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Organized Symposia

TITLE: An Industry Perspective on the International Trade Environment: Issues and Alternatives for the Next WTO Round (Moderator: Bert Greenwalt, Arkansas State University)

Organizers: Bert Greenwalt, Arkansas State University; and David Schweikhardt, Michigan State University

Participants: Richard Bell, Riceland Foods, Inc.; Mark Lange, National Cotton Council; and William Kuckuck, Tyson Foods

NAFTA and the Uruguay Round of GATT were important turning points in U.S. agricultural trade. Despite the trade liberalization achieved in these negotiations, export subsidies, tariff rate quotas, and other non tariff barriers remain. Accordingly, agricultural trade issues are expected to retain a central role during the next round of WTO negotiations. This symposium features industry representatives from three sectors of southern agriculture. Each representative will discuss: (1) the success and failures of trade liberalization under NAFTA and GATT, (2) the issues facing their respective company and/or commodity, and (3) policy alternatives that should be considered for addressing these issues.

TITLE: Recent Trends in Agricultural Prices and Incomes: Anomalies or Indicators? (Moderator: Michael Dicks, Oklahoma State University)

Organizer: Daniel G. De La Torre Ugarte, University of Tennessee

Participants: Luther Tweeten, Ohio State University; Daryll Ray, University of Tennessee; and Stephanie Mercier, U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee

Returns to Southern crops and livestock have been lower in 1998 and are projected to continue to decline in 1999. Among events offered to contribute to this situation is recent change in agricultural policy. Are recent price and income events an aberration caused by a rare confluence of independent events, or are they an indicator of expectations under a new policy environment? This symposium presents considerations of this question from the perspectives of the free market, production agriculture, and Congress. Upon presentation of these considerations, the audience is invited to participate in a lively policy discussion.

TITLE: Welfare Reform and Its Impact on Rural People and Places in the South (Moderator: Bo Beaulieu, Mississippi State University)

Organizer: Bo Beaulieu, Mississippi State University

Participants: Bo Beaulieu, Mississippi State University; Deborah Tootle, Louisiana State University; Frank Howell, Mississippi State University; and Mark Henry, Clemson University

The shifts occurring in the public assistance programs in the United States are creating significant challenges for rural South. Simple demographics prove to be a key factor. The South remains home to the largest number of nonmetro residents. Over 22 million people are rural Southerners, constituting 45% of our country's nonmetro population. Furthermore, with the onset of TANF, for example, expectations are that people and communities of the rural South will be hard pressed to meet the major challenges associated with this program. Availability of paying jobs and human capital endowment issues are discussed.

TITLE: Implications of Changing Agricultural Policy for the South—Revisited (Moderator: Lucas D. Parsch, University of Arkansas)

Organizer: Keith H. Coble and Barry J. Barnett, Mississippi State University

Participants: Barry J. Barnett, Mississippi State University; Keith H. Coble, Mississippi State University; and Chris S. McIntosch, University of Georgia

It has been argued that changes in farm policy significantly affect agricultural production in the South. This symposium would revisit issues broached in the 1998 SAEA invited paper session discussing the implications of changing farm policy on southern agriculture. The perspective of an additional year's experience under the new farm legislation, a year of widespread revenue insurance availability in the region, and subsequent analysis allows new insights into the issues. The three presenters will address three key issues: (1) problems with southern crop and revenue insurance programs, (2) changes in price volatility, and (3) evolution in southern acreage response.

TITLE: Emerging Rural Development Issues in the South (Moderator: Bo Beaulieu, Mississippi State University)

Organizer: Bo Beaulieu, Mississippi State University

Participants: Jim Hite, Clemson University; Don Voth, University of Arkansas; John Allen, University of Nebraska; and Melissa Barfield, Mississippi State University

The Southern Development Center, with funding from the Economic Research Service, has recently invested grant funds for the preparation of four comprehensive reports addressing key rural development issues in the South. The intent of these reports is to provide State Rural Development Councils, as well as other rural development policy bodies, with timely

research information on priority issues facing these agencies. This symposium is intended to showcase the major issues and policy recommendations outlined by the authors in the research documents. These products will be published in a special series produced by the Southern Rural Development Center.

TITLE: Graduate Agribusiness Management Education in the South (Moderator: Lisa House, Mississippi State University)

Organizer: Lisa House, Mississippi State University

Participants: Allen Featherstone, Kansas State University; Lisa House, Mississippi State University; S. Sureshwaran, South Carolina State University; and Charles Hall, Texas A&M University

As Agricultural Economics Departments search for ways to increase or maintain graduate enrollment, Master's level agribusiness programs are becoming more popular. The Southern schools have seen a proliferation of new, or modified, degree programs in the 1990s. The purpose of this symposium is to examine existing Master of Agribusiness programs. Speakers will briefly identify how their degree was developed, the niche they are trying to fill, and how experience is integrated, if at all, into the program. One goal is to leave ample time for discussion from participants who may have questions about developing and maintaining similar programs.

TITLE: Prospects and Potentials for a Free Trade Area of the Americas (Moderator: Mike Reed, University of Kentucky)

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

Participants: Mechel Paggi, USDA/CSREES; Flynn Adcock and Parr Rosson, Texas A&M University; Gary Fairchild, University of Florida; Geoff Benson, North Carolina State University; Larry Sanders, Oklahoma State Uni-

versity; Harold Harris, Clemson University; and Tim Taylor, University of Florida

We examine the progress of ongoing negotiations to liberalize trade and to assess the potential impacts on southern agricultural trade of the formation of a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Implications for applied research and extension education program development will be discussed. Lessons learned from recent experiences at various southern institutions, that have led the development of international trade education programs and have assessed the impacts of the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Uruguay Round Agreements of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, will be highlighted, examined, and discussed.

TITLE: The Southern Tobacco Communities Project: Making Allies of the Hatfields and McCoys (Moderator: Kelly H. Tiller, University of Tennessee)

Organizer: Kelly H. Tiller, University of Tennessee

Participants: John Litz, Burley Tobacco Farmer, Morristown, Tennessee; J.T. Davis, President, Concerned Friends for Tobacco; Amy Barkley, Director, Kentucky Health Coalition; and Rebecca Reeve, STCP Director, University of Virginia Institute for Quality Health

Recognizing that stakeholders must sometimes *agree to disagree*, the Southern Tobacco Communities Project (STCP) illustrates how effective atypical alliances can be in confronting issues that threaten agriculture when at least some common ground can be exploited. This symposium presents the perspectives of three tobacco stakeholders—a burley grower, a flue-cured grower, and a public health advocate—as they entered the dialogue, including their primary concerns, expectations, motivations, and perceptions of other stakeholder interests. The STCP director then presents an overview of the dialogue process, highlighting accomplishments of the group and lessons

learned along the way. Audience viewpoints will be discussed.

TITLE: Agricultural and Educational Changes in Russia and the Newly Independent States: Roles for Agricultural Economists in the Transition to a Market Economy (Moderator: Glenn C.W. Ames, University of Georgia)

Organizer: Glenn C.W. Ames, University of Georgia; and C. Parr Rosson, III, Texas A&M University

Participants: Alexei A. Koptchenov, Chelyabinsk State Agricultural Engineering University; Bill R. Miller, Mississippi State University; John Nichols, Texas A&M University; Adnan Mirzoev, Rabobank; and Parr Rosson, Texas A&M University

Economic conditions in Russia are having a drastic impact on higher education. Chelyabinsk Agricultural University is typical of many regional Russian universities in transition. While faculty have freedom to determine curriculum and degree requirements, their teaching loads are excessive, requiring up to six courses per year. The future of higher education in the agricultural sciences is at risk in Russia and other independent states.

TITLE: Occupational Safety and Health Hazards Associated with Farming and Rural Life: Multidisciplinary Research Issues (Moderator: Chryssoula Thodi-Petrou, South Carolina State University)

Organizer: Chryssoula Thodi-Petrou and S. Sureshwaran, South Carolina State University

Participants: Gerald Doeksen, Oklahoma State University; Steve Olenchock, NIOSH; Bradley K. Rein, USDA/CSREES; and Chryssoula Thodi-Petrou, South Carolina State University

Discussant: Chris Severdies, Clemson University

Although occupational hazards in agriculture are well recognized, very little effort has been rendered towards developing preventive health care focused on farming and rural population. Any isolated research that exists is discipline specific and the economic viability of alternative less hazardous production techniques has not been evaluated. Furthermore, the federal farm and welfare system reforms are likely to reduce income and, in turn, increase the relative costs of safety and health for farmers. In this symposium, a multidisciplinary panel is assembled to identify potential research topics of interest to economists, especially in the southern states.

TITLE: ISO 9000 and U.S. Agribusiness
(Moderator: Albert J. Allen, Mississippi State University)

Organizer: Albert J. Allen, Mississippi State University

Participants: Warren Couvillion, Mississippi

State University; John Surak, Clemson University; Terry Obert, Mississippi State University; Jim Hartman, Flavorite Labs, Memphis; and Gerald Mumma, Mississippi State University

ISO 9000 series of standards are intended to provide a basic generic definition of quality management systems and facilitate international trade. A decade after its inception, more than 100 countries have adopted the international standards as national quality standards. It is currently unclear what role these process standards have had or will have on U.S. agribusiness competitiveness and trade. Increasing international agribusiness trade encourages a need to communicate and validate production and processing procedures. This Organized Symposium would provide a platform for discussing ISO 9000 series of standards, its application, and the pertinent implications for U.S. agribusiness competitiveness and trade.