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USDA, APHIS

Current Activities

Is India a Potential Market for U.S. Agriculture?

Under the aegis of the Emerging Markets Project sponsored by USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, ERS researchers have been collaborating with counterparts in several Indian institutions to study issues of mutual interest. To date, detailed studies have been completed on the Indian markets for pulses, oilseeds, and poultry. These studies generally indicate that while the domestic market is undergoing rapid structural changes, such changes do not necessarily translate into immediate increases in U.S. agricultural exports to India. Additional studies will examine the economics of plant biotechnology regulations, the implications of the removal of Multi-Fiber Arrangement import quotas on India's textiles and apparel sector, and the prospects for improved marketing efficiency for wheat in India. Information on ERS's program of work on Indian markets is available at www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/india/. **Tom Vollrath, thomasv@ers.usda.gov**

"One-Stop Shopping" for Commodity Data

ERS and six other USDA agencies are cooperating to develop a web-based portal for commodity market data and information, the Commodity Market Information System (CMIS). Through CMIS, users will be able to access key data and analyses on supply, demand, and prices from several USDA agencies without having to visit each agency website separately. A prototype, expected to be rolled out by the end of 2004, will demonstrate a customer-centric approach toward searchable and user-friendly electronic access to USDA's broad spectrum of commodity market information. **Milton Ericksen, miltone@ers.usda.gov, and Joy Harwood, jharwood@ers.usda.gov**

Studying the Economics of Invasive Species Management

In August 2004, ERS and the Farm Foundation co-sponsored a review of the ERS Program on the Economics of Invasive Species Management (PREISM) in Washington, DC. The objective of the meeting was to review the progress and/or preliminary results of each 2003 PREISM grant or cooperative agreement. PREISM awardees and cooperators made presentations, and several external discussants commented on each paper. Attendees included ERS researchers and representatives from a variety of Federal agencies charged with preventing, monitoring, and managing invasive species. Abstracts of the 2003 PREISM grants are posted on the ERS website at www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/invasivespecies/. **Stan Daberkow, daberkow@ers.usda.gov**

Focusing on Variety

USDA encourages people to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables through the Food Guide Pyramid and participation in the National 5 A Day Partnership. A diet rich in a variety of fruits and vegetables helps one to consume a complete mix of nutrients. Using ACNielsen data, ERS researchers are investigating the factors that influence purchases of fruits and vegetables and identifying obstacles to attaining variety, such as household spending levels and other demographic characteristics. **Hayden Stewart, hstewart@ers.usda.gov**

How Do Mass Marketers Affect Food Prices?

As part of ERS's research program on the dynamics of retail food markets, researchers from ERS and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) are examining the impact of supercenters, club stores, and mass merchandisers on retail food prices. Using retail food price scanner data, MIT professor Jerry Hausman and Ephraim Leibtag measured the impact of increased market share by nontraditional retail outlets on food prices. These price changes were then used to estimate the bias in the Consumer Price Index for food eaten at home. **Ephraim Leibtag, eleibtag@ers.usda.gov**

New Releases

Paying for Fruits and Vegetables

Americans do not eat the recommended levels of fruits and vegetables. One argument is that they are expensive, especially when purchased fresh. Using 1999 ACNielsen Homescan data, ERS researchers recently analyzed serving costs of over 150 forms of fruits and vegetables and found that consumers can eat the recommended three servings of fruits and four servings of vegetables daily for 64 cents. This finding and others are presented in a new report, *How Much Do Americans Pay for Fruits and Vegetables?* (AIB-790). **Jane Reed, allshous@ers.usda.gov**

Effects of Animal Diseases on Trade

Disease outbreaks and related trade restrictions have slowed previously expected high growth in many U.S. animal product exports, with U.S. beef exports most affected. A recent ERS report—*U.S. 2003 and 2004 Livestock and Poultry Trade Influenced by Animal Disease and Trade Restrictions* (LDPM-120-01)—discusses how animal diseases and disease-related trade restrictions have influenced trade in animal products in the past few years, with an emphasis on 2003 and forecasts for 2004. **Dale Leuck, dleuck@ers.usda.gov**

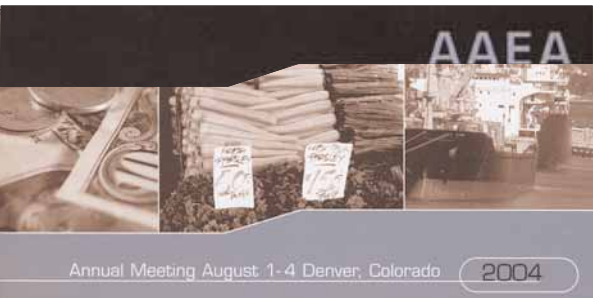
The citations here and in the rest of this edition are just a sample of the latest releases from ERS. For a complete list of all new ERS releases, view the calendar on the ERS website: www.ers.usda.gov/calendar/

