

Keeping Track

PURDUE UNIVERSITY
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

Vol. XIV No. 3

Fall 2009



Benjamin Gramig



Kenneth Foster



Joan Fulton



Maria Marshall



Philip Abbott



Christopher Hurt



Wallace Tyner

Multiple Awards for AgEcon at AAEA

The Agricultural & Applied Economics Association Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony were held July 27, 2009. Recognizing that professional success depends on professional recognition, the AAEA takes pride in recognizing the outstanding contributions of its members in a variety of different categories. This year, faculty were chosen for multiple awards, including the prestigious naming of two AAEA Fellows who have made outstanding continuous contribution to the profession.

Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation, Honorable Mention: Benjamin Gramig

Distinguished Graduate Teaching, Ten or More Years Experience: Kenneth Foster

Distinguished Extension/Outreach Program, Group: Joan Fulton and Maria Marshall for the AICC-New Ventures Team

Quality of Communication: Philip Abbott, Christopher Hurt, Wallace Tyner for "What's Driving Food Prices?"

AAEA Fellows: John Connor and Matthew Holt

Graduate Student Extension Competition Award: Anna Flaig

Best Economics Paper, Food Safety and Nutrition: Christiane Schroeter, Jason Lusk, and Wallace Tyner

Best Undergraduate Paper: Sam Clark, advisor, Corinne Alexander

Elected AAEA President: Thomas Hertel



John Connor



Matthew Holt



Anna Flaig



Samuel Clark



Thomas Hertel



Corinne Alexander

Akridge Named Dean of Purdue Agriculture



Jay Akridge was named the Glenn W. Sample Dean of Agriculture at Purdue University, taking on a job that oversees academic, research, Extension and regulatory service for the state and beyond. Akridge replaces Randy Woodson who was named Purdue's provost last May. "Jay is an excellent leader who has a clear vision for Purdue Agriculture," Woodson said in announcing the appointment. "He is a very positive force who has the ability to build on the outstanding quality of one of the nation's leading agricultural institutions."

"Agriculture plays an important role in Indiana's economic vitality," Akridge said. "The state looks to us to grow leaders to create new enterprises, provide expertise to help the industry remain globally competitive, and be a valued partner in youth and rural development. This is our charge and is what the people of Purdue Agriculture are passionate about."

Akridge had been serving as interim dean, and previously served as the university's interim vice provost for engagement and was director of the Center for Food and Agricultural Business, which provides professional development and research for agricultural industries. He was director of the Purdue and Indiana University Kelley School of Business MS/MBA in Food and Agribusiness Management program and the James and Lois Ackerman Professor of Agricultural Economics. Akridge is an agribusiness expert with research, teaching and Purdue Extension activities focused on improving managerial decision-making skills. Special interests include strategic management and marketing, adoption of new technology, and the buying behavior of agricultural producers. <http://news.uns.purdue.edu/x/2009a/090107WoodsonAkridge.html>

Quick Reference
Department of Agricultural Economics
765-494-4191

Department Head
Kenneth Foster, Ph.D.
765-494-4191
kfoster@purdue.edu

Associate Department Head
William Masters, Ph.D.
765-494-4235
wmasters@purdue.edu

Associate Department Head
Director, Graduate Programs
Gerald Shively, Ph.D.
765-494-1116
shivelyg@purdue.edu

Teaching Coordinator
Frank Dooley, Ph.D.
765-494-4244
dooleyf@purdue.edu

Extension Coordinator
George Patrick, Ph.D.
765-494-4191
gpatrick@purdue.edu

Graduate Coordinator
LouAnn Baugh
765-494-4196
baughl@purdue.edu

Director, Undergraduate Advising
and Student Services
LeeAnn Williams
765-494-0262
leewill@purdue.edu

Director, Center for
Food and Agricultural Business,
and Director, Purdue-Kelly MS-MBA
in Food and Agricultural Business
Alan Gray, Ph.D.
765-494-4327
gray@purdue.edu

Director, Center for Rural Development
Kevin McNamara, Ph.D.
765-494-4236
mcnamara@purdue.edu

Director, Cropping Systems Mgmt,
Team Co-Leader, Site Specific
Management Center
Bruce Erickson, Ph.D.
765-494-9557
berickso@purdue.edu

Executive Director, Indiana Council for
Economic Education
Harlan Day, Ph.D.
765-494-8545
dayhr@purdue.edu

Newsletter Managing Editor
Debby Weber
765-494-4205
weberdl@purdue.edu

DEPARTMENT HEAD, KENNETH FOSTER, COMMENTS



Kenneth Foster

The great Yogi Berra, well known for his baseball talents as well as his oxymoronic comments, said, "You better cut the pizza in four pieces because I'm not hungry enough to eat six." Perhaps- hang with me here- Ag Econ students are analogous to Berra's pizza. We are looking for new ways to teach a rapidly growing cadre of future agricultural economists. Our undergraduate enrollment has expanded from the mid-300's to nearly 500 students in the past few years. As a result, we are busy figuring out new ways to educate in order to provide this growing demand with the high-quality education that they expect and deserve. It's a great challenge to have and demonstrates the importance of food and agriculture to the state, nation, and world. Like the size of Berra's pizza slices, our class sizes are growing to accommodate the increase in students. This means we are experimenting with approaches to create smaller classroom experiences within the larger classroom setting. We are also experimenting with online educational settings such as virtual labs for some of the more computationally oriented courses.

These are exciting times to be an economist and to be in the business of economics education. Daily, the news is full of teachable opportunities both in the classroom and through our Extension efforts. It is our goal to continue producing graduates who excel in their careers and make lasting contributions to their communities and the economy. It is also our goal to enhance our efforts to support life-long learning for stakeholders in our Extension programs. In this issue of our annual newsletter you will read about the accomplishments of some of our current students and recent graduates as well as our faculty and staff. Those honors span the breadth of the department's missions of learning, discovery, engagement and international development. We are proud of our traditions and reputation and plan to continue down the road of excellence because as Yogi Berra once said, "You've got to be very careful if you don't know where you are going, because you might not get there."

