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Farm Foundation

Increasing Understanding of Public Problems and Policies

1993

- THE STATUS OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AMERICA
- AN EVOLVING PUBLIC POLICY EDUCATION
- HEALTH CARE REFORM
- PUBLIC ISSUES EDUCATION AND THE NPPEC
- ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY: THE LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY AGENDA

Subjects Discussed at Previous Conferences

- 1976 The U.S. Political Economy • Food and Agricultural Policy • Impacts of Judicial and Regulatory Decision Making • Energy Policy
- 1977 Federal Policy Process • U.S. Energy Policy • World Food—U.S. Policy Choices • 1977 Food and Agriculture Legislation • Agent Training and Leadership Development
- 1978 Food and Nutrition Policy • Policy Options for Small Farms • International Agricultural Trade • The Land-Grant System and Public Policy
- 1979 Controlling Inflation: Alternative Approaches, Impacts and Implications • Policy Legislative Process
- 1980 Dispersed vs. Concentrated Agriculture • Ethics of Public Policy • Productivity • Rural Transportation • Energy Policy Issues • Policy Issues and Educational Approaches
- 1981 Government Programs and Individual Decisions • Public Support of Research and Extension • Agriculture in the 1980s • Methodology of Public Policy Education
- 1982 Domestic Economic Policy • Federal Government Role in Resource Management • Trade Policy • Financing Government Under Tight Budgets • Food Policy
- 1983 Economic Transition • Land Ownership Issues and Policy Education Approaches • The U.S. Food and Agricultural System in the International Setting • The Policy Education Process
- 1984 Federal Deficit • Providing Public Services in an Era of Declining Taxpayer Support • Water Policy • Distribution Issues in Food & Agricultural Policy • Methodology Workshops • Emerging Politics of Food & Agriculture
- 1985 The Changing Face of America • The Changing Face of Agriculture • Status of 1985 Agricultural and Food Legislation • Tax Policy Revision • Developing Policy Education Programs on Controversial Issues
- 1986 Balancing the Federal Budget • Effects of Agricultural and Trade Policies on the Competitiveness of U.S. Agriculture • Human Stress and Adjustment in Agriculture • The Food Security Act of 1985 and Public Policy Education for the Future
- 1987 Socioeconomics of Rural America • Rural Revitalization • U.S. Agriculture in the International Arena • Role of Values, Beliefs and Myths in Establishing Policy • Policy Education and the Policy Process
- 1988 Policy Choices for Revitalizing Rural America • Priority Issues for a New Farm Bill • Opportunities for Joint Public Policy Education • Emerging Issues in Agricultural and Food Policy • Emerging Resource Issues • International Agricultural Relations
- 1989 The Global Environment for the U.S. Economy in the 1990s • Family Policy • Rural Development Policy • Public Policy Education • Water Quality Policy
- 1990 An Evolving Public Policy Education • Safe Food and Water: Risks and Tradeoffs • Balancing Environmental and Social Concerns with Economic Interests in Agriculture • Structural Change in Food Industries and Public Policy Issues • Toward a New Europe
- 1991 Global Competitiveness, Productivity and Social Impacts • Public Policy Education Methods • Policy for Environment and Economic Development • Rural Resource Development and Work Force Productivity • Political Economy of the Dysfunctional Family
- 1992 Public Policy Education in the 1990s • Agriculture and Environmental Policymaking: Issues, Actors, Strategies • The Rural Social Infrastructure • Domestic Consequences of Evolving International Trade Policy

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Increasing Understanding of Public Problems and Policies — 1993
Editors: Steve A. Halbrook and Teddee E. Grace
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Farm Foundation, Oak Brook, Illinois
January, 1994

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FOREWORD

This publication reports the major discussions of the 43rd National Public Policy Education Conference held September 12-15, 1993, in Clearwater Beach, Florida. The 124 participants represented most states, the United States Department of Agriculture and other public agencies.

The conference is held to improve the policy education efforts of those extension workers responsible for public affairs programs. In turn, this should help citizens faced with solving local and national problems make more intelligent and responsible decisions.

