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## **CURRENT INFORMATION DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS**

### **1. ProQuest Digital Dissertations**

#### **Improved inventory control strategies for farm supply cooperatives**

Publication Number AAT 3259608

Pakiding, Fitryanti, Ph.D., Oklahoma State University (U.S.A.), 2007, 188 pages;  
Advisor: Kenkel, Phill.

*Scope and method of study.* The general objective of this research was to examine farm supply cooperative inventory management performance and to identify improved inventory control strategies. The data were obtained from an inventory data of a farm supply cooperative in Oklahoma from March 2004 to February 2006. To examine the inventory performance of the cooperative, the Inventory Turnover Ratio (ITR) and Inventory Management Index (IMI) were employed. The major decisions in practicing an effective inventory management within this cooperative coincide with three major trading activities: sale, purchase, and transfer of items between the branches. Therefore, the improved inventory control strategies related to these three activities were developed in this study. A strategy called "proper inventory mix" was implemented to the sale activity; a strategy based on economic order quantity was applied to improve the purchasing activity; lastly the centralization storage model was applied in making a better decision in transferring items between branches activities.

*Finding and conclusions.* The inventory performance of each group of items found to be varied significantly within the group and among the groups of items. The average ITR for the entire cooperative was 3.58 and the average IMI was 0.46. This finding indicates that the cooperative needs to improve its inventory turnover as well as its gross margin. The improved sales strategy was found to significantly increase the performance of some groups of items. The improved purchasing strategy was found to significantly reduce the ordering costs and the holding costs. The stocking locations strategy was found to reduce the total distance to transfer the items, hence decrease the transportation cost. Despite of all the improvement in inventory performance due to the implementation of improved inventory control

strategies developed in this study, it can be concluded that there is no single "ideal" inventory control system that can be applied to every item, hence further research is needed to ascertain a better inventory control system for individual items or group of items.

**Heterogeneity on the commons: An analysis of use and management of common forests in Himachal Pradesh, India**

Publication Number AAT 3254936

Naidu, Sirisha C., Ph.D., University of Massachusetts Amherst (U.S.A.), 2007, 209 pages; Advisor: Stevens, Thomas H.

Community-based natural resource management has become immensely popular among some policy makers on the assumption that involvement of local communities can achieve conservation goals with greater efficiency and equity. However, the community is quite often conceived of as an undifferentiated whole. Given that diverse groups may exist within a community, with heterogeneous interests, abilities, incentives, and social affiliations, such a conception is problematic. This dissertation empirically investigates the effects of heterogeneity on use and management of common forests.

This dissertation conducts a meso-level study of heterogeneity using the 'community' as the unit of analysis. The data are derived from fieldwork conducted in the middle Himalayan ranges of Himachal Pradesh, India in 2004. During this fieldwork, survey data were collected in 54 forest communities. This method contrasts with the usual practice of examining individual motivations or conducting a cross-section country-level study.

There are two key findings. First, three dimensions of heterogeneity affect collective management of forests: heterogeneity in wealth, social groups and incentives. However, these effects are complex and non-linear. The empirical results suggest that both social and wealth heterogeneity have a non-monotonic relationship with cooperation. In addition, heterogeneity in incentives decreases cooperation conditional on the presence of wealth heterogeneity. These results imply that cooperation does not depend on social parochialism, very high levels of wealth heterogeneity reduce cooperation, and a divergence between wealth and incentive to cooperate decreases the level of collective management.

Second, forest use is affected by heterogeneity as well. The sampled communities have access to forests that are common property, in that rights of use are vested with the community and not the individual. This means that all individuals in the community should be able to use the forest to the same degree.

However, on investigating the effect of heterogeneity in forest use, the dissertation finds that wealth heterogeneity increases whereas social heterogeneity decreases the extent of forest use even after controlling for market related factors. The results therefore, suggest that the social structure of the community plays an important role in determining both the degree of cooperation and extent of forest use at the community level.

**Fair trade coffee in Costa Rica: A new model for sustainable development?**

Publication Number AAT 3257741

Pongratz-Chander, Krisztina, Ph.D., Northern Arizona University (U.S.A.), 2007, 383 pages; Advisor: Wright, Stephen.