Homecoming



The Boilermakers will host the Northwestern Wildcats on Saturday, October 3, 2009. A 12 noon kickoff will be preceded by activities, stage performances, food vendors, individual college/school tents, including the College of Agriculture tent located on the Memorial Mall across from the Ag Administration Building. A buffet will be held from 9 to 11 a.m., and AgEcon Professors Bill Uhrig, Wally Tyner, Joan Fulton, and Steven Wu will be in attendance to greet and get better acquainted with visitors. Contact the Agricultural Alumni Association for information at (765) 494-8593. Purchase tickets on-line: <http://www.purduesports.com/tickets/pur-tickets.html>



ICEE at the State Fair

Thanks to the skilled exhibit makers in the Department of Agricultural Communications at Purdue University, the Indiana Council for Economic Education was prominently featured at this year's Indiana State Fair. The informative display, with Herschel the puppet dog as the centerpiece (<http://www.kidseconposters.com/herschel.html>), highlighted many ICEE programs including curriculum materials that will help teachers implement new legislation requiring the teaching of financial education in grades 6-12.

ICEE website: <http://www.econed-in.org/>

DEPARTMENT EVENTS AND HONORS

Dooley Receives Highest Teaching Honors



Frank Dooley

Frank Dooley was honored with a 2009 Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award in Memory of Charles B. Murphy, Purdue's highest undergraduate teaching honor,

the Murphy award is given annually in recognition of outstanding teaching in all phases of undergraduate instruction at the West Lafayette campus. A \$10,000 monetary award accompanies the honor. Frank's name will be included in the engraved Book of Great Teachers, a plaque in Purdue Memorial Union that honors the best teachers throughout Purdue's history. Murphy was a history professor at Purdue between 1927 and 1970.

The College of Agriculture also honored Dr. Dooley by awarding him the Richard L. Kohls Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award. He will receive a commemorative plaque and cash award from the college.

Dr. Dooley has won 13 awards for outstanding teaching and advising, including the [American Agricultural Economics Association Outstanding Undergraduate Teacher in 2000](#), the David C. Pfendler College of Agriculture Outstanding Counselor Award in 2004, and was named a Faculty Fellow in Purdue University's [Teaching Academy](#) in 2002. He is the Education Representative to the [Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals](#), Indianapolis Chapter.

Outstanding Visiting Economist Award

Otto Doering received the first Bruce Gardner Outstanding Visiting Economist Award at the USDA Economists Group meeting in Washington, D.C. Each year the group honors distinguished economists for their contribution to agricultural economics and policy. The award, presented by Richard Just, President of the Agricultural



Otto Doering

& Applied Economics Association, was designed to honor the service of academic and industry colleagues who have distinguished themselves through service to the USDA.

Extension Specialists Recognized for Outstanding Careers

The Purdue University Cooperative Extension Specialist Association recognized specialists and professionals for outstanding contributions to Indiana during the annual Purdue Extension awards banquet in September 2008.



Christopher Hurt

Christopher Hurt was named the Career Award winner. An agricultural economist, Hurt provides economic evaluations on how current issues impact Indiana agriculture. He supplies regular outlook analysis and information for corn, soybeans, cattle, hogs and Indiana farm income, as well as educational programs on the use of futures and options markets. Hurt coordinates the annual Agricultural Outlook program for the Department of Agricultural Economics. Throughout the year he presents additional outlook meetings and speaks to many groups, averaging about 80 engagements per year during a 26-year period, reaching an average of 6,000 people each year. In addition, Hurt maintains outlook information on a departmental Web site and coordinates a Web site with the University of Illinois that records 20,000 hits per month. He annually receives about 220 requests for media interviews ranging from local newspapers to national media, such as the Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post and National Public Radio.



Allan Miller

Allan Miller received the Mid-Career Award. Miller, an agricultural economist, collaborates with Purdue Extension educators to organize the annual Indiana Farm Management Tour and is co-leader of the annual Farming Together Workshop at Purdue.

He has worked on many Purdue Extension farm management programs and publications, including co-authoring the annual "Purdue Crop Cost and Returns Guide." In the late 1990s, Miller chaired a departmental working group that developed a strategic planning publication titled "Positioning the Farm Business." It became a basis for workshops and later a series of publications and distance education efforts. Miller helped organize training programs designed to aid farm audiences in using accounting software. He has counseled many Hoosier farm families on farm succession planning and uses those experiences to make his classroom teaching more relevant. Miller is past president of the National Association of Farm Business Analysis Specialists and is currently president-elect of the National Farm Financial Standards Council.



Maria Marshall

Maria Marshall was recognized as the Early Career Award winner. An agricultural economist, she leads Purdue Extension programs for small business development, providing research-based management assistance, instruction and publications for diverse audiences. She has presented workshops throughout the state, nation and world in both English and Spanish for audiences ranging from small farm owners in developing countries to highly educated technology entrepreneurs. Marshall's flagship program is the INventure Web site, which has more than 3,600 registered users. She has taught Extension educators from Indiana and other states to use INventure to increase their capacity to assist entrepreneurs through the business planning process. During her Food Entrepreneurship Program jointly delivered with the Food Science Department, she offers biannual workshops that help participants make more informed decisions and avoid costly mistakes. To read the complete article: <http://news.uns.purdue.edu/x/2008b/080917HibberdPucesa.html>

(continued on pg 4)

DEPARTMENT EVENTS AND HONORS



Allan Gray

Allan Gray has been named director of the Center for Food and Agricultural Business and the MS-MBA in Food and Agribusiness Management.

Gray will provide strategic direction for the Center, work with food and agribusiness managers in the Center's professional development programs, and conduct research on agribusiness management and decision-making. The MS-MBA in Food and Agribusiness Management is a dual-degree, distance-delivered program offered in partnership by Purdue and Indiana Universities. Gray joined the Purdue staff in 1998. He has received numerous awards, including the American Agricultural Economics Association's Distinguished Extension/Outreach Program Award, the Purdue University Dean's Team Award and the United States Distance Learning Association's Excellence in Distance Teaching Award

Ethanol Co-products Team Awarded for Research & Outreach

A team of Purdue University agricultural researchers studying corn ethanol co-products is the recipient of the 2009 Purdue Agriculture Team Award. The Integrated Corn Ethanol Co-Products team is an interdisciplinary applied research and Extension rapid-response effort composed of more than 40 researchers representing five departments within Purdue Agriculture, including Agricultural and Biological Engineering, Agricultural Economics, Agronomy, Animal Sciences, and Botany and Plant Pathology.

