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An Assessment of the *NJARE*

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Assessments of the *NJARE* and other agricultural economic journals by faculty in the Northeast Region were contrasted to those made by faculty in other regions. Faculty in the Northeast judged the *NJARE* to be of high professional quality and personal usefulness and felt that the *NJARE* had made substantial quality improvements. A strong regional character in the *NJARE* was evidenced by low journal participation rates by faculty in other regions. Impacts of recent changes in the Journal and the need for future assessments were discussed.

An assessment of journals used by agricultural economics faculty was reported in a recent issue of the *Southern Journal of Agricultural Economics* (Broder and Ziemer). In that study, the *Northeast Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics (NJARE)*¹ did not rank high among agricultural economics and related journals. This note represents a caveat to the earlier study. The objectives of this note are two-fold. First, assessments of the *NJARE* by faculty in the Northeast Region are reported. Second, assessments of the *NJARE* by faculty in the Northeast are compared to assessments by faculty in other regions. In contrast to the methodology used in the earlier report, this note represents a more meaningful assessment of the *NJARE*.

Procedure

Data for this note were obtained from a 1982 assessment of journals by 246 agricultural economics faculty at major land grant universities. Of the 516 questionnaires mailed as part of the original survey, 92 were mailed to faculty employed at major land grant universities in the Northeast Region. The delineation of universities in the Northeast were adapted from Peck and Babb and include the following universities: Connecticut, Cornell, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Penn State, Rut-

gers and Vermont. Thirty-three (33) usable responses were received from the Northeast Region for a response rate of 36 percent. These individual responses form the sample from the assessments made in this note. Additional details on the methodology used in the survey can be found in the previous article.

Faculty Characteristics

Characteristics of the 33 faculty respondents from the Northeast are compared to the 213 faculty from all other regions in Table 1. The sample of respondents from the Northeast consisted of 21 percent assistant professors, 36 percent associate professors and 42 percent professors. When compared to faculty in other regions, faculty in the Northeast had larger teaching and extension appointments and, had fewer years of professional experience. Also, the majority of faculty in the Northeast sample were resource economists in contrast to other regions which were dominated by marketing and policy economists. These sample characteristics were assumed to be representative of the faculty in these regions and have some influence on their assessments of journals.

Journal Rankings

The *NJARE* was included in a list of 25 journals used by agricultural and resource economists. Survey faculty were asked to rank these journals in order of their 1) professional quality and 2) personal usefulness. Rankings of the top ten agricultural economics and related journals are shown in Table 2. The *NJARE*

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¹ Formerly the *Journal of the Northeast Agricultural Economics Council*.

Table 1. General Characteristics of Faculty Surveyed by Region of Employment

Faculty Characteristics	Regions	
	Northeast	All Others
Observations	33	213
Rank:		
% Assistant professors	21.2	24.0
% Associate professors	36.4	23.9
% Professors	42.4	52.1
Appointment:		
% Research	45.7	50.9
% Teaching	34.5	30.1
% Extension	18.2	15.4
% Other	1.6	3.6
Experience		
≤ 10 years	48.5	46.9
> 10 years	51.5	53.1
Specialty:		
% Production, Management & Finance	21.2	25.8
% Marketing and Policy	33.3	38.0
% Resources	39.4	26.8
% Other	6.1	9.3

was ranked fourth in professional quality and second in personal usefulness by Northeast faculty. These rankings are in direct contrast to the tenth place rankings given to the NJARE by faculty in other regions.

As expected, Northeast faculty rankings of the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* (AJAE), *Southern Journal of Agricultural Economics* (SJAE) and *Western Journal of Agricultural Economics* (WJAE), were less than that reported by other regions. Journals

ranked of higher quality and greater usefulness in the Northeast included *Land Economics* and *Agricultural Finance Review*.

Quality Changes

Faculty perceptions of journal quality are thought to change over time. Hence, faculty in the survey were asked to indicate their perceptions of changes in journal quality over the past five years. Faculty in the Northeast reported, overwhelmingly, that the quality of the NJARE had improved in the past five years (Table 3). These views were not shared by their counterparts in other regions. The *North Central Journal of Agricultural Economics* (NCJAE) was ranked second in improvement by Northeast faculty, followed by the SJAE and WJAE. Less than a majority of faculty in the Northeast felt that the other journals had improved.

Only the AJAE was mentioned by Northeast faculty as having declined in quality. However, the percentage of faculty in the Northeast indicating a decline in the AJAE (16.7) was less than that indicated by faculty in other regions (26.5).

Journal Use

Faculty in the survey were also asked to indicate their involvement with various journals,

Table 2. Faculty Rankings of the NJARE and Other Agricultural Economics Journals by Region of Employment

	Region			
	Northeast		All Others	
	Professional Quality	Personal Usefulness	Professional Quality	Personal Usefulness
	-----mean ratings ^a -----			
Northeast J. Agr. & Res. Econ.	8.53 (4)	4.50 (2)	18.07 (10)	15.79 (10)
Amer. J. Agr. Econ.	4.88 (1)	3.76 (1)	3.62 (1)	2.62 (1)
Land Economics	6.19 (2)	6.92 (5)	8.07 (3)	6.46 (4)
Southern J. Agr. Econ.	10.18 (6)	7.70 (7)	8.05 (2)	5.15 (2)
Western J. Agr. Econ.	13.63 (9)	7.55 (6)	8.10 (4)	5.35 (3)
Agr. Econ. Research	9.22 (5)	5.90 (4)	10.17 (5)	7.38 (5)
North Central J. Agr. Econ.	12.00 (8)	4.67 (3)	11.04 (6)	8.57 (6)
Canadian J. Agr. Econ.	11.14 (7)	8.71 (9)	11.45 (7)	11.60 (9)
Agr. Finance Review	7.40 (3)	8.20 (8)	13.95 (8)	11.36 (8)
J. Farm Mgr. & Rural App.	14.25 (10)	11.60 (10)	14.54 (9)	9.26 (7)

^a Ordinal ranking shown in parentheses.

