

Agenda

- 10:00 a.m. -10:45 a.m. **Introduction and information sharing**
- 10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. **A Macro Indicator Analysis of the Evolving Urban-Rural Divide**
Dr. Roberto Gallardo, Vice President for Engagement and Associate Professor of
Agricultural Economics, Purdue University
- 11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. **Lunch Break**
- 12:45 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. **Renewable Energy and Farmland Market Dynamics**
Binayak Kunwar, PhD Student, Department of Agricultural Economics,
Purdue University
- 1:45 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. **Break**
- 2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. **Future Meeting Planning and Feedback**
- 2:15 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. **The Department of Agricultural Economics Current Status and Vision for the Future**
Dr. Nicole Widmar, Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics,
Purdue University

Speaker Bio

Dr. Roberto Gallardo Roberto Gallardo is Vice President for Engagement and Associate Professor in the Agricultural Economics Department at Purdue University. He holds an electronics engineering undergraduate degree, a master's in economic development, and a Ph.D. in Public Policy and Administration. Gallardo has worked with rural communities for over a decade conducting local and regional community economic development, including use of technology for development. He has authored more than 100 articles including peer-reviewed and news-related publications regarding rural trends, socioeconomic analysis, industrial clusters, the digital divide, and leveraging broadband applications for community economic development. He is the author of the books "Responsive Countryside: The Digital Age & Rural Communities," which highlights a 21st century community development model that helps rural communities transition to, plan for, and prosper in the digital age, and "Indiana at a Glance: Edition 2025," which analyzes more than 60 county, state, regional, and national variables around population, workforce development, economic development, income, housing and caring, and digital opportunities. Dr. Gallardo is a TEDx speaker and currently serves on the Federal Reserve Board Community Advisory Council.

Binayak Kunwar Binayak Kunwar is a second-year PhD student in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Purdue University. Binayak completed his master's degree at Purdue in Agricultural Economics in 2024 and last summer his thesis entitled "Impact of Commercial and Utility-Scale Solar Energy on Farmland Prices" received the Outstanding Master's Thesis Award from the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association. His MS advisor was Dr. Todd Kuethe and his PhD advisor is Dr. Chad Fiechter.

Dr. Nicole Widmar Nicole Widmar is Department Head and Professor of Agricultural Economics at Purdue University. A native of New York state, Dr. Widmar has a bachelor's degree in animal science from Cornell University and a Ph.D. in agricultural economics from Michigan State University. She joined Purdue in 2010 and has served in many leadership positions, winning numerous awards including the Richard L. Kohls Outstanding Undergraduate Teacher Award and the Purdue University Faculty Engagement Scholar Award. Her teaching, research, and Extension activities focus on farm business management and production economics, with recent work concentrating on consumer perceptions of livestock-derived food products. She conducts interdisciplinary research that provides support for on-farm decision making regarding technology adoption, analysis of producer costs and benefits associated with alternative production processes, support for management of purchased inputs, and insight into the implications of changing consumer demand and preferences for agricultural producers. Dr. Widmar is proud of the uniquely entrepreneurial nature of the agricultural economics department and looks forward to supporting faculty development, guiding students, and helping shape the strategic direction of the department.