Specific objectives were: 1) to provide timely and useful information on public issues; 2) to explore different approaches to conducting public policy education programs; and 3) to share ideas and experiences in policy education.

The Farm Foundation financed the instructional staff for, and the transportation of one individual from each extension service to, this conference which is planned in conjunction with the National Public Policy Education Committee. The Foundation also financed publication and distribution of these proceedings which are made available to state and county extension personnel, teachers, students and others interested in increasing understanding of public policy issues.

Larry D. Sanders, Chairman
National Public Policy
Education Committee

Walter J. Armbruster
Managing Director
Farm Foundation

January, 1994

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Abstracts

THE STATUS OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AMERICA

OBSERVATIONS ON AGRICULTURAL POLICY, POLICY REFORM AND PUBLIC POLICY EDUCATION

John E. Lee, Jr.
Mississippi State University

The intervention of the United States government in agriculture in the twentieth century is an explainable response to the basic characteristics of agriculture that generate instability, over-production and depressed prices. The concentration of large benefits among relatively few producers and diffusion of costs over a large non-farm population make policy reform difficult. The policies in place since the 1930s have had both positive and negative consequences from a societal perspective. While farm policies have gradually become less distortive, less expensive and increasingly sensitive to a broader array of social concerns, such as the environment and food safety, they still reduce the overall efficiency of the U.S. economy, regressively redistribute income and wealth, and divert the attention and energy of policymakers away from more pressing rural and social problems. Increasing the public's understanding of the consequences of alternative policies is essential for policy reform and is both the opportunity and awesome responsibility of public policy educators.

THE STATUS OF AGRICULTURE IN 1993

Marty Strange
Center for Rural Affairs

Five trends characterize American agriculture: Export dependence, diminished opportunity for beginning farmers, increasingly industrial production systems that reduce access to open markets, the privatization of science and interest in sustainable farming. Policy issues raised by these trends include the need to harmonize environmental, social and economic objectives of commodity programs, restoration of credit programs aimed at beginning farmers, more effective enforcement of anti-trust laws that address vertical market

arrangements, redirection of publicly-funded agricultural science to national policy objectives, and trade policy that seeks a more restrained role for the U.S. farmer in the world food system.

**A LEGISLATIVE PERSPECTIVE
ON CURRENT AND FUTURE CHANGES
IN U.S. FARM POLICY**

Chip Conley
House Committee on Agriculture

Agriculture policy is being pressured to change from directions other than administration policies to reduce government involvement. Deficit reduction legislation passed in 1993 made only modest reductions in agricultural commodity program spending. Agriculture appropriations provide one means of changing policies through program reforms and reductions in program spending. The National Performance Review to "reinvent government" will be another source of change as will trade policy liberalization and regulatory changes. Budget pressures, beginning in 1995 when a new farm bill must be written, will challenge agricultural interests and policymakers to make the most of diminishing federal resources.

**FARM GROUP PERSPECTIVE
ON U.S. FARM POLICY**

Harry Bell
American Farm Bureau Federation

The 1994 farm bill will do much more than set prices. Interests outside and inside agriculture will load legislation with measures that address food safety, land use planning, wealth redistribution, conservation practices, government spending and trade. Environmental and consumer groups will use the farm bill to mandate their brand of politically correct agriculture. Various factions within agriculture will debate food safety, chemical use, biotechnology and food costs, conservation, sustainability and research for alternative crops and alternative uses of traditional crops. The public policy message from America's farmers to you—we need your help to develop practical approaches to today's farming challenges and common sense ways to farm better, more economically and environmentally.

AN EVOLVING PUBLIC POLICY EDUCATION

PUBLIC POLICY IN A CHANGING SOCIETY

*Otto Doering
Purdue University*

Many believe government is not working. Remedies include a different decision process, new values and new institutions. However, major changes in the nation itself must not be ignored. We are no longer the world's only economic powerhouse, our demographics are different and fundamental values have already changed. Policy decisions are difficult because of an increasing and divisive focus on the distribution of wealth and power. We need to better identify drivers of change and core issues of concern to society if public policy is to be more accessible, participatory and constructive for most citizens.