Costa Rica offers an excellent case study due to its historically distinctive democracy, nationalist tradition, and unique economic development, all aspects historically intertwined with coffee production in this country. This study examines the current situation of coffee producers and the coffee industry, both of which operate under the guidelines of the global commodity chain (GCC), a global trading mechanism that creates power and income disparities among the different actors involved. Fair trade has emerged as an alternative to the GCC with the potential to offer social, economic, and environmental benefits to coffee producers and their communities. This dissertation questions whether fair trade can offer an alternative model of development for coffee producers in Costa Rica in the era of globalization.

Cooperatives can be sites of progressive and social empowerment and the fair trade movement, sharing many of these goals, alternatively markets their products. Drawing upon primary and secondary data, including field research and interviews, this research project examines the nine cooperative members of the consortium COOCAFE from two different angles: first, as cooperatives that offer benefits for its members; second, as fair trade cooperatives that offer fair trade advantages not available to any other coffee cooperative in Costa Rica outside the consortium. A wide spectrum of cooperative and fair trade cooperative attributes and services are examined. The study, moving beyond this initial set of criteria, further examines two issues: environmental sustainability and gender.

Ecological issues that derive from coffee production, such as deforestation, water and soil pollution, and loss of biodiversity are examined to determine if the cooperatives do indeed maintain sustainability while producing coffee, following fair trade criteria. Also, this dissertation addresses the absence of women in the literature of agriculture and development, and examines the role/s that women

involved in the cooperatives have in the production of fair trade coffee and the extent to which fair trade benefits women in particular.

The study concludes that fair trade, as an alternative trading mechanism, has the potential to counterbalance the detrimental outcomes produced by neoliberal free market policies by deconstructing the notion of development and re-designing global trade systems, making small producers more relevant in the global commodity market.

**The farm investment and food security implications of privatized land tenure and cash crop production: Evidence for a cooperative tenure alternative for West African states**

Publication Number AAT NR23849

Tiepoh, Moses Geepu Nah, Ph.D., Concordia University (Canada), 2006, 214 pages; Advisor: Unknown.

In view of the continuing crisis in African agricultural development and particularly food production, and the inefficacy of past policies by African governments and international institutions in improving the investment incentives and productive capacity of low-resource farmers, attention is now being redirected to the institutional context of these farmers, especially the terms on which they own and utilize land. The main debate in this discourse has been about whether or not African indigenous customary land tenure institutions constrain the region's agricultural development and therefore should be replaced with formally privatized tenure systems.

The purpose of this doctoral thesis is to contribute to this debate by explaining and demonstrating how under certain social, political, and institutional governing conditions such customary institutions may evolve into cooperative tenure alternative rather than privatization, promote efficient land use and, in the process, encourage rural farm investments; and by showing that cash crop production, which is linked to land privatization, may impede national food security.

Although previous authors have stressed the need for more inclusive models to address these two research questions, none have provided analyses and evidence that clearly highlighted the linkage between both questions. This dissertation has attempted to accomplish this by demonstrating that farmers operating under a cooperative land tenure system, as facilitated by their social capital and access to state-local institutions, will have less incentive to overexploit any available communal forest land and therefore invest more in intensive farming and agricultural modernization than those producing under a non-cooperative or

privatized tenure. The empirical evidence for this conclusion shows that households farming under cooperative systems have a greater average investment spending than those under privatized systems. The dissertation has also shown that cash crops as produced mainly on privatized land and food crops are substitutes in production. On average a percent increase in cash crop production is associated with a 0.18 percent decrease in food crop production for most West African countries.

Thus it may be the case that cash crop production conflicts with the food security needs of these countries, just as it is supported by a land privatization that undermines farmers' investment incentives.

**Owner value maximization in consumer owned firms**

Publication Number AAT 3254499

Parker, Frederick Byron, Ph.D., University of Missouri – Columbia (U.S.A.), 2006, 120 pages; Advisor James, Harvey S., Jr.

