

WAEA News Update



Hello and I hope fall is going well for everyone. Thanks to all of the hard work from our Past President, Chris Bastian, the WAEA is in a great position with fairly little news to report. At our annual virtual meeting this past summer, I was thrilled to see the meeting so well attended and full of great presentations and speakers. I personally want to thank Chris Bastian, Lynn Hamilton, Kelley Mazur, Matt McFadden, and all of the Directors for their decisiveness and amazing amount of work that went into pulling that off. Also, I want to congratulate all our award winners and our new WAEA fellows (Ashok Mishra

and Randy Fortenbery). I hope to raise a glass and celebrate your achievements with you soon. Videos of the award ceremony, our outstanding keynote address by Ian Sheldon, the presidential address, and two really interesting invited sessions (The Impact of COVID in the Mountain West; Trends Risks, Opportunities in Western U.S. Agriculture: Implications for Extension) can be viewed [here](#).

As we look forward, the 2021 annual meeting is planned to be held jointly with the Canadian Agricultural Economics Society (CAES) in Whistler, BC, Canada. We are moving ahead with plans to have an in-person meeting on July 18-22 at the Hilton Whistler Resort and Spa, while also working with the hotel and the CAES to minimize financial risks to the WAEA. This is an ongoing situation and hopefully more information will be provided in the winter newsletter. If you have any concerns, thoughts, or suggestions on the upcoming conference, I'd love to hear from you. One way or another, we will have an annual meeting. To that end, the usual litany of calls for papers and awards for the upcoming conference will be detailed in the winter newsletter with most deadlines in mid-February. So, plan accordingly.

Finally, you will find WAEA officer nomination information in the pages that follow, along with a link to the election page. This year has been very stressful and has pulled all of us all in many directions. I appreciate the willingness of all of the nominated candidates to dedicate their time and energy to this association. Please vote today! Voting is online and will close on November 30, 2020.

Eric Belasco  
WAEA President

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**Important Dates**

- 2021 Joint WAEA/CAES Annual Meeting*  
*July 18-22, 2021*  
*Whistler, BC, Canada*
- 2022 Joint WAEA/AAEA Annual Meeting*  
*July 31 – August 2, 2022*  
*Anaheim, CA*

WAEA Officer Elections

The following candidates have agreed to stand for election:

**President**

**Stephen Devadoss**, Texas Tech University

**Gregory McKee**, Brigham Young University, Idaho

**Director**

**Tim Delbridge**, California Polytechnic State University

**Kate Binzen Fuller**, Montana State University

**James Sterns**, Oregon State University

**Mykel Taylor**, Kansas State University

**Voting Instructions**

Please visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HRHJF7Y> to submit your vote.

The election deadline is **November 30, 2020**.

## Candidate Statements – President



**Stephen Devadoss**  
*Texas Tech University*

### Background

I am currently the Emabeth Thompson Endowed Professor of Agricultural & Applied Economics at Texas Tech University. I teach Ph.D. Mathematical Economics,

Microeconomics, and International Trade & Policy, as well as M.S. and undergraduate International Trade. I also teach Agricultural Trade at the undergraduate level. My research interests include trade, econometrics, natural resources, production economics, policy, and industrial organization.

I received my Ph.D. from Iowa State University, and I have been a member of WAEA for more than 30 years. I became a **WAEA Fellow** in 2010, and a recipient of the WAEA Teaching Award in 2009. I have served on the JARE Editorial Council (1998 – 2000), WAEA Fellows Selection Committee (2013, 2015), served as a member of the WAEA Thesis Award committee in 2015 and chaired it in 2013. I also served as a member of the WAEA Teaching Awards Committee in 2010 and 2011, and as chair of the Outstanding Journal Article Committee in 2020. I have guided my graduate students to receive six (a record number) WAEA Outstanding Thesis Awards. Several of my students have participated in WAEA graduate paper competitions, and two of my students have received awards. I am also bestowed with the SAEA Lifetime Achievement Award in 2018. I have also served AAEA and SAEA at various capacities: Editorial Board of AEPP (2015-2018) and JAAE (2016-2019); member (2016, 2017) and chair (2018) of the AAEA Thesis Award Committee; and member (2012-2014) and chair (2015) of the AAEA Teaching Award Committee; and member (2019-2020) and chair (2021) SAEA Lifetime Achievement Committee.

I have received 14 research awards (including outstanding journal articles), 20 teaching awards

(including WAEA and AAEA Undergraduate, and AAEA Graduate Teaching Awards), and 23 graduate advising awards. I have published more than 130 refereed journal articles and guided my graduate students to publish more than 75 journal articles. I have helped my graduate students to receive 50 awards (including 13 AAEA Outstanding Dissertation and WAEA & AAEA Outstanding M.S. Thesis awards).