INNOVATIONS IN PUBLIC POLICY EDUCATION

*Alan J. Hahn
Cornell University*

Changes occurring in public policy education during the past five to ten years include: 1) richer and more complicated discussions of advocacy, 2) movement toward a genuine merger of content and process, 3) a richer and more complicated picture of how educational impact happens and 4) development of better language to talk about objectives and impacts. The emerging public policy education concept resonates with a widely-recognized societal need for better ways to practice politics.

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION APPROACHES TO CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

*Ronald C. Faas
Washington State University*

For years, extension public policy educators have placed their faith in the standard alternatives/consequences model's three common steps: 1) clarify the problem or issue; 2) develop alternatives; and 3) identify consequences of each alternative. An essential corollary of this model has been the notion of "the teachable moment."

By extending the “teachable moment,” Alternative Dispute Resolution can be seen as an enhancement of the alternatives/consequences model.

COLLABORATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESSES

*Robert M. Jones
Florida State University*

The traditional use of litigation for dispute resolution can be time consuming and expensive, and has not always produced fair and wise solutions. Over the past decade, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) processes such as mediation, negotiated rule making and policy dialogues, have become more common features upon the public policy landscape. ADR and Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) are voluntary processes that involve many interests in a facilitated—or mediated—face-to-face negotiation. The impartial facilitator, often selected by the participants, assists in defining issues, exploring the parties’ mutual interests and those that divide them, generating and assessing options and reaching an acceptable solution. These consensus-based negotiations, in which the agreements must satisfy all participants’ interests, have the potential for broadening the options available to those seeking an acceptable balance between conflicting goals.

USE OF ADR IN EXTENSION PUBLIC POLICY EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND ROLES THAT EXTENSION CAN PLAY IN DISPUTE RESOLUTION

*Leon E. Danielson and Simon K. Garber
North Carolina State University*

The public policy educator has many roles at his or her disposal: Information Provider, Technical Advisor, Convener, Facilitator and Program Developer. The increased importance of issues programming and the increased priority given to measurement of results are creating additional pressures to take a “resolution-of-the-issue” approach toward public policy education. Extension public policy educators can respond by incorporating concepts and techniques from dispute resolution into their ongoing public policy education programs. This may involve an expansion of the group facilitation role to include Issue Facilitation (citizen participation, interest-based negotiation and consensus building) and adding the roles of Promoter

of Dispute Resolution and Mediator. This change will require increased training on facilitation and mediation skills, provision of new teaching materials and increased support from extension administration.

FRAMING PUBLIC ISSUES AND WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

*JoAnn Myer Valenti
Brigham Young University*

How the mass media *frame* an issue influences audience perception, discussion and attitudes of acceptance or rejection, and impacts the likelihood an audience will act on the issue presented. This paper argues that issue framing provides media with their most powerful effects and offers recommendations for improving media relations and media attention to issues on the rural and farm agenda. The paper also summarizes a moderated dialogue between those in the audience at the 1993 National Public Policy Education Conference in Clearwater Beach, Florida, and a panel of journalists.

BUILDING COALITIONS FOR EDUCATING AND PROBLEM SOLVING: PROCESS, ROLES, WARNINGS AND STYLES FOR EXTENSION INVOLVEMENT

*Fielding Cooley, Andy Duncan and Judy Burr ridge
Oregon State University*

Some educators pay close attention to planning the coalition building process; others eschew process planning and operate by the seat of their pants. In either case educators can profit from using a variety of styles when participating in learning and problem solving coalitions. Fielding Cooley's section of this presentation outlines a coalition building process and corresponding roles. Andy Duncan deals with some issues of practical application in the field and, finally, Judy Burr ridge relates roles and practice to issue education styles.