Empirical research on cooperatives assumes profit maximization as the primary objective function, and generally concludes that cooperatives are inefficient. In contrast, theory indicates that cooperatives may pursue different objectives, and may be supra-efficient achieving these objectives. However, no significant empirical evidence of cooperative objectives other than profit maximization exists. This is an important question because cooperatives are theorized to be capable of significant societal objectives, but may be underutilized due to perceptions of inefficiency.

I develop a comprehensive framework regarding consumer owned cooperative firms (COFs) built on existing theory, indicating that COF owner value is inclusive of producer surplus (profit) and transaction costs, but also inclusive of consumer surplus in COFs. Three distinct objectives are studied in an attempt to falsify the framework through a study of electric cooperative COFs in the United States. The framework is not falsified, and evidence favors an interpretation that the framework is accurate, although not proven.

**No place like home: The founding and transformation of the New Deal town of Jersey Homesteads, New Jersey**

Publication Number AAT 3188684

Friedman, Sora H., Ph.D., George Mason University (U.S.A.), 2006, 262 pages;  
Advisor: Levine, Lawrence

This dissertation traces the history of Jersey Homesteads, New Jersey, founded under the New Deal planned communities movement in 1936 and known as Roosevelt since 1945. The town was the only New Deal planned community that targeted urban, Jewish, garment workers and combined agricultural, industrial, and retail cooperatives. While previous scholarship judges the project a failure due to the failure of the cooperatives (the primary concern of federal supporters), based on a review of primary documents, the dissertation argues that the project was actually a success, as it provided a better quality of life for its original settlers. The dissertation considers all of the factors involved in the town's founding: the participation of the settlers who sought to improve their quality of life; the role of "founding father" Benjamin Brown, a Jewish immigrant entrepreneur who sought to establish a Jewish agricultural cooperative; and the town's roots in the back-to-the-land and planned communities movements, and as an artist's colony.

**Market power and policy in the United States dairy industry**

Publication Number AAT 3235961

Ahn, Byeong-II, Ph.D., University of California, Davis (U.S.A.), 2006, 122 pages;  
Advisor: Sumner, Daniel A.

This dissertation provides economic analyses of the interaction between market power and government policy in the U.S. dairy industry. In the first essay, I investigate revealed political market power reflected in the pattern of price discrimination by end-use that is the hallmark of milk marketing orders. This essay shows that the pattern of prices that would maximize producer profits, if producers operated a cartel with monopoly power, is far above actual government-set price differentials between milk used for fluid products and milk used for manufactured products. The pattern of actual price differentials is consistent with political welfare weights for producers that are small relative to the weights that would yield maximum producer profits. These results suggest that while milk producers have more political power than do raw milk buyers, their political power is small relative to full monopoly power in setting prices.

The second essay tests for existence of bilateral market power between raw milk buyers and sellers by investigating reactions of market participants to the price regulations of milk marketing orders. I specify a fixed-effects fluid milk pricing equation that allows a test for oligopsony power of milk bottlers given the oligopoly power of dairy cooperatives. The test results, based on monthly data for 10 years across 30 cities, indicate actual prices respond to minimum prices and therefore milk bottlers and dairy cooperatives both have market power. This implies that minimum price policy has contributed to raise producer profits by raising the bargained prices.

In third essay, building on the developments in essay 2, I develop a practical indicator of relative bargaining power. I define the relative bargaining power of buyers as the ratio of the difference between the actual bargained price and minimum price to the difference between the upper bound for price bargaining and minimum price. The estimation results, based on a reduced form of the pricing, indicate that the relative bargaining power of dairy cooperatives in regional raw milk markets is significant, but small compared to the bargaining power of milk bottlers.

**Farmgate prices and market power in liberalized West African cocoa markets**

Publication Number AAT 3232257

Wilcox, Michael D., Jr., Ph.D., Purdue University (U.S.A.), 2006, 310 pages;  
Advisor: Abbott, Philip C.

Liberalization of West African cocoa markets, following structural adjustment reforms, resulted in the elimination of parastatal marketing boards to promote greater pass-through of world prices to farmers. Concerns about subsequent effects on farmgate prices, farmer income, and marketing channel competitiveness have been raised. This research estimates the extent of non-competitive behavior in West African cocoa markets and investigates implications of these findings on policy prescriptions.