"This team is a great example of what can happen when a group of researchers cross disciplines and work together to address issues on a global scale," said Jay Akridge, the Glenn W. Sample Dean of Agriculture. "The team's contributions to renewable energy sectors through research and Extension are playing a vital role in creating more sustainable agriculture and biofuels industries." Formed in 2006, the team has addressed issues surrounding

the increasing production of dry distillers' grains with solubles (DDGS) from the corn ethanol industry. Projects have included research in the DDGS production process, impacts of DDGS as an animal feed ingredient and the economics of its use, such as by reducing ethanol waste. In addition to research, the team created a series of Bioenergy Extension publications, sponsored several seminars and a conference for stakeholders, and wrote numerous scientific journal articles.

Team members from Agricultural Economics include Bhawna Bista, Frank Dooley, Kenneth Foster, Brandon Hollas, Joseph Hubbs, Christopher Hurt, Paul Preckel and Wallace Tyner of Agricultural Economics. Funding was provided by the participating departments, and through partnerships with the Indiana State Department of Agriculture and The Andersons Clymers Ethanol.

To read the complete article: <http://news.ans.purdue.edu/x/2009a/090515IlelejiAward.html>

For more information on bioenergy and to access the team's publications, go online to <http://extension.purdue.edu/renewable-energy/bioenergy.shtml>

Quagraine Receives Distinguished Early Career Award



Kwamena Quagraine

Kwamena Quagraine, an Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant aquaculture-marketing specialist, received the Distinguished Early Career Award from the United States Aquaculture Society.

This award is given to individuals who have been involved in aquaculture for less than 10 years and have shown outstanding leadership, research, education, extension, or industry development. Quagraine, who has been at Purdue since 2005, holds a joint appointment in Agricultural Economics and Forestry and Natural Resources. Kwamena works with the aquaculture industries in Illinois and Indiana, aquaculture producers, aquaculture associations,

distributors, restaurants, retail outlets, and consumers to develop viable markets for Indiana and Illinois farm-raised aquaculture products. He conducts aquaculture-marketing workshops for producers, provides training and educational materials for farmers and Extension Educators, and helped co-author the Aquaculture Marketing Handbook. To learn more about aquaculture at Purdue: <http://www.ag.purdue.edu/fnr/Pages/extaquatics.aspx>

Tyner Co-Chairs Purdue Center for Research in Energy Systems and Policy

Purdue and Indiana universities have joined forces to expand research exploring crucial issues surrounding energy production, distribution and use. The two institutions have jointly created the Indiana Consortium for Research in Energy Systems and Policy to advance interdisciplinary research related to energy systems and environmental and energy policy issues. Members of the consortium include IU Bloomington, Purdue University in West Lafayette, and Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

In Discovery Park, the new Center for Research in Energy Systems and Policy will lead the effort, focusing on Purdue's strengths in engineering and technology with an economic analysis component. Wallace Tyner, professor of agricultural economics and co-chair of the Purdue center, will manage the Purdue portion of the consortium. "The consortium will help researchers at all three institutions move from discipline-specific approaches to address energy problems from a more comprehensive energy-systems perspective," Tyner says.

The primary goals include facilitating the formation of interdisciplinary and multi-institution research teams; securing funding for research team projects; and conducting objective research focused on meaningful solutions to challenges result-



Wallace Tyner

DEPARTMENT NEWS AND EVENTS

ing from increased demand for energy resources. Says Purdue President France A. Córdoba, "Purdue and IU each have significant strengths in energy systems and will bring together all our resources to develop solutions, not just for Indiana and our nation, but also for our global community."

For the complete article: <http://news.uns.purdue.edu/x/2008b/081030TynerCresp.html>

CAFO Impacts Mixed in Communities

"Community Impacts of Confined Animal Feeding Operations" examined 50 CAFOs in Benton, Cass, Huntington, Jasper, Jay, Randolph, Wabash and Wells counties. The 2007-08 study looked at demographics, labor, impacts on local government budgets, environment violations, and county planning and zoning.

The research team of AgEcon professors, Janet Ayres, Lawrence DeBoer and Roman Keeney, and Tamilee Nennich from Animal Sciences, presented the full study on June 18 in a statewide broadcast carried live at Purdue Extension offices and other locations in 21 Indiana counties.

CAFOs are livestock production operations where large numbers of animals are raised in buildings or similar enclosed facilities. There are approximately 645 CAFOs operating in Indiana. Focused on swine and dairy CAFOs, researchers interviewed operators, county government and highway officials, and pored over tax documents and environmental records.

About a third of the CAFO operators within the eight counties studied were interviewed. "Evaluating their reception since beginning operation, 80 percent of surveyed operators rate community

response as mostly positive or all positive."

Surveys indicated that CAFO operators make large feed and supplies purchases both locally and within Indiana and make greater use of hired labor than typical farm operations, Keeney said. "This hired labor runs the gamut from hired managers to part-time help, with wages that tend to be higher than average agricultural wages and comparable to county averages," he said.

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management cited 39 rules violations at animal feeding operations in the study counties over a 13-year period ending in 2008. Fifteen of those were issued to CAFOs. Twenty-five of the violations occurred during manure application on crop fields.

The impact of CAFOs on local government budgets and taxes was mixed, said Larry DeBoer. "An analysis of county taxes and budgets shows that some CAFOs generate enough added tax revenue to cover the added costs they create, and some do not," DeBoer said. Part of the CAFO tax bills provide tax relief for existing taxpayers, he added. Zoning and land-planning issues were even more complex. While counties have zoning ordinances that apply to land use, there are differences in how each approaches CAFOs, Ayres said.

The two-hour broadcast is available for viewing online by logging onto <http://www.agecon.purdue.edu/extension/programs/cafo.asp>

Extension publications based on the study can be found at <http://www.ansc.purdue.edu/CAFO/>

To read the complete article: <http://news.uns.purdue.edu/x/2009a/090618AyresCAFO.html>

National Guard Trained as Ag Educators

A unit of specially selected Indiana National Guard members were trained at Purdue University for deployment to Afghanistan as agricultural educators. The mission is to support the military operation there by providing the Afghan people

advice that could help them improve their agribusiness operations. The 28-member unit had training in agriculture-related functions including irrigation, crop production and pest management, soils assessment, livestock management, food storage, and marketing and nutrition.