EDUCATIONAL COALITIONS, POLITICAL COALITIONS AND ROLES FOR EXTENSION

*Alan J. Hahn
Cornell University*

Educational coalitions are different from political coalitions. Political coalitions are of two types—*advocacy* and *consensus-seeking*. Development of consensus-seeking coalitions is a reasonable goal for public policy educators; advocacy coalitions should probably be avoided. As extension increasingly works in coalitions, it needs to articulate a public policy education role that is both complementary to others and widely recognized as unique and important.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

ETHICAL ISSUES IN HEALTH CARE REFORM

*Mark H. Waymack
Loyola University Chicago*

Why is there a *moral* necessity for health care reform? What is the moral failure of our current health care delivery system? The current ethical crisis in health care delivery is rooted in our holding at least three different, conflicting conceptions of the ethics of health care delivery. First, we believe in an individual's *right* to medical care. Second, we regard health care as a business, obliged to the ethics of business. Third, we believe the health care system has a moral obligation to care for and promote the *public* welfare. Juggling all three "ethics" simultaneously is responsible for our current moral predicament.

HEALTH REFORM: WHAT THE CLINTON PLAN AND ALTERNATIVES MEAN TO RURAL AND URBAN AMERICA

*Edward F. Howard
Alliance for Health Reform*

Highlights of the Clinton health reform plan include universal coverage, managed competition within a budget, a standard benefits package, insurance reform and establishment of an overall limit for

health care spending. States would set up alliances, administering subsidies for low-income people and low-wage employers, certifying health plans, and running data collection and quality improvement programs. Alternatives include two less intrusive “managed competition” proposals, an incremental plan featuring “medical savings accounts,” rather like IRAs and a “single-payer” Canadian-style plan. We *will* have a health plan passed within the next year because the political case for reform is overwhelming.

HEALTH CARE REFORM: THE IMPLICATIONS FOR HEALTH DATA SYSTEMS

Ronald C. Young
Kansas State University

Health reform, whether at the state or national level, will require greater attention to health care data base development. This paper reviews many of the issues that have faced states as they strive to implement health care data bases and thereby draw policy implications for national systems development. The general purpose of the information system must be clearly understood by policymakers, system managers and users alike. Like the purpose of the system, the scope, the control, the content and the use of the system will determine its nature and its effectiveness in supporting health care reform.

A CASE STUDY OF EXTENSION'S RESPONSE TO HEALTH CARE REFORM

Lorraine Garkovich
University of Kentucky

Current proposals for health care reform may not address the spatial inequalities—the differences in life chances that arise merely from residential location in rural or urban places—that affect access to health care in America. Extension can help rural citizens focus the debate so reforms address their limited access to health services.

PUBLIC ISSUES EDUCATION AND THE NPPEC

PUBLIC ISSUES EDUCATION AND THE NPPEC

*Walter J. Armbruster
Farm Foundation*

Public policy education evolved to allow extension staff to effectively educate on controversial public issues without taking a position. Public policy education specialists have always dealt with a wide range of topics, although the most visible educational materials of the National Public Policy Education Committee (NPPEC) focus primarily on agricultural commodity policy. The issues-alternatives-consequences model combines content expertise and process methodology. In recent years, the content embraced, as well as process developments, have expanded the usefulness of public policy education. The current interest in public issues education provides real opportunities to increase extension staff understanding of how to effectively educate on controversial issues.

PUBLIC ISSUES EDUCATION: A COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE PUBLIC DECISIONS

*Ayse C. Somersan
University of Wisconsin-Extension*

The Cooperative Extension System has defined Public Issues Education as “educational programs which have the objective of enhancing the society’s capacity to understand and address issues of widespread concern.” The vision is to become the premier educational resource to Americans as they relearn the practice of democratic politics. The goal is to assist the citizenry to become active and productive participants in the public decision-making process. The action agenda calls for Cooperative Extension staff at all levels to embrace this effort and to build their content and process capacities. The expected outcome of the initiative is improved quality of public choices.

PUBLIC ISSUES EDUCATION AND THE NPPEC

B. L. Flinchbaugh
Kansas State University

It is time the National Public Policy Education Committee (NPPEC) truly broadens its base. Extension education on public policy issues must cut across many disciplines to provide the input citizens need, in the Jeffersonian sense, to make informed decisions. There is room for family issues, national resource issues and, yes, even price and income policy for farmers. There is room for all of us to apply our unique expertise! The record on farm bill issues needs to be replicated on other issues. It is time to fill the vacuum with some oxygen. What shall we call it? Public policy education, issue-based programming, public issues education? That is immaterial!