Cameroon served as a case study to examine farmgate transactions. A survey was conducted to collect data to investigate price transmission. Imperfect price transmission was found between world and farmgate prices. Regression results suggest that marketing margins are significantly influenced by institutional variables, indicating that the farmgate market is not competitive. Itinerant buyers exert market power against farmers while marketing cooperatives have significant countervailing power.



A conjectural variations approach was adopted to estimate the degree of market power present in cocoa markets of Ivory Coast and Nigeria. Evidence of market power was found between buying centers and ports in Ivory Coast. Market power, exercised in part by multinational exporters, must be considered in concert with the Ivorian government, which still collects non-trivial export taxes. Ivorian civil war appears to have rent-reducing effects. No evidence of market power was found in Nigeria.

Suggested policies to increase farmer income, such as export taxes, Fair Trade, and cooperatives were examined in a partial equilibrium framework. The model incorporated prevailing market conditions; variants compared outcomes under competitive, imperfectly competitive, and price transmission cases. These initiatives suffer from problems common to agricultural policies. If policies provide incentives for supply expansion, then farmgate prices are driven downward (Fair Trade). Fair Trade type premiums help farmers more if decoupled from supply and demand. Farmers benefit only partially from export tax reduction in a large country (Ivory Coast), but lose when a small country (Cameroon) introduces export taxes. Cooperatives have a positive effect on member income, but at the expense of non-members. Consumers stand to gain more than farmers if demand is indeed more inelastic than supply. While these policies may benefit targeted farmers, market interactions diminish benefits to farmers overall.

**The social ecology of agrarian reform: The landless rural worker's movement and agrarian citizenship in Mato Grosso, Brazil**

Publication Number AAT 3192092

Wittman, Hannah K., Ph.D., Cornell University (U.S.A.), 2005, 244 pages; Advisor: Geisler, Charles.

This dissertation investigates how relationships between society and nature are changed through the struggle for land and agrarian reform in the Brazilian state of Mato Grosso. Since the mid 1980s, Mato Grosso has become Brazil's leading soybean producer and the expansion of export-oriented agriculture has been a priority of local, state, and federal governments. In 1995 a national agrarian social movement, the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (Landless Rural Workers Movement, or MST), began mobilizing to resettle displaced family farmers in Mato Grosso through the implementation of constitutionally sanctioned agrarian reform programs.

Through a set of four related papers, this dissertation substantiates the claim that the struggle for land in Mato Grosso is a struggle to define new material

landscapes, as well as to create new spaces for the exercise of agrarian and environmental citizenship through the implementation of new relations of production and participation. Ultimately, it is a struggle to produce a new society based on social and ecological justice.

In Chapter Two, I investigate the mutual constitution of society and nature through an analysis of the socio-ecological triple movement in Mato Grosso. I argue that ongoing landscape transformation in this region is the material outcome of interactions between the local ecology and two dominant or competing movements: the "soy society" representing the expansionist or commodifying tendencies of agroindustrial capitalism in Brazil's center-west region and the MST, which contests this expansion in a countermovement embodied in particular spatial, political, and agro-ecological practices.

In Chapter Three, I undertake a historical ethnography of frontier colonization and grassroots agrarian reform programs in Mato Grosso, showing how the occupation of new and old spaces on the socio-ecological landscape changes both the opportunities for and the practice of agrarian citizenship. In Chapter Four, I focus on the development of an alternative strategy of agricultural cooperation developed by the MST and its implications for both settlement viability and regional development. In Chapter Five, I explore the concepts of ecological democracy and ecological citizenship to evaluate the potential of grassroots movements to achieve an ecological land reform in Mato Grosso.

**A socio-economic analysis of land settlement in Libya: The case of Wadi Al-Hai project**

Publication Number AAT C822216

Amara, Abdulkarim Mohamed, Ph.D., University of Northumbria at Newcastle (United Kingdom), 2005, 260 pages; Advisor: Unknown.

