (Roughly thirty minutes from Fayetteville)

My father owns a forty-acre farm outside of Lincoln where he raises cattle and is a poultry farmer for Tyson Foods, Inc. My mother is a Customer Service Manager for Tyson Foods, Inc. in the International Division at their World Headquarters in Springdale. My grandparents on my dad's side, are also poultry farmers for Tyson Foods, Inc. My grandpa is involved in many ag-related activities such as the Rustic Relics club, a tractor organization in Morrow and Farm Credit. I grew up on the farm mentioned above, and was heavily involved in 4-H from the time I was five until I could join FFA in high school. I continued to be active in FFA all throughout high school and got into many activities through that such as poultry judging and food science and technology and various leadership activities.

Please give some educational background information.

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas, May 2008

BS in Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences

Major: Poultry Science

Minor: Agbusiness

How/Why did you choose UA for a Master's degree?

I had already received my BS degree from the UA, so I already felt at home here. It is also close to home so I didn't have to leave everybody I know and love. I was born in Fayetteville and have lived near the area my entire life so I had always pictured myself receiving my education from the UA. I figured I would continue on the path I was already on and get both my degrees here.

Are you thesis/nonthesis and what year in program?

Second year thesis

What do you wish to do with your degree?

I really have no idea right now exactly what I will do with my degree! I have some ideas about the areas I would like to go into, but nothing really set in stone as of right now. I am waiting to see what kinds of opportunities open up for me. I have given some thought to R & D or even Marketing, but I'm keeping an open mind.

Please describe your time at UA/dept.

FAST!! I finished my BS degree in three years after beginning straight out of high school in fall 2005. I took summer classes until I graduated college in 2008 so it was a very quick process, and now I have already finished one year of my MS! It is all so fast!

What areas of your MS program interest you the most?

I loved Dr. Nalley's Agricultural and Rural Development class. I loved learning about how far this degree can actually go and how we can change lives in other nations through the use of the things we are learning here in Arkansas. For some reason I also kind of enjoy least-cost analysis. The one-on-one attention is helpful as well. It is different being a graduate student, because our advisors only have one or two students they are assigned to, whereas being an undergraduate, they might have anywhere from five to fifteen or somewhere around that range.

What is your thesis title.

"Assessment of Fresh Vs. Frozen Beef in School Lunch Programs ."

Internship (if any) for non-thesis, who, what, where?

I am on the thesis-track, but still am interning for this summer. I am a Research and Development Intern for Tyson Foods, Inc. at their Corporate office in Springdale, Arkansas. It is just a summer internship that began in May and ends on the last day of July.

What outside activities have you been involved in?

I am active with my church, and I love to run! I have entered a few competitions with friends, one of the more recent being the Hogeye Half-Marathon, which was actually really challenging.

How do you spend your free time? Hobbies, travel, other interests?

I hardly get to do any of the things I really love, but I do make time for running at least. I love to read and watch movies, and I love to travel to new places! This October, for our honeymoon, we are spending eleven days in Honolulu, Hawaii, and I am so ready to leave!!!

Megan R. Norton will marry Andrew Paul Hudgens on Saturday, October 3, 2009.

GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Katherine McGraw

Where are you from?

Little Rock, AR. Little Rock is the capital of Arkansas. It was named in 1722 by a Frenchman, Jean-Baptiste Benard de la Harpe, "La Petite Roche" because of a natural rock formation on the Arkansas River. There is virtually no agriculture within Little Rock, but we pride ourselves on being the hub for agribusiness and extension services in the state.

Please give some information about your family.

My parents live in Little Rock. My sister, Sally (20), lives in North Little Rock and attends UALR. I live with Rudy (3), my dog, and Natalie, my awesome roommate. Rudy and I do everything together except attend class and go to restaurants.

Please give some educational background information.

I decided to study poultry science here as a junior, where I obtained by BSA in May of 2008.

How/Why did you choose UA for a Master's degree?

Dr. Jennie Popp easily convinced me that I should stay in Fayetteville and continue with graduate studies to complement my undergraduate program.

Are you thesis/nonthesis and what year in program?

I just switched to thesis track this summer. I have been here since Fall of 2008.

What do you wish to do with your degree?

This remains to be seen. I am thinking about extension, teaching, or managing a farm business, but there are many options I haven't considered. I am a short-term planner.

Please describe your time at UA/dept.

I like Fayetteville more every day. I love our department, our mission, and the people.

What areas of your MS program interest you the most?

I love to do regression analyses. I do them on the weekends for fun.

Internship (if any) for non-thesis, who, what, where?

I did an internship in undergrad for Egg Innovations, LLC. The headquarters are out of Wisconsin, but I worked in Warsaw... Indiana, not Poland. I really enjoyed learning about the Amish people in Indiana but never want to work in live production. I only buy cage free eggs now.

What outside activities have you been involved in?

I love to ride my bike and walk with Rudy. I also enjoy gardening and cooking.

How do you spend your free time? Hobbies, travel, other interests?

I like to visit my grandparents and parents when I have free weekends. I also enjoy going to Razorback football, basketball, and baseball games. I also spend a lot of time studying.

What do you miss from "back home?"

I miss going to my favorite park, Two Rivers. I also miss going to the farm with my dad on Saturdays.

What do you like best about the program, being a grad student?

I really like the fact that if there is something I don't know and need to know more about, there is always someone around who has the answer.

What do you like best about UA/Fayetteville?

My favorite thing about Fayetteville is the fall leaves and the bike trail.

Any work experience? Previous jobs?

I previously worked at two therapeutic riding centers where individuals with mental or physical disabilities or challenges come to have physical therapy or take classes to learn to follow directions or responsibility.