### WAEA Vision Statement

I am honored to be nominated to serve as President of WAEA. I have benefited greatly from the WAEA, and I would like to give back to the Association. I regularly attend the WAEA meetings, and I very much enjoy the great locations, academic interaction with colleagues, friendly atmosphere, and intellectual contribution of the members.

WAEA conferences offer a great venue for graduate students to present their work, particularly by participating in paper competitions. I would like to continue this competition and attract more graduate students to become members, present papers, and participate in academic discussions at the meetings.

The Association currently has roughly 340 members. I envision increasing the number of memberships by contacting new faculty members and graduate students. These members can serve the Association for a longer period, thus maintaining and/or expanding the membership. Jointly meeting with the Western Extension Committee has brought visibility to the Association. In a similar vein, I would like to augment the membership by contacting faculty members at non-land grant institutions. WAEA is in good financial standing, and I would like to maintain the fiscal stability of the Association by increasing the membership.

JARE has been one of the premiere agricultural economics journals in the world, and I would like to continue this tradition by supporting the Editorial Board and improving the JARE manuscript submission software.

In summary, the Association has served its members well regarding professional development opportunities related to research, teaching, extension, and graduate education, and I want to preserve and enhance these opportunities offered through the WAEA.

## Candidate Statements –President



**Gregory McKee**  
*Brigham Young  
University, Idaho*

### Background

Greg is a faculty member in the Department of Economics at Brigham Young University, Idaho (BYUI). He obtained a B.S. Economics from Brigham

Young University and M.S. and Ph.D. in Resource and Agricultural Economics from University of California, Davis. He was a faculty member at North Dakota State University from 2006 through 2016 and at University of Nebraska, Lincoln from 2016 through 2020 before joining BYUI.

Most of McKee's academic experiences are related to cooperatives, community banking, and strengthening the rural economy, some of which resulted from observations while serving on a cooperative financial institution's board of directors. Research and outreach with cooperatives in agriculture, finance and utilities has given Greg experience in a variety of topics. Greg's teaching emphasis has resulted in delivery of curriculum on cooperatives to multiple campuses. His teaching, research and outreach program have resulted in several journal articles and non-refereed publications, workshop presentations to business and community groups, and awards. He has served as the Chair of NCERA-210, a multistate extension and research committee for cooperatives; the Chair of the eXtension Cooperatives Community of Practice; and on the editorial board of NACTA Journal.

McKee has been a member of WAEA since 2005. Contributions to the WAEA include a Director of the association, planning annual meetings, reviewing journal article submissions and selected paper abstracts, serving as a guest editor for an issue of Western Economics Forum, and service on other committees as requested. Membership in the WAEA has helped expand his skill set, professional network, and understanding of the breadth of agricultural and environmental issues across the western United States.

## WAEA Vision Statement

Current events make the value of an active professional association greater than ever. One of the most obvious areas the Association can benefit members is to support students encountering a challenging employment environment. The Association can enhance research and outreach opportunities by facilitating discussion about the consequences of current events on food and agricultural supply chains. The WAEA should be central to establishing as well as maintaining research and mentorship collaborations.

The collegial atmosphere of the Association is ideal for responding to these needs. I believe the WAEA is already a valuable resource for encouraging research, quality teaching, on-point outreach, and collaboration that helps interpret the western region. The annual meeting is a long-standing facilitator of professional development opportunities, it recognizes outstanding work by students, new faculty members and established colleagues. The Association encourages past, current, and potential members to exchange ideas and opportunities in a supportive atmosphere. My career has benefitted by these efforts. Furthermore, as a researcher and supporter of outreach programs, I highly value informed and engaged editorial teams that oversee dissemination of accessible and relevant research in the JARE and Western Economics Forum. Furthermore, the Association strengthens interest in career development by providing an attractive atmosphere for families to participate in annual meetings and to foster collegiality.

I support a vision of the WAEA remaining an active community of interest and activity for building member capacity to understand economic questions across the western states. My efforts as president will be to encourage the utilization and development of this capacity. Well-designed annual meetings, with attention to student professional development, selection of quality editorial teams, and professional exchange have been typical activities promoted by the Association. I value participating in these activities and look forward to encouraging colleagues to learn about, connect with, and engage the range of expertise available among Association members.

