Fall 2026 Newsletter

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2027 WAEA Annual Meeting
June 20-22, Eugene, OR

2028 WAEA-CAES Joint Annual Meeting
July 2028, Banff, Canada

News Updates

Greetings all! I hope you Fall semester is off to a good start and you are excited about the upcoming academic year. The WAEA annual meeting this past summer was held in Flagstaff, AZ. We had a wonderful turnout, and I have received very positive feedback both on the location, and the meetings in general.

I would like to thank our Past-President, Dayton Lambert, for his organizational leadership during the meetings, as well as for all he has done for our Association the last several years. I would also like to acknowledge the excellent work of the WAEA Directors, Kate Brooks and Amy Hagerman, as well as Past-President Dustin Pendell for overseeing the awards program. Also, thank you to WAEA Directors, Ram Acharya and Bill Ridley, for putting an excellent selected paper program together.

I would like to congratulate all of the 2026 award winners and the newest WAEA Fellows, Drs. Jason S. Bergtold and Russell E. Tronstad. All award recipients can be viewed on the WAEA website at: https://waeaonline.org.

Finally, President-Elect, Amy Hagerman, is leading an initiative to assess the needs of the membership in terms of WAEA offerings moving forward. Look for an invite in November requesting your input via a needs assessment survey. Your input and feedback will be very important to shaping the future of the Association.

Annual Meeting Updates

Planning is underway for the 2027 WAEA annual meeting, to be held from June 20 to 22 in Eugene, OR. Eugene is right off the I-5 freeway and thus is easily accessible. It's also a gateway to many wonderful places to visit in Oregon, including the pacific coast beaches, the whitewaters of the Rogue and Deschutes rivers, Crater Lake National Park, and the festivals and outdoor opportunities in nearby Bend, OR. The Winter 2026/27 newsletter will include additional information about the upcoming meeting. Additionally, plans are in place for the 2028 meetings to be held along with the Canadian Agricultural Economