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# James L. Novak

## Lifetime Achievement Award

James (Jim) Novak is a professor and Extension specialist in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, Auburn University. He holds BS (1974) and MS (1976) degrees in resource economics from the University of New Hampshire and a PhD (1982) in applied economics from Clemson University. He served as an Extension Specialist with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service from 1981 to May 1985 and with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System from June 1985 to the present. Dr. Novak coordinated risk management education in the southern region through a Southeast Regional Risk Management Education Center (1997–2000) under the auspices of a Risk Management Agency (RMA/USDA), Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES/USDA), and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) memorandum of understanding and acted as chair of the National Risk Management Education Advisory Committee (2001–2002). He also served as a representative on the Southern Region Extension Risk Management Center Advisory Committee (2001–2004). Dr. Novak was instrumental in working with the team that established the current four National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA/USDA) Regional Risk Management Education Centers through the 2000 Ag. Risk Protection Act. More recently he served as a member of the Southeast Climate Consortium Executive Committee, which coordinated climate research and education activities across the southeast region. Dr. Novak currently teaches classes in agricultural policy and computer applications, conducts policy and risk research, and is responsible for Extension agricultural policy and crop insurance risk management education. He is currently serving as coeditor of American Agricultural Economics Association's (AAEA) Choices and Policy issues publication and is finalizing a textbook on the history and economics



of agricultural policy. Dr. Novak has been married to Dr. Patricia Duffy since 1984. They have one child, Sylvia Rose Novak, of Opelika, Alabama.

Dr. Novak's past awards include those from the Southern Agricultural Economics Association, the American Agricultural Economics Association, the Southern Forestry Resource Extension Specialists, the Farm Service Agency/USDA, the National Public Policy Education Committee, and the Farm Foundation. In 2005 he received the prestigious R.J. Hildreth Award for Career Achievement in Policy Education. He has also received team awards for Outstanding Achievement in Public Issues Education from the National Public Policy Education Committee and the Farm Foundation in 2002 and 2003. The award was for work on the 2002 Farm Bill Public Policy Preference Survey and for subsequent policy education efforts relating to this farm bill.

Dr. Novak has been active on a national and regional level coordinating the southern region's implementation of the 2002 Farm Bill

survey as part of the National Farmer Farm Bill Preferences Survey team. He also assisted in planning and conducting national and regional farm bill education programs for both the 2002 and 2008 Farm Bills with this team. He has served as a CSREES/USDA National Program Leader with the Economics and Community Systems Unit as part of an IPA between this agency and Auburn University. A major accomplishment in this role includes the resurrection of the Agricultural Policy and the Marketing listservs, which had continued to distribute information and education materials on a regional and national level.

Dr. Novak has served in many different leadership roles at the regional and national level including acting as secretary, chair-elect, and chair of the Southern Extension Public Affairs Committee and the Extension Section of the AAEA. Accomplishments include assisting in writing the bylaws for the AAEA Extension Section and chairing a later rewrite of them. Very few know that as chair he was instrumental in restoring the Legislative Update by House and Senate staff to an Extension Section-organized session at the AAEA annual meeting. As chair of the Extension Section he gained approval from the AAEA Board for implementation of the Larry Sanders-initiated Extension Graduate Competition, which has contributed to graduate student awareness of potential careers in Extension economics.

Dr. Novak was responsible for the establishment of the SERA-39 "Public Policy Education" regional committee, serving as its organizing chair. SERA-39 continues to provide a forum for policy specialists and the presentation of policy education information nationally. Service to the SAEA includes membership on the Declining Membership Committee, organizing symposiums, and presenting papers at the annual meeting. At the national level, Dr. Novak has served on AAEA's Council on Food,

Agricultural and Resource economics (C-FARE), Outreach, and Nominating Committees and the *Journal of Extension* and *Journal of Sustainable Agriculture* editorial boards.

A hallmark of Dr. Novak's career has been his willingness to step up and assume leadership roles when badly needed. His leadership was a major key to delivering the southern region's support for the establishment and congressional funding of the Regional Risk Management Education Centers. When the National Public Policy Education Committee was disbanded, Dr. Novak assumed responsibility for resurrecting a replacement resulting in SERA-39. When someone was needed in Washington, DC, to present the case for a national public policy program leader, Dr. Novak assumed that position. Numerous other examples could be cited including providing leadership through coordination of southern policy education efforts. Dr. Novak also has a history of leadership in the crop insurance area providing assistance in gaining approval for Group Risk Soybean insurance in Alabama and the implementation of AGR-Lite in Alabama, Florida, South Carolina, and Georgia. At the departmental level, he continues to mentor undergraduate advisees and graduate students, providing service through chairing the College of Agriculture Tenure and Promotion Committee and past service on the Faculty Senate and Faculty Senate Committees. Over his career he has garnered more than \$1 million in grants including a Rockefeller team grant to study the oldest continuous cotton rotation in the world, the "Old Rotation." During his career he has published refereed articles in the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, *Southern Journal of Agricultural Economics*, *Agricultural History*, and *Agricultural and Applied Economics Journal* along with the publication of numerous bulletins, *Extension*, and popular press articles.