**Candidate Statements – Director**

**Tim Delbridge**  
*California  
Polytechnic  
State University*

**Background**

Tim Delbridge is an Assistant Professor in the Agribusiness Department at California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly). He

holds an undergraduate degree in International Studies from University of Wisconsin and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Applied Economics from the University of Minnesota. Prior to pursuing graduate studies, he was an agriculture extension agent with the Peace Corps in Paraguay. Tim teaches agribusiness risk management, agricultural finance, agribusiness management, and agribusiness decision tools. Tim has developed a study abroad program aimed at agriculture and agribusiness students to take place in Querétaro, Mexico, which will allow students to interact with and study the Latin American operations and partnerships of US-based firms.

Tim's research program focuses on farm-level decision making, with applications to technology adoption in the specialty crop industry and the transition from conventional cropping systems to organic agriculture in California and elsewhere. Recent projects have addressed economic issues in the California strawberry industry, including an analysis of the economic feasibility of robotic harvest and the regional distribution of economic losses to major insect pests. Ongoing work related to organic agriculture focuses on the impact of water transfers on the organic adoption decision in California's Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys,

and a separate project related to the issue of pesticide drift and its impact on organic growers.

**WAEA Vision Statement**

It has been a joy to participate in WAEA meetings and serve the association since my move to the West. The association plays a critical role in the development of students and young faculty, produces strong publications, and hosts meetings that serve as valuable and refreshing opportunities for collaboration, research dissemination, and networking. I value the supportive and collegial culture of the WAEA and it is my honor to be a candidate for a director position.

My vision for the future of the WAEA is to maintain these attributes that make our association and annual meetings so attractive to our members, while working to expand membership to those in our profession and private sector networks that have been less active. In particular, I would like to find ways to encourage the submission of presented papers for the annual meetings on a broader range of topics to bring in those of our colleagues that focus more on the food industry and related issues, specialty crops, and the international issues that are relevant to agriculture in the West.

In my opinion, the WAEA leadership has done a great job of making graduate and undergraduate students feel welcome and engaged at our meetings, and I would like to continue and expand these efforts. Meetings and presentations are formative experiences for young and aspiring economists and I believe we should encourage their participation and opportunities to engage.

**Candidate Statements – Director**



**Kate Binzen Fuller**  
*Montana State University*

**Background**

Kate Binzen Fuller is an Associate Professor and Extension Specialist in the Department

of Agricultural Economics and Economics at Montana State University. She has an undergraduate degree in Economics and Mathematics from the University of North Carolina, Asheville, and an M.S. and Ph.D. in Agricultural and Resource Economics from University of California, Davis. Dr. Fuller’s research is in the areas of risk management, land valuation, and organic agriculture. Her extension programs, administered through a variety of platforms, seek to remove barriers to data and other information, and provide tools with which agricultural stakeholders can analyze important financial decisions. Her main areas of extension focus are in risk management, land leasing, and agricultural outlook. Dr. Fuller currently serves as the President of the Australasian section of AAEA and the Chair of the AAEA Extension Graduate Student Competition. She has been a member of WAEA since being a graduate student. As part of the AgEconMT.com blog team, which she now heads, she won the WAEA Extension Award in 2017. She is also an active member of the Western Extension Committee, of which she has been a part since 2014 and from which she won the Young Professional Award in 2017.

**WAEA Vision Statement**

Thank you for considering me for the position of WAEA Director. I have enjoyed and learned a great deal from WAEA events as well as the meetings and connections I have made as part of the Western Extension Committee, which I now see as linked to WAEA. Much of my vision is in the continuation of an association that fosters connections and places value on applied research and outreach. However, as we move forward as an organization, it is important to me that we create an increasingly inclusive tent under which our members can work together, in terms of identities, job types, and areas of study. At this point I have more questions than answers as to how to make that happen, and much work to do learning how this organization functions. But some of my best skills are in listening and learning from others, and if elected, I will put those skills to work. Thank you for your consideration.

## Candidate Statements – Director



**James Sterns**  
*Oregon State University*

### Background

James Sterns is an Associate Professor in the Department of Applied Economics at Oregon State University. He completed undergraduate degrees in Agricultural Economics, and Feed Science and Management at Kansas State University, and MS and PhD degrees in

Agricultural Economics at Michigan State University. His current teaching and research focus areas are agribusiness management and the performance of agri-food systems in the Pacific Northwest. Much of his research during his career has been focused on specialty crops and most recently, he has been working with the Oregon wine industry as that industry strives to develop strategies to grow and sustain the economic viability of the region's vineyards and wineries.