Comstock

Recent Meetings

Rural Sociological Society Annual Meeting

In August 2004, ERS researchers presented a wide variety of findings at the Rural Sociological Society (RSS) annual meeting in Sacramento, CA. RSS was founded in 1937 to promote the development of rural sociology through teaching, research, and extension. Its original members were active as early as 1920 as a section of the American Sociological Society. At the August conference, ERS researchers presented papers on rural population dynamics, the public policy impacts of rapid inmigration of Hispanics to nonmetro counties, the positive relationship between attractive natural amenities and access to services and inmigration of people to rural areas, food costs in nonmetro households compared with those of metro households, and the new ERS county typology codes and their potential usefulness in rural development policy analyses. **Leslie Whitener, whitener@ers.usda.gov**



Annual Meeting of Agricultural Economists

In August 2004, ERS researchers discussed and debated a wide range of issues with their colleagues at the annual meeting of the American Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA) in Denver, CO. A highlight of the meetings was the annual Frederick V. Waugh Memorial Lecture, which featured, for the first time, a USDA economist. Joseph Glauber, Deputy Chief Economist of USDA since 1992, delivered a presentation titled, "Crop Insurance Reconsidered," in which he assessed the efficacy of crop insurance program changes over the last 15 years. Established in 1991, this lecture series is cosponsored by the AAEA and ERS in honor of an intellectual giant in the agricultural economics profession who stressed the idea that economists should do relevant and useful work.

How Can Time-Use Data Be Used?

In July 2004, ERS and the Farm Foundation cosponsored a 1-day conference on policy-relevant uses of data from the new American Time Use Survey of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This important new dataset will allow researchers to analyze the choices people make in how they spend their time, the time and income constraints they face, and the consequences of their decisions. This conference provided researchers, policymakers, and program administrators an opportunity to discuss and identify policy issues that time-use data can illuminate, such as obesity, grocery store access of low-income households, and working time versus household responsibilities. The conference agenda is available at www.ers.usda.gov/emphases/healthy/timeuseconference/agenda.htm. **Karen Hamrick, khamrick@ers.usda.gov**

Conservation Reserve Program: Planting for the Future

In June 2004, Marc Ribaudo, Patrick Sullivan, and Daniel Hellerstein of ERS participated in the conference "CRP: Planting for the Future," sponsored by USDA's Farm Service Agency and the U.S. Geological Survey, held in Fort Collins, CO. Attended by over 200 people, the conference featured presentations by academic researchers, government scientists, program administrators, industry representatives, and Capitol Hill staffers on the theme of how USDA's Conservation Reserve Program might be best implemented, given social and environmental goals. **Marc Ribaudo, mribaudo@ers.usda.gov**

Integration of the Food Supply Chain

In June 2004, at the 1st Global Agri-Food Forum in Mexico City, Mexico, ERS researcher Phil Kaufman participated in a panel session titled, "Strengthening the Integration of the Food Supply Chain." His presentation on "Changing Competition, New Technology, and Consolidation in the U.S. Retail Food Industry: Implications for Agricultural and Food Suppliers," provided insights on issues similar to those of the Latin American countries represented at the conference. Other session topics were "Controversy Over Water," "The Impact of China on Global Agriculture," "Global Trends in Agro-Food Commerce," and "What is the New Producer Model?" An overriding theme was the need for producers and processors to compete in global markets and to become more consumer-driven through better integration within the food supply chain. **Phil Kaufman, pkaufman@ers.usda.gov**

National Obesity Prevention Conference

Sponsored by the
U.S. Department of Agriculture
October 25-27, 2004
Hyatt Regency Hotel, Bethesda, Maryland

With a better understanding of the social, economic, and behavioral causes of poor dietary choices, more effective prevention measures can be designed. Thus, the conference will focus on research themes, both short- and long-term, and steps that can be taken to prevent further increases in the prevalence and severity of obesity. The conference will be science-based, but will have a practical orientation to aid in developing practical strategies to prevent obesity. The conference will be open to the public, but space is limited.

For more information or to register see: www.usda.gov/Newsroom/indexNOPC.html. Steve Crutchfield, scrutch@ers.usda.gov