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY: THE LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY AGENDA

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY: THE LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY AGENDA

Michael T. Olexa
University of Florida

Environmental policy issues of interest to agriculture and likely to be addressed by the 103rd Congress include nonpoint source pollution, wetlands, endangered species and pesticide issues related to food safety and minor-use pesticide registration. If successfully addressed through law, there still remains the problem of implementation through regulation. The challenge for agency action will be to shape and implement regulations acceptable to diversified interests. The objective of this paper is to highlight the policy issues in the current legislative agenda, note the challenges for implementation and briefly address the opportunities that this agenda holds for extension.

**IMPACTS OF REDUCED PESTICIDE USE
ON THE PROFITABILITY
OF THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SECTOR**

*Charles Hall, Ron Knutson, Ed Smith,
Sam Cotner and John Miller
Texas A&M University*

This study determines the impacts of reduced chemical use on fruit and vegetable crops. Specifically, the yield and per unit cost impacts of eliminating the use of insecticides, fungicides and herbicides was evaluated, as well as the impacts of a 50 percent reduction in the number of applications. The impacts generally were substantial but highly variable among regions and crops. The fresh market crops tended to experience larger yield reductions than the processed market crops. Sweeping pesticide-use reduction involving more than one pesticide category would have more adverse (synergistic) impacts on yield than strategies targeted toward particular pesticides.

**IMPACTS OF EPA DAIRY WASTE REGULATIONS
ON FARM PROFITABILITY**

*Ronald D. Knutson, Joe L. Outlaw and John W. Miller
Texas A&M University*

With the initiation of dairy waste regulatory activity in Texas and Florida during the early 1990s, questions have arisen regarding the impacts of these regulations if extended throughout the United States. The Agricultural and Food Policy Center (AFPC) system of representative dairy farms provided a unique opportunity to evaluate the impacts of these regulations on dairy farm profitability if extended to all other states.

**ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY
AND NATURAL-RESOURCE-BASED
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

*Tim Phipps
West Virginia University*

Environmental policy involves trade-offs among alternative resource uses, economic development and environmental quality. For mining, there are trade-offs between the economic value of the resource and the environmental costs of extraction, processing and

use. Forestry presents the perplexity of a resource that has one type of value when it is harvested and a mutually exclusive value as a standing forest. Fisheries add the complication of a resource that has, in many areas, been severely damaged by nonpoint sources of pollution. Finally, outdoor recreation is a crosscutting issue affected by environmental quality and the decisions on forestry and fishery management.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY: IMPACTS ON NATURAL-RESOURCE-BASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Robert Phillip Jones
Southeastern Fisheries Association

Clean air, clean water and clean land policies, if totally implemented, would have dramatic positive impacts on the economic development of the fishing industry. Public policy issues that need to be re-examined include flawed science, netting ban, allocation of resources among user groups, water quality, endangered species, marine mammal protection, coastal zone use, turtle excluder devices, by-catch reduction devices and transfer of marine resource management to game and fish commission. The elimination of commercial fishing would have monumental social and economic costs. There needs to be a well-thought-out public policy toward production of food from the sea.

TOURISM, NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS AND PUBLIC POLICY

Clyde F. Kiker and Andrew Seidl
University of Florida

Tourism, although a significant economic sector worldwide and the major sector in locations such as Florida and the Caribbean, has received little explicit attention by economists and policy analysts. Especially poorly understood is the relationship of tourism to its natural and social settings. Few explicit public policy forums exist for dealing with the wide array of unfolding issues. The dominant public policy perspective of tourism is as a component of economic growth, as a means of increasing employment. Issues concerning the quality of the social and environmental settings are just beginning to be raised. There are public policy education opportunities in areas where tourism is an important sector and introduction of systematic institutional approaches can lead to improved public participation in setting the direction of tourism.

***The Status of Agriculture
and Rural America***