The present study is concerned with the settlement and agricultural development process as it is taking place in the Wadi Al-Hai agricultural project and the influence of some socio-economic factors on the agricultural exploited area.

The Wadi Al-Hai project is one of the most important agricultural development projects in Libya. It is located 85 km south-west of the capital city Tripoli, and includes 417 farms, with each farm being 25 hectares, and consisting of a modern house and all agricultural requirements.

For the empirical study, two types of analysis will be used: (1) Descriptive statistical analysis: describing the study the main features of the structure of agriculture development in the Wadi Al-Hai area, and the economic situation of the

farmers in the project. The data for this part were analyzed on the basis of simple but appropriate statistical measures, such as frequency ratios, means and distributions, standard error and the chi-square test. (2) Econometric Analysis: using economic statistical analysis and the relations between different economic and social variables in a set of mathematical models aiming to explore the potential contributions and influences of such factors in this project. In short, a log-linear cross sectional model is developed aiming at relating the relevant socio-economic factors to the exploited areas.

Also the study is based on a survey of 105 settlement households located in the Wadi Al-Hai project. Key socio-economic characteristics of the farmers are related to their experience and quantitative survey data are supplemented by qualitative interview material. Additional documents were provided by the Council of Agricultural Development, Secretariat of Planning.

The theoretical analysis is based on economic development and growth with reference to agriculture and agricultural development in Libya. A number of weaknesses in the project are identified such as in the operation of cooperatives, marketing arrangements, extension services and water management. In conclusion, some agricultural policy recommendations are made for the exploitation of natural resources and human resources in the project. Our initial results indicate that all the variables studied have statistically significant effects on the agricultural exploited area in the project.

#### **A tale of two communities and other deforestation stories**

Publication Number AAT 3196586

Alix Garcia, Jennifer Marie, Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley (U.S.A.), 2005, 115 pages; Advisors: de Janvry, Alain, Sadoulet, Elisabeth

This dissertation contains three chapters: two explaining deforestation in common property forests in Mexico, and a third examining the relative merits of different designs of payment programs to mitigate deforestation loss. All three chapters use data collected in 2002 in Mexico.

The first chapter develops and tests two game theoretic models analyzing the deforestation decision. This dichotomy is based upon the observation that communities that extract wood for sale, as opposed to those living from agriculture, behave in very different manners. The model in the latter case allows for simultaneous cooperative and non-cooperative groups within the same community. We confirm empirically that a larger cooperative group leads to lower deforestation. In the former situation, a dynamic model explains how investment in

community public goods is used as a payoff to those in the village without rights to forestry profits. This payoff minimizes their incentive to encroach upon the forest. In these communities, econometric results show that larger investment in public goods does lead to less forest conversion.

The second chapter explores the questions of both *where* and *how much* deforestation occurs in total within community boundaries. The model shows that this is a joint decision for the community. In contrast to the single-user, single parcel approach common in the land-use change literature, individual forest parcels in a given property are ordered according to their value in pasture and deforested to the point where the total deforestation requirements of the community are satisfied. Empirical results confirm these predictions.

In the third chapter, principles of environmental payment schemes are formalized into three programs that are then simulated: payment of the opportunity cost for forests at risk: a flat payment scheme with a cap on allowable hectares; and opportunity cost payments for forest at risk with highest environmental benefit per dollar paid. The last is most efficient and the second most egalitarian. Larger and more remote communities receive most of the budget from the most efficient program. Under this program more, but lower, payments go to poor and indigenous communities, and these are more efficient than those allocated to the non-poor and non-indigenous.

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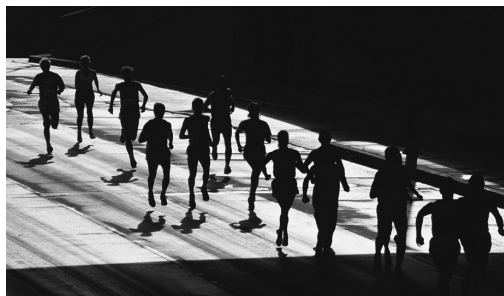
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