"The idea is modeled after Extension as it was developed in this country," said Kevin McNamara, professor of agricultural economics and leader of Purdue's efforts to work with Afghanistan's Kabul University in improving its agricultural education program. McNamara said that just as the United States successfully applies university research to support and improve peoples' lives through Extension, the goal of this group is to help the Afghans enhance their standard of living.

"Afghan agriculture is quite different from that in the United States, so even though most of the unit has agricultural experience, we are preparing them for situations they will face there," McNamara said. For example, Afghan farmers spread wheat by hand to plant it. U.S. farmers no longer do that, so "broadcast planting" will be covered in a session on planting wheat and corn. McNamara said the typical farm in Afghanistan is about one or two acres in size. The farmers use oxen to pull the plow and dry their crops in the sun.

The Indiana National Guard unit will be deployed for approximately one year, with plans to send additional units over the next two years. The unit will be able to connect back to both Purdue for information during its deployment.

Full story: <http://news.uns.purdue.edu/x/2008b/081113McNamaraGuard.html>

Retirement of Edna Loehman

Dr. Edna Loehman came to the Department of Agricultural Economics in February, 1981 from SRI, International, a consulting firm. She had previously been an assistant professor for six years at the University of Florida in Agricultural Eco-



Janet Ayres



Lawrence DeBoer



Roman Keeney



Kevin McNamara

DEPARTMENT NEWS AND EVENTS

nomics. She received both her Masters degree in Mathematics (1967) and PhD in Economics in 1970 from Purdue.



Dr. Edna Loehman

Dr. Loehman developed and taught Applied Welfare Economics for a number of years and enjoyed interacting with students on applied policy projects.

For this course, she developed a novel teaching approach: computer programs to teach price equilibrium and pricing for externalities and public goods. Dr. Loehman also initiated and taught a course in Mathematical Economics and a course in Environmental Economics.

Initially, she participated and taught in the Center for Public Policy and Public Administration under Bob Whitford, which allowed her to interact with students from all over the world. As a result of this experience, she helped foster interdisciplinary teaching at Purdue.

Dr. Loehman is listed as one of the top 50 women economists in terms of citations for 1971-87 (in Ratings of Women Economists by Citations, Journal of Economics and Business, 1990). She also received an NSF Career Advancement Award for 1994-95. Several of her students received American Agricultural Economics Ph.D. dissertation awards. Dr. Loehman was among the first chairs of the Committee of Women in Agricultural Economics, elected for 1987-88.

Dr. Loehman was an active contributor to several cooperative regional research projects, including NE-165 (Private Strategies, Public Policies, and Food System Performance), NC-230 (Integrating biophysical functions of riparian systems with management practices and policies), and W-1190 (Interfacing technological, economic, and institutional principles for managing inter-sector mobilization of water).

Four important themes of her research were: 1) measurement of non-market values; 2) cooperation and cost-sharing; 3) risk and insurance; 4) water pricing and management. She was one of the pioneers

of contingent valuation and conducted several environmental or public goods research applications. She was also one of the first to use cooperative game theory for cost sharing and later developed a pricing method for shared goods which was tested with experimental economics. She developed applications in the risk arena, including agricultural insurance and cropping with weather risk. Dr. Loehman also developed several novel theories, including an alternative to expected utility theory and a new method for water pricing that ensures cost recovery.

Dr. Loehman published and wrote chapters for two edited books while at Purdue: Water Quantity/Quality Management and Conflict Resolution, 1995 (co-author Ariel Dinar), and Designing Institutions for Environmental and Resource Management, 1998 (co-author Marc Kilgour). When she was on the faculty at the University of Florida, she edited Economics and Decision-making for Environmental Quality, 1974 (co-author J. Richard Connor).

She served for many years on the University Compensation and Benefits Committee and for three years on a university-wide proposal review committee (Kinley Trust Selection Committee). She was an Associate for the Tippecanoe Soil and Water Conservation District and served on the Lafayette Groundwater Protection Committee. She has been a member of the Bach Chorale, the Lafayette Peace Coalition, the Sierra Club, and the Holocaust Remembrance Committee.

Her daughter Rachel Loehman, and before death, her mother Gisela Tusak, encouraged and supported these endeavors.

Through the years, Dr. Loehman has enjoyed interacting with the excellent graduate students in the department and her outstanding colleagues with their important applications of policy analysis, a hallmark of the Purdue Agricultural Economics Department.

Entrepreneurial success starts with planning

In an economy shedding jobs, some un-

employed people might think it's time to become their own boss. Before they go to work for themselves, they've got another job to do: develop their business idea, said Maria Marshall, agricultural economist and rural business development specialist. Prospective entrepreneurs should consider the type of product or service they plan to offer, the market for that product or service, and how much revenue they will need to keep their business afloat, she said. A Purdue University online resource can help. The Purdue INVenture Business Planner can assist individuals navigating the entrepreneurial maze.

"It is designed to be user-friendly and to guide someone through a business plan by asking them questions," Marshall said.

"We have it set up in six stages, the first stage of which is what I call the back-of-the-napkin approach. If you go no further than the first stage, the first four questions will ask you, 'Why do you want to start the business?' 'Who is your customer?' 'What's your product?' and 'What's the break even?'

Subsequent stages help the user analyze the market, establish how the product or service will be produced, determine what it will take to market the product or service, and calculate expenses and returns. The user will generate a report that will place answers into a business plan format and help decide whether or not the proposed business might be successful. IN-Venture is offered through the Agricultural Innovation and Commercialization Center (AICC), housed in the Department of Agricultural Economics. AICC provides a wide range of resources and tools to aid entrepreneurs.

The planner is free and available online at <https://www.agecon.purdue.edu/planner/>

Distinguished Agricultural Alumni

The College of Agriculture honored distinguished alumni on March 5, 2009. This annual event recognizes mid-career graduates who have made significant contributions to their professions or to so-

DEPARTMENT NEWS AND EVENTS

ciety. Honored alumni from agricultural economics were Elizabeth Bechdol and Richard Halderman.

Elizabeth A. Bechdol, Director, Agribusiness Strategies, Ice Miller LLP from Auburn, Indiana

M.S., Agricultural Economics, 1996



Elizabeth A. Bechdol

From education to high-profile career posts to family commitments, Elizabeth “Beth” Bechdol says, “I live for the challenge and I give 100 percent of everything I have to that challenge.” After graduating cum laude from Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service, she enrolled in Purdue’s agricultural economics master’s program in international trade and policy, earning her degree and Outstanding Master’s Thesis Award in 1996.

