



November 2016

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## International Association of Agricultural Economists

# Newsletter

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear members of the IAAE,

We live in most interesting times. While there is much to celebrate in the world, there is much wrong in the world of economic policy, with many policy makers—and putative policy makers—enthusiastically pushing solutions not well grounded in economic analysis. Such proposals abound, including fiercely-argued proposals to tear up trade agreements that have helped millions of people to rise from poverty. Part of the policy debate about climate change—and its impact on the ability of the world to feed its people—remains resolutely uninformed by thermometer readings. And the debate about Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) rolls on, with much resort to emotional, rather than factual, arguments. Given the depressing drum roll of poorly-informed policy proposals, should we, as agricultural economists, give up on our traditional role of providing fact-based input into policy debates?

Fortunately, on many problems and in much of the world, policy makers remain deeply interested in fact-based analysis and problem solving. Even if fact-based analysis doesn't initially win the argument, facts remain very pesky things. Many earlier policy debates—such as those involving the cobweb theorem and the supposed inherent instability of agricultural markets—resulted in farm policies that created other problems. The policy failures identified by leading agricultural economists of the time were ultimately shown to be true. Setting fixed prices for agricultural products in the US and the EU created endless surpluses and international conflicts, and a need for policy reform.

In the long run, I think we can be confident that policy makers will adopt sensible policies...even if only after they have exhausted all of the available alternatives. But, of course, this will be the case only if we persist in providing high quality analysis and in highlighting the deficiencies of ill-considered policy choices.

It's now just over a year since the 29th International Conference of Agricultural Economists (ICAE) in Milan Italy. The record-breaking attendance at this meeting and the quality of the debate on analytical and policy issues highlighted the strength and vigor of our Association, and the importance of this triennial gathering. It's time now to look forward to the 30th ICAE, to be held in the wonderful city of Vancouver, July 28 to August 2, 2018. For more information, please see [www.icae2018.com](http://www.icae2018.com).

Since the Milan Conference, your Association has been active in a number of dimensions. The Plenary papers from the conference have been sent to the printer and are scheduled to appear in a Special Issue of our journal, *Agricultural Economics*, before the end of the year.

As noted in the article by our editors, Awudu Abdulai and Ashok Mitra, *Agricultural Economics* has gone from strength to strength in recent years. The rise in its Impact Factor to 1.74 takes it to second place in its field, making it an even more desirable journal in which to place your work. Congratulations to our editors and to all involved in bringing about this wonderful outcome.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (cont'd)

Between our triennial conferences, IAAE frequently sponsors Inter-conference Symposia in regions where there are both critically important issues to discuss and opportunities to strengthen the Profession. In April this year, we co-sponsored the highly successful symposium on “Agricultural Transitions along the Silk Road” held in Almaty, Kazakhstan. This conference focused on the dramatic changes in agriculture in the transition economies of Central Asia. It also brought home to me the depth of talent amongst agricultural economists in that often-overlooked region.

At its recent meeting, which took place on the occasion of the 2016 meetings of the African Association of Agricultural Economists in Addis, the IAAE Board considered the location of our 31st ICAE in 2021. This was a very difficult decision, with excellent proposals submitted from India and Indonesia. In the end, the Board decided to go with the proposal from India. This means that the ICAE in 2021 will be held in New Delhi around 24-29 August 2021, bringing it back to the South Asian region for the first time since the Mysore conference in 1958. We would particularly like to thank the teams—headed by PK Joshi of India and Erizal Jamal of Indonesia—for preparing such high quality proposals. And we look forward very much to an exciting ICAE in New Delhi in 2021.

At the same meeting, the Board decided to support a proposal for an ICAE Inter-Conference Symposium to be held in Talca, Chile 24-26 October, 2017. This meeting will bring together agricultural economists from across Latin America—and from outside the region—to discuss pressing challenges facing agriculture in this critically important region.

We also decided to move ahead on a proposal to introduce a Mentoring scheme to help develop talent among the younger members of our profession. More details on this proposal will be provided by its developer and champion, Steven Ware Omamo, in a later issue of the Newsletter, and on the IAAE website.

Finally, our Board decided to proceed with an updating and revamp of our website. Initially, we will go with a cosmetic update. But longer term, we are looking for input from enthusiastic, tech savvy members to help guide us to a new website that can help us to better serve our members. If you'd like to help with this initiative please let me know at [w.martin@cgiar.org](mailto:w.martin@cgiar.org).

Best regards,

Will Martin

## JOURNAL BUSINESS

Submissions to *Agricultural Economics* have grown rapidly over the years. We received 545 new manuscripts in the past year, up from 472 in 2014-2015, 423 in 2013-2014, and 377 in 2012-2013. The fraction of new submissions that were summarily rejected (without review) was 305 out of 545 new submissions (56%). The journal continues to attract a very large number of papers from authors who aspire to publish in an internationally-recognized journal but whose work is not yet ready for publication in *Agricultural Economics*. The goal in issuing “desk rejections” is simply to avoid unnecessary delays for authors and reduce burdens on reviewers and Associate Editors when manuscripts are clearly unsuitable for review, or do not fit the aims and scope of the journal. The annual acceptance rate stood at 11%, slightly down from 13% and 14% in the prior two years.

The best paper selected from 2015 was “Is there a slowdown in agricultural productivity growth in South America? by Federico Trindade and Lilyan Fulginiti. Plaques were presented to the authors in August 2016 at the AAEA conference in Boston.

There is good news regarding the journal's impact and popularity. In June 2016 the ISI 2015 Impact Factors (IF) were released, and we are pleased to inform you that we improved our IF substantially. In particular, the one-year IF for *Agricultural Economics* increased to 1.74 in 2015, well above the previous two years (1.09 and 1.19, respectively), and placing it 2<sup>nd</sup> on the list of 17 journals in the Agricultural Economics and Policy category.

2015 IF results for the ten highest-ranked journals are summarized below.

Journal	Rank	2015 IF
Food Policy	1	2.044
<i>Agricultural Economics</i>	2	1.739
Journal of Agricultural Economics	3	1.545
European Review of Ag. Economics	4	1.544
American Journal of Ag. Economics	5	1.436
Australian J. of Ag. & Res. Economics	6	1.302
Canadian Journal of Ag. Economics	7	1.291
Applied Econ. Perspectives and Policy	8	1.148
Annual Rev. of Resource Economics	9	1.042
Agribusiness	10	0.738

As usual, we look forward to hearing from you, by email at [aabdula@food-econ.uni-kiel.de](mailto:aabdula@food-econ.uni-kiel.de) or the websites listed below.

Awudu Abdulai and Ashok Mishra  
Co-Editors, *Agricultural Economics*

# GlobalFood Symposium 2017

**April 28-29, 2017, in Göttingen (Germany)**

Global agri-food systems are undergoing rapid transformation, involving new food standards, new technologies, novel forms of vertical coordination, changing consumer preferences, and various other trends. The ramifications for trade flows, industry structure, competitiveness, and social welfare may be far-reaching but are not yet well understood. Developing countries in particular face technical and institutional constraints, potentially impeding successful participation in emerging value chains. This may have implications for poverty, food security, nutrition, and sustainable development.

The aim of this Symposium, organized by the *GlobalFood* Program in Göttingen, is to discuss new research findings and policy challenges related to the global agri-food system transformation. The two-day event will feature plenary sessions with invited speakers, contributed paper sessions, and posters. Confirmed speakers include Jenny Aker (USA), Kym Anderson (Australia), Jill McCluskey (USA), Marie Ruel (USA), Tom Reardon (USA), Jo Swinnen (Belgium), and Maximo Torero (USA).

We invite submissions for contributed papers and posters from all researchers working on related topics from an economics and/or social science perspective. Topics to be covered include: supply chain management, food standards and trade, sustainability certification, contract farming, linking smallholder farmers to markets, food security and poverty, supermarkets, consumer preferences, nutrition transition, obesity, among others.

All submissions should be in the form of extended abstracts (two pages) to be submitted via the *GlobalFood* website (<http://www.uni-goettingen.de/globalfood>). The submission deadline is 15 November 2016. All submissions will be peer-reviewed. Authors will be notified of the decision by 15 January 2017. The top-three submissions by junior researchers will be selected for presentation in plenary sessions.

Participants will have to cover their own travel cost plus a 50 EUR registration fee (including free access to all sessions, coffee breaks, two lunch snacks, and one conference dinner). We will try to make available a few travel stipends for accepted contributions from developing-country doctoral students.

More information about the *GlobalFood* Program and the Symposium can be found under: [www.uni-goettingen.de/globalfood](http://www.uni-goettingen.de/globalfood). Further questions can also be addressed to: [globalfood@uni-goettingen.de](mailto:globalfood@uni-goettingen.de).

## IAAE Web Site Job Postings

Requests for job postings, along with a check for \$200 for each listing for international or regional organizations and \$300 for postings from other organizations, should be sent to the IAAE, 555 E Wells St., Suite 1100, Milwaukee, WI 53202, U.S.A. Postings of up to 300 words will generally be linked to the complete job posting on the organization's own website and maintained for 90 days maximum.

## IAAE Newsletter

The IAAE Newsletter (ISSN 1052-5815) is published semiannually by the IAAE. News Alerts are published periodically to provide new information. Information for the **October 2016** issue must reach the IAAE Secretary-Treasurer's office by October 10, 2016 (contact on Page 1). Every effort will be made to include the material provided. IAAE reserves the right to select and shorten items for publication.