He has been a member of the WAEA since 2013, and has been serving as his department's member of the WAEA Council. He also has helped with the Association's teaching award committee, serving as the committee's chair this past year. He regularly attends the annual meetings (whether they are live or virtual), and in 2017 he was the recipient of the WAEA Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award – More than 10 Years of Experience.

His prior work experiences include 12 years as a faculty member of the Food and Resource Economics Department at the University of Florida. During his career, he has served in a range of leadership and service roles, including the executive committees of the Agribusiness Economics and Management (AEM), Teaching, Learning and Communication (TLC) and the Institutional and Behavioral Economics (IBES) sections of the AAEEA. He also has served as the Chair of the multi-state WERA-72 Coordinating Committee on Agribusiness and Competitiveness, and as Chair of the Southern Agricultural Economics Association's Undergraduate Committee. He also has worked internationally, including extended work assignments in Cameroon, France, Ecuador and Haiti.

### WAEA Vision Statement

I am honored to have this opportunity to stand for election to be a Director on the WAEA's Executive Council. As I consider the possibility of being called to serve in a leadership position, my thoughts are burdened with the simple fact that the COVID-19 pandemic will cast a long shadow into our future, with analysts projecting continued disruption of the status quo and an acceleration of changes that were already in motion pre-pandemic. Rapid change and ubiquitous uncertainty are not the typical assumptions we make as practicing economists, but these are the conditions in which our Association will need to navigate if it is to remain viable and effective.

In these times we will need a shared vision, and if elected this will be my first priority - to have the WAEA Executive Council articulate and commit to a renewed shared vision of what we aspire to be in the coming decade. Obviously, all organizations, private firms and government agencies are facing these same challenges, but that provides an opportunity to collectively develop our strategic thinking skills. A new vocabulary is already emerging. Key words include "adaptive", "flexible", "resilient" and "nimble". It will be the responsibility of the WAEA Executive Council to apply this new paradigm and to work through the process of prioritizing what services and activities we will offer as an Association.

As an Executive Council member, I would add one more word to this conversation - Ambidextrous. I am borrowing this term from C. O'Reilly and M. Tushman, co-authors who published a Harvard Business Review article, "The Ambidextrous Organization" in 2004. To paraphrase their central point – we need to learn how to do two things simultaneously. We need to identify which of the Association's past successes should be sustained while also looking for innovative changes to enhance what we can offer our membership, given a post-pandemic world. My crystal ball is broken, so I am a bit shy on specifics for what that mix of old and new will look like. And as a consequence, all I can pledge is process – how I intend to lead and serve, both in terms of my personal efforts and in terms of what I will advocate while on the Executive Council. Central tenets of this process are effective communication channels for relaying both ideas to the membership and for hearing ideas from the membership, transparent decision making, and an open-mind willing to consider (and if appropriate, advocate that we adopt) actions that we might have considered unimageable in a pre-pandemic world.

Candidate Statements – Director



**Mykel Taylor**  
*Kansas State University*

**Background**

Mykel Taylor is an Associate Professor and Extension Specialist in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Kansas

State University. Mykel grew up on a cattle ranch in Montana and attended Montana State University receiving a Bachelor’s degree in Agribusiness and a Master’s degree in Applied Economics. She worked for 3 years at Kansas State University as an Extension Associate and then went on to North Carolina State University for her PhD in Economics. Mykel has worked in extension at both Washington State University and Kansas State University. She has been at K-State for nine years, working on issues ranging from farm land values and cash rents to farm policy.

Mykel’s research and extension areas of interest include farm management and land economics. She has served as a reviewer for JARE and the WAEA annual conference as well as serving on the WAEA graduate thesis committee.

**WAEA Vision Statement**

Similar to many of you, my first exposure to WAEA was as a graduate student presenting research and seeking feedback from others. This tradition of being open to graduate student research is important and a key aspect of their professional development. As a Director, I would seek to expand opportunities for graduate students at the WAEA conference such as networking events and/or dedicated sessions featuring graduate student work.

Having spent all of my career balancing research and extension, I am interested in the continuation of a strong partnership between the WAEA and the Western Extension Committee. I believe that their presence at the WAEA Conference is a key component to facilitating partnerships with other researchers. I would work to keep that group engaged with WAEA and potentially expand their involvement in the annual conference.

Finally, I would encourage the WAEA to expand mentoring efforts for young professionals. This might include workshops or facilitating collaborations with more senior faculty. Our universities are not necessarily expanding their faculty resources and we often find it fruitful to reach across institutions to find mentors with similar research, extension, and teaching interests. To the extent that WAEA can facilitate that type of collaboration, we should attempt to do so.