She joined Sparks Companies Inc., now Informa Economics, that June, staying five years as vice president. She then spent a year as deputy staff economist for the Senate Agriculture Committee and three as chief of staff to the under secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. After nearly a decade on Capitol Hill, Indiana and family called her home, where she was invited to take on the challenge of helping launch the state’s first Department of Agriculture. She spent three years as deputy director, an experience, she says, “I wouldn’t trade for anything.”

In December 2007, she was recruited by Indianapolis’s Ice Miller LLP to debut and direct the firm’s agribusiness strategies and lead business development and marketing efforts. She lives in her native DeKalb County, where her father still farms. Spending time with family are her chosen pastimes today, with many activities, such as horseback riding and ballet lessons, centered on her daughter, Grace, 7. “I wish I could claim car racing or rock climbing as a hobby,” she says, “but right now I simply enjoy every chance I get to be with my family.” Due to a family members’ diagnoses, she’s also active with the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and

the Indiana Chapter of the Huntington’s Disease Society of America. She also serves on several Purdue and agricultural boards and associations.

Richard Halderman, President, Teays River Investments, from Wabash Indiana



Richard Halderman

B.S., Agricultural Economics, 1991

Decades before Richard R. Halderman was born, the family name was already well-known for farm management achievements. The legacy began when his grandfather Howard stepped up to manage foreclosed farms during the Great Depression. It continued under his father Robert, and now the third generation, brothers Howard and Richard. “Dad loved nothing more than figuring out how to set Howard and me up with the business and let us run,” Richard says. After earning an agricultural economics degree at Purdue in 1991, Richard spent about a year at a Florida dairy before joining the family businesses, Halderman Farm Management Service Inc. and Halderman Real Estate Services Inc. in Wabash, Indiana.

Today, he co-owns those businesses with this father and brother. And he heads Halderman clients’ Teays River Investments and Agricultural Real Estate Investors, whose combined assets include some 70,000 acres of U.S. crop and livestock production operations valued at more than \$200 million. He is also on the board of International Farmland Holdings, which has invested more than \$600 million in Argentine, Brazilian and Uruguayan farmland topping 650,000 acres. “The challenge draws me, and so does the paradox of agriculture,” Halderman says, as do the people he works with. “We go a thousand miles an hour. We see change occurring. Economically, it’s been quite interesting, sure. I do what I love and the money happens to be a byproduct of that.”

Halderman’s spare time is focused on religious activities and his family—his wife Kelli and their home-schooled children, Jackie and Jeremiah. Together, they enjoy

renting villas on tropic islands, where they boat, water ski, scuba dive, or visiting Colorado for snow skiing vacations. They also like to read and compete in mini-triathlons.

35th Annual Snyder Lecture & Awards

The Snyder Lecture and awards ceremony was held on April 17, 2009. Established in 1975 as a memorial to a distinguished member of the faculty who died the previous year, the James C. Snyder Memorial Lecture is the Department of Agricultural Economics’ signature event. Funds for the support of the memorial are contributed by friends and corporations who wish to encourage the continuation of the professional efforts of Jim Snyder during his brief but brilliant career. The event was attended by Dr. Snyder’s spouse, Mary Ruth Snyder, and daughters Olivia Harting and Emily Laugesen, to help celebrate his legacy. Mary Ruth was presented with a beautiful set of Purdue embossed bookends to mark the celebration.



Brian D. Wright

This year’s Snyder guest lecturer was Brian D. Wright, Professor of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the University of California, Berkeley. His presentation, “Grain Price Gyration: Recent Research and Its Policy Implications” outlined recent theoretical progress on modeling commodity price processes, and in empirical estimation of markets for storable commodities. His research enhances understanding about why major markets have been fragile, does not support arguments for market irrationality or disruptive speculation, but does point to a clear need for collective commitment to open markets of the global grain trade. At the awards ceremony, Jerry Shively announced the winners of the student poster competition, best thesis and dissertation, and outstanding undergraduates.

DEPARTMENT EVENTS AND HONORS

Graduate Poster Competition

1st Place Prize Winner – Certificate, will receive \$200 from the department

Name: David Ortega

Poster: “Exploring Urban Markets for U.S. Pork in China”



David Ortega

2nd Place prize Winner – Certificate, will receive \$150 from the department

Name: Uris Baldos, Tani Lee, Delphine Simon

Poster: “Immigrants in Indiana: Where they live, Who they are, and What they do”

3rd Place prize Winner – Certificate, will receive \$100 from the department

Name: David Ortega

Poster: “Meat Demand in China: An Application of the LA/AIDS Model on New Time Series Data”

Outstanding Thesis and Dissertation

Samantha Snyder, MS – “Does Access to Food Impact Health? A Study of Body Mass Index in Marion County Indiana” – Outstanding Master of Science Thesis for 2008 (Susan Chen). Samantha also made a presentation of her work to the audience and is continuing on toward a doctoral degree in Agricultural Economics at Purdue.

Kathryn Boys, PhD – “Investment, Trade, and Economic Development: Lessons from Vietnam” – Outstanding PhD Dissertation for 2008 (Phil Abbott and Wally Tyner)

Outstanding Undergraduates: Freshman– Emily Hirsch, Sophomore – Brianne Stauffer, Junior – Katie Bartlett, Senior – Ryan Crane, Highest Scholar – Tamara Truax.

In recognition of those individuals with a strong connection to the Department of Agricultural Economics who have made outstanding contributions in their fields, Ken Foster presented Apex Awards to four individuals, representing the convergence of accomplishment in the lives of the honorees.

Dr. Michael Boland is a professor of agricultural economics and associate director of the Arthur Capper Cooperative Center at Kansas State University where he has teaching, research, and continuing education responsibilities in agribusiness management strategy. He has received numerous national, university, and college teaching awards and was recently selected as the 2008 National Association of Land Grant Universities USDA National Agriculture and Food Excellence in Teaching section award, which is the most prestigious college teaching award in the United States.



Dr. Michael Boland

Mike has also received several national and college extension team awards and was a member of the Hard White Wheat Commercialization Team that received the USDA Secretary's Honor Award. The majority of his work involves food and agribusiness firms where he has co-authored over 50 case studies on agribusinesses and teaches educational modules on finance, governance, and strategic thinking in boards of director leadership programs. Mike has served as co-chair of the National Food and Agribusiness Management Education Commission which was funded by USDA and is currently serving as chair of the International Agribusiness Task Force. He has led multiple international study tours of agriculture for students in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, New Zealand, Nicaragua and Uruguay and will be in southern Africa later this year. Mike also serves as a U.S. Department of State Speaker and Specialist in international trade and marketing issues affecting the food industry. From 2005 to 2008, he served as co-chair of the Teaching, Learning, and Communications section of the American Agricultural Economics Association, and is President-elect of the Western Agricultural Economics Association. He earned his MS and PhD degrees in agricultural economics from Purdue University where he was the recipient of a USDA National Needs PhD Fellowship in Agribusiness. Mike is the oldest of 12 children and was raised in Minnesota.

John Demerly is the Director of Business Development for ABG, where he has led and facilitated hundreds of projects for sales training, branding, customer segmentation, business plan development and facilitation of strategic planning exercises such as Soy 2020 for the United Soybean Board, the Ohio Soybean Council Strategic Plan, the International Soybean Opportunities Task Force, and the Vision for Illinois Strategic Plan. He joined ABG in 2005, after having served as the Executive Director of the Indiana FFA Organization since 2000. In that capacity he not only led the Indiana FFA's own activities, but also acted as liaison for the Indiana Department of Education's statewide Life Sciences Strategy, and developed advanced Life Sciences courses linked to Purdue University's College of Agriculture. Previously he spent four years as a Marketing Representative for Novartis Agribusiness, managing sales across a five-county area.



John Demerly

John graduated from Purdue with a B.S. in Agricultural Sales and Marketing in 1997. As a student he made many notable contributions including service as President of the Purdue Foundation Student Board, President of Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity, and membership in Iron Key Leadership Honorary. He was active in NAMA, as an Agricultural Ambassador. After graduation he played a key role in support of our sales and marketing courses and the Ready-Set-Sell program. John has also served as board president of the Purdue alumni corporation for the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity, as a board member for the Indiana Council for Economic Education, the Science Education Foundation of Indiana, and the Indiana Rural Development Council as well as our own Dean's Advisory Council. John and his wife (also a Purdue graduate) have four children and reside in Avon, Indiana. John is active in his church and in community service, primarily through the Avon Junior Athletic Association and the Avon Education Foundation.

DEPARTMENT NEWS AND EVENTS



Gerald and Joan
Gentry

For Gerald and Joan Gentry, Purdue is more than just a university; Purdue means family. They were high school sweethearts, married and had two children, William (BS Agricultural Economics '91) and Angela (BS Pharmacy '86). After starting their family, Gerald and Joan moved to West Lafayette and Purdue University where their kids made trips out to the agricultural farms and Gerald studied Agronomy, earning his degree in 1968. After graduation, the Gentry family moved to "Happy Valley," Pennsylvania, and Gerald received his Master's degree in Agricultural Economics from Penn State University in 1970. Gerald has enjoyed a long career as a commodities trader from his days at Merrill Lynch to his time at the Chicago Board of Trade, where he held a seat from 1973 to 2006. Gerald and Joan moved back to West Lafayette, and Gerald is enjoying his work from the comfort of home where he trades mostly online. In 1999, Gerald and Joan established the Gerald and Joan Gentry Scholarships in Agronomy and Agricultural Economics. As a result of the Gentry's generosity, numerous undergraduates have been awarded scholarships to support their academic careers. Gerald received the Purdue Agronomic Achievement Award in 2001 and served on the Department of Agronomy's Advisory Council from 2005-2007. Beginning in October 2009, Gerald will chair the President's Council Leadership Board. Gerald and Joan are members of the President's Council and the John Purdue Club. Although the Gentry's say they have too many great memories at Purdue to pick just one, some of their favorites include trips with other President's Council members and former Purdue University President Steven Beering and his wife, Jane.



Patricia Stroup

Patricia Stroup is the Group Manager for Dairy for Nestle Business Services, heading up dairy procurement for Nestle USA, Nestle Canada, Nestle Nutrition and Dreyer's Grand

Ice Cream. Patty's team directs purchases of more than 300 dairy products and ingredients for approximately 25 plants throughout the U.S. and Canada. She supports such famous brands as Nesquik, Carnation, Dreyer's/Edy's, Coffeemate, Nestle Toll House, Stouffer's, Lean Cuisine, Hot Pockets, Nestle Crunch, and Butterfinger.

Patty serves on the boards of the Milk Industry Foundation of the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) and the Dairy Institute of California. She is also an active committee member in Dairy Institute's Producer Relations Committee and the IDFA Legislative and Economics Committee. Before joining Nestle in 2006, Patty was the Director of Dairy Procurement and Policy at Hilmar Cheese Company in California and, earlier, the Director of Communication, Education and Legislation at Maryland and Virginia Milk Producers in Virginia. Patty grew up on a dairy farm in Pennsylvania. She holds a bachelors in Communications with a cognate in Dairy Science from Virginia Tech and an MBA in Food and Agribusiness from Purdue University. She currently lives in California's Central Valley.

Outstanding Students

David Ortega was selected for the National Science Foundation (NSF) East Asia and Pacific Summer Institutes (EAPSI for his NSF grant "Investigating the Effects of Economic Growth on Consumer Preferences and Demand for Goods." He was a visiting scholar at China Agricultural University (Dept. of International Trade) in Beijing, China where he conducted consumer demand and food safety research. He was also a visiting researcher at Inner Mongolia Agricultural University and at Southwest University of Finance and Economics in Sichuan province.

On June 21st, a team of three Purdue Ag Econ graduate students placed fourth in the International Agribusiness Management Association's (IAMA) Case Study Competition in Budapest, Hungary. The team consisted of David Moll, Amber Rankin, and Joshua Yoder and was coached by Professor Holly Wang. Each team was

handed a case study and given four hours to analyze key business decisions, develop recommendations, write an executive summary, and prepare power point slides. Later, each team presented their analysis and recommendations to a public forum and a panel of judges who also questioned the team.



Miriam Otoo

Ph. D. student, Miriam Otoo, was awarded a Norman E. Borlaug International Agricultural Science and Technology Fellowship from the Leadership Enhancement in Agriculture

Program, funded by the USDA. The main objective of her research is to examine key constraints in the development of cowpea flour processing businesses in West Africa. Dr. Ousmane Coulibaly of IITA and Dr. Joan Fulton of Purdue University will act as her mentors. She will be conducting her fieldwork in Benin, Ghana, Niger and Nigeria under the supervision of her mentors. Irvin Widders, the Director of the Dry Grain Pulses CRSP, also supports her research.



Christopher
Chibwana

Masters student, Christopher Chibwana, was awarded a Norman E. Borlaug International Agricultural Science and Technology Fellowship from the Leadership Enhancement in

Agriculture Program. The main objectives of his research are to relate Malawi's Starter pack Scheme, the input Subsidy program, and government's use of price controls in Malawi. Dr. Gerald E. Shively of Purdue University and Dr. Monica Fisher of the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), are mentoring Mr. Chibwana. He will be conducting his fieldwork in Malawi under the supervision of his CGIAR mentor. His research is also supported by Michael Carter, the Director of the Assets and Market Access (AMA) CRSP.

Purdue University competed in the National Agri-Marketing Association Student Marketing Plan Competition on April 15th and 16th at the National NAMA Meetings in Atlanta, Georgia, bringing home a third place finish and Most Polished Presenta-

OUTSTANDING STUDENTS

tion award. The team consisted of some of Ag Econ's best and brightest students: Jill Steiner, Jamie Albrech, Faye Barkley, Sara Egan, Daniel Stauffer, Matt Nidlinger, Jeff Edwards, Jeff Cole and Mike Baird, who all worked very hard to achieve this award. The students developed a five-page executive summary and twenty minute board-room style presentation for their product, Brookston Pork Burgers.



Adam Kline

Adam Kline returned to Purdue University this fall as the new student body president. Kline, a 22-year-old ag-economics/political science major, has a student government career that includes serving on student court, being a senator representing Purdue's College of Agriculture and running the successful campaign for last year's student body president. Kline spent the first half of his summer working for his father, and the second half in Brazil where his father owns a farm, for some intense study of Portuguese and cultural issues in preparation to act as his family's liaison for that South American operation. He's pondering a law degree with an eye toward the ever-growing complexity of agri-business and what it will take to keep the family operation at its forefront. Before that, however, he'll be working to implement a platform of improvements at the university. Creating a new \$98 million recreational sports facility for students is one priority. Implementing certain green initiatives and creating a textbook exchange that will benefit the students are also among the items on his agenda.

To read the complete article as reported by John Carlson in thestarpress.com: <http://www.thestarpress.com/article/20090615/NEWS01/906150339>



Jill Steiner

Jill Steiner was one of eight recipients of The Charles O. McGaughey Leadership awards established to honor students with leadership potential. To be eligible for these awards, students must have completed at least two

years of full-time study with at least a 3.0 GPA, and are selected on the basis of their contributions to the university and community. Jill graduated in May with degrees in agricultural economics and agricultural communication. She served as the student representative on the Purdue board of trustees, president of the Purdue Foundation Student Board, and president and treasurer of Glenwood Cooperative. She also was the social chair of Mortar Board National Honorary Society, day scheduling co-chair with Old Masters Central Committee, secretary with Agriculture Student Council and publicity chair with Agriculture Communicators of Tomorrow. Steiner has been an Indiana FFA Foundation intern and country market manager and was an agriculture coalition intern for Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels.



John Mazunda

John Mazunda, May AGECEC Graduate, was selected as the 2009 recipient of the Martin C. Jischke Outstanding International Student Award. The award is presented annually at the spring University Honors Convocation. This award is made possible by President Emeritus Martin C. Jischke, who established the award to honor a Purdue student who has helped the University welcome and connect people of all cultures. Mr. Mazunda has demonstrated throughout his career at Purdue the scholarship, leadership, service and character that makes him a very deserving recipient. We are also pleased to announce that John will remain at Purdue for his Master of Science degree in Agricultural Economics.



Eric Barnard

Eric Barnard, from Flora, IN, received the \$500 G.A. Ross Award as the outstanding graduating man at Purdue University. Barnard is the 21st College of Agriculture recipient of the Ross Award in the 50 years that it has been given. Barnard also received a Governor Bob Orr Entrepreneurial Fellowship, which allows recent graduates to work for two years with some of Indiana's fastest growing entrepreneurial companies. Barnard's host

company is RICS software, which provides services to the retail sector. Barnard was president of the Purdue Student Government and active in the Purdue Greek Intersvarsity Youth Fellowship, Mortar Board, and Farm House Fraternity.



Ryan Crane

Ryan Crane was selected as the student responder at Purdue's December 2008 Commencement ceremony. Ryan, who came to Purdue from Exeter, Maine, was a student leader in the College with involvement in Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity, Ag Ambassadors, the Dean's Scholars program, and the College of Agriculture Leadership Development Certificate program.

Agricultural Economics senior Sawyer Sparks, is CEO and founder of BioGreene, LLC, in Bloomfield, Indiana. Started in 2007, it markets alternative fuels and animal feed



made from sunflowers. From an initial stove-top beer making experiment using soy flour and gluten free yeast, a non-toxic, non allergenic, wheat-free modeling compound, Soy-Yer Dough was derived. Touting the advantages of this alternative to similar products, Soy-Yer is free from common allergens and comes in a variety of colors and fruit scents from blueberry to banana. Available in original and a soy-free version, Sawyer has sold his product to elementary schools and individuals, and markets it to organizations as a novel fundraiser. Sawyer and his product made the national news in an article in The New York Times, and in March 2009 earned a third place award and monetary prize at the second annual Elevator Pitch Competition at Discovery Park's Burton D. Morgan Center for Entrepreneurship. (Photo courtesy of Nick Schneider, Assistant Editor, Greene County Daily World)

New York Times: http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/04/education/edlife/ideas-Playdoh-t.html?_r=2
BioGreene, LLC: <http://www.biogreene.com/>

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENTS

2008 Best PhD Dissertation Award from Michigan State University: Benjamin Gramig

Gerald and Joan Gentry Scholarship winners: Catharine Kuber: Phil Emmert: Kristin Fleenor

Promoted to Associate Professor: Corinne Alexander

Gamma Sigma Delta 2009 Award of Merit: Corinne Alexander

Promoted to Rank 4 Associate Professional staff: Ginger Batta and Maud Roucan-Kane

Promoted to Associate Professor: Jennifer Dennis

Alpha Lambda Delta and Phi Eta Sigma honorary member: Lawrence DeBoer

Promoted to Associate Professor: Maria Marshall

Bronze Award for CASE V Teresa DuBois Exline Award for Best Practices in Communications & Marketing: Maria Marshall - Market Maker

Sustainable Agriculture Outreach Award from The Hoosier Environmental Council: Maria Marshall - Market Maker

2008 Carl F. Hertz Distinguished Service to Ag Award from the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers: Michael Boehlje

Millionaire's Club Award from the College of Agriculture: Paul Preckel

Purdue Ag Alumni Certificate of Distinction: Robert Thompson

Outstanding Graduate Educator Award from the College of Agriculture: Wallace Tynor

Appointed a Senior Fellow by the American Antitrust Institute: John Connor

Combined Overall Championship: All-East Intercollegiate Livestock Contest: Chris Grimm and Katie Linhart as part of the team

2nd place, Best Professor, by a campus wide student election: Robert Taylor

OBITUARIES

Bob Richardson

Bob Richardson grew up on the family farm at Ambleside (Victoria, Australia).

He earned a Bachelor's degree in agricultural science, specializing in agricultural economics, at the University of New England (UNE) at Armidale, New South Wales. Bob completed both his MS and PhD in Agricultural Economics at Purdue, having won the department's Outstanding MS Thesis Award. He graduated in 1973 and returned to UNE in the Department of Agricultural Economics & Business Management. In 1979 he joined the Australian Wool Corporation in Melbourne as Economics Manager, and was awarded the very prestigious Order of Australia for his services. He later served as Dean of the Institute of Land & Food Resources at the University of Melbourne. He is survived by his wife Pip and adult children, Sarah, Lachlan, and Tim.

Clifton Cox

Clifton Cox passed away on February 21, 2009. Clifton was a professor of Agriculture of Economics at Purdue University until 1960 when he left to take over the food division of Armour and Co., which became a division of Greyhound Corporation. During his 20 years with them he served as chairman of Armour & Co. and vice chairman of The Greyhound Corporation. After his 1981 retirement, he joined the American Graduate School of International Management becoming vice president of academic affairs. Clifton received honorary degrees from three universities. In 1982 Clifton was appointed to Ronald Reagan's President's Cost Control project. He was listed in publications including 'Who's Who in America', 'Finance and Industry', 'Community Leaders in America', and 'American Men of Science'. Clifton was born March 28, 1916 in Alabama, one of 11 children. He was married to his late wife, Helen, for 64 years and had three children. He was predeceased by his daughter, Connie. He is survived by his children: Stina Nelson and John Cox, his grandchildren, a great granddaughter, and three sisters.

NEW FACULTY AND STAFF

Nicole Olynk

Nicole Olynk will be joining the department as a new assistant professor. Nicole will join us on January 4th, 2010 after completing her Ph.D.

in agricultural economics at Michigan State University. Nicole's research and extension activities will be focused in the areas of farm business management and production economics. She has a strong interest in applied research that can inform decision making on commercial agricultural operations. Nicole is interested in applied work that links together the biological components of on-farm production and farm management. Her work incorporates both the economic outcomes of a decision and the uncertainties or efficiencies that arise from the biological process underlying the production process.



Nicole Olynk

ment, budgets & proposals, Faculty & Staff PARs, billings, reporting, supervising the Business office staff, credit card management & reconciliations to name a few items. In her spare time she likes to spend time with her family (husband Mike) & 2 daughters (Amy & Mckenna) in Rossville. Her hobbies are knitting, Purdue football, cooking & anything her girls are involved in.

Kristyn Kapetanovic

Kristyn Kapetanovic has joined the Center for Food and Agricultural Business as its marketing assistant. In this newly created position, Kapetanovic focuses on implementing the center's various marketing efforts for its open enrollment seminars and custom programs. She will coordinate the center's data management system, lead the production of program materials, assist with the development and distribution of articles and manage program Web sites. Kapetanovic received her bachelor's degree in English, technical writing and creative writing from Purdue. She comes to the center from a position in healthcare information technology.



Kristyn Kapetanovic

Jill Hufford

Jill joined the department in April 2009 after being in the Agronomy Business office for 6 1/2 years. Her duties include: graduate student payroll, faculty account manage-



Jill Hufford

Department of Agricultural Economics
403 W. State St.
Krannert Building
West Lafayette, IN 47907-2056

William Masters skillfully authored a bit of economics rhyming wit that was published on Stephen J. Dubner's blog posting page in The New York Times, Freakonomics, The Hidden Side of Everything, Thursday, June 4, 2009. To the author's question, "Why are kiwis so cheap?", Will responded:



William Masters

Damn supply and damn demand:
Why cheap hogs and costly ham?
Bargain wheat, expensive flour,
The oldest villain's market power.

Just one seller makes us nervous,
Like that U.S. Postal Service:
They may offer bargain prices,
But who disciplines their vices?

Middlemen have long been blamed
For every market that's inflamed,
Yet better explanations come
From many a Hyde Park alum.

Modern views from [Chicago-Booth](#)
Give a nuanced view of truth,
[Steven Levitt](#) and [John List](#)
Made each of us [a freakonomist](#).

We let data speak its mind
No matter what **Friedman** opined
And find the price of fruit and veg
To be driven by the market's edge.

Like the tail that wags the dog,
Marginal thinking clears the fog:
Sellers, buyers, traders too,
Interact and prices ensue.

A kiwi costs 33 cents
Simply because no one prevents
Another farm or New York store
From entering and selling more.

In contrast apples may be dear,
For reasons that will soon be clear:
Picking them's below our station,
To lower costs we need migration.

Bananas have a different story,
Seedless magic, breeder's glory,
Cheap to harvest and to ship,
Who cares if workers get paid zip?

Each crop's method of production,
Where it grows and how it's trucked in,
Satisfies some needs quite cheaply
While other costs will rise more steeply.

A buyer's choices matter too,
For nonsense stuff like posh shampoo,
Prices are not down to earth,
The more you pay the more it's worth.

Behavior is as behavior does,
Maybe some things are "just because,"
Much of life's a mystery,
A habit due to history.

For prices, though, it's competition
Plus tariffs set by politicians,
That determines whether we see
Such delightfully cheap kiwi

To read the complete article:
<http://freakonomics.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/06/04/why-are-kiwis-so-cheap/>