Table 3. Perceptions of Changes in Quality of *NJARE* and Other Agricultural Economics Journals by Region of Employment, 1982

	Faculty perceptions of changes in quality during past five years					
	Improved		Unchanged		Declined	
	Northeast	Others	Northeast	Others	Northeast	Others
	-----percent-----					
Northeast J. Agr. & Res. Econ.	90.0	19.5	10.0	70.7	0.0	9.8
Amer. J. Agr. Econ.	29.2	33.5	54.2	39.4	16.7	26.5
Land Economics	60.0	41.3	40.0	48.0	0.0	10.7
Southern J. Agr. Econ.	62.5	59.6	37.5	34.9	0.0	59.6
Western J. Agr. Econ.	16.7	71.7	83.3	25.7	0.0	3.1
Agr. Econ. Research	36.4	31.4	63.6	54.6	0.0	12.8
North Central J. Agr. Econ.	83.3	46.7	16.7	50.7	0.0	2.7
Canadian J. Agr. Econ.	14.3	31.0	85.7	62.1	0.0	6.9
Agr. Finance Review	16.7	29.2	83.3	60.4	0.0	10.4
J. Farm Mgr. & Rural App.	0.0	27.4	100.0	69.4	0.0	3.2

Table 4. Faculty Use of *NJARE* and Other Agricultural Economics by Region of Employment, 1982

	Presently subscribes to	Consulted in past 5 years	Submitted paper for publication	Have published in	Served in editorial or review capacity
	-----percent of faculty in Northeast ^a -----				
Northeast J. Agr. & Res. Econ.	57.6 (2.4)	69.7 (19.2)	63.3 (3.2)	66.7 (2.8)	54.5 (1.9)
Amer. J. Agr. Econ.	81.8 (89.2)	75.8 (91.1)	69.7 (77.5)	60.6 (66.7)	66.7 (57.7)
Land Economics	15.2 (9.9)	45.5 (48.4)	33.3 (18.3)	12.1 (13.6)	18.2 (14.6)
Southern J. Agr. Econ.	6.1 (40.8)	39.4 (66.2)	6.1 (39.0)	3.0 (31.9)	0.0 (33.8)
Western J. Agr. Econ.	3.0 (36.7)	36.4 (56.3)	12.1 (29.1)	6.1 (23.9)	3.0 (27.8)
Agr. Econ. Research	12.1 (22.1)	45.5 (58.2)	6.1 (8.9)	6.1 (9.9)	3.0 (4.7)
North Central J. Agr. Econ.	6.1 (24.4)	18.2 (46.5)	9.1 (16.0)	6.1 (11.3)	12.1 (16.9)
Canadian J. Agr. Econ.	3.0 (1.9)	36.4 (46.9)	6.1 (8.0)	6.1 (6.1)	0.0 (1.9)
Agr. Finance Review	6.1 (6.1)	21.2 (30.5)	3.0 (4.7)	3.0 (3.8)	3.0 (1.4)
J. Farm Mgr. & Rural App.	0.0 (8.0)	15.2 (37.6)	3.0 (13.1)	0.0 (13.6)	0.0 (3.3)

^a Percentage of faculty in other regions are shown in parentheses.

the results of which are shown in Table 4. Approximately 58 percent of the faculty in the Northeast subscribed to the *NJARE*. The *NJARE* was consulted by 69.7 percent of the Northeast faculty; while 63.3, 66.7 and 54.5 percent of these faculty, respectively, had submitted papers for publications, had published in and had served in an editorial or review capacity. Participation rates by Northeast faculty in the *NJARE* were considered high, ranking second only to participation rates in the *AJAE*.

Participation rates in the *NJARE* by faculty in other regions were almost non-existent in four of the five categories shown in Table 4. These data suggest that the *NJARE* was predominately a regional journal at the time this survey was conducted.

Conclusions

As a caveat to an aggregate assessment of journals used by agricultural economics faculty at major land grant universities, this paper focused on assessments made by faculty employed in the Northeast Region with specific reference to the *NJARE*. This study found that faculty in the Northeast judged the *NJARE* to be of high professional quality and personal usefulness. Faculty in the Northeast felt strongly about improvements in the quality of the *NJARE* and were active in a variety of journal related activities. However, assessments of and participation in *NJARE* activities by faculty in other regions suggested that the *NJARE* has maintained a strong regional character.

Since this survey was conducted, the *NJARE* has undergone two major changes. Beginning with the April-1984 issue the Journal was reduced in size and typeset. With the October-1984 issue the name of the journal was changed to its current title. All of these changes are thought to enhance the Journal's image within and outside of the Northeast Region. A follow-up study using a similar

methodology is recommended to document the impacts of these changes.

Reference

- Broder, Josef M. and Rod F. Ziemer. "Assessment of Journals Used by Agricultural Economists at Land Grant Universities." *S.J. Agri. Econ.* 16-1(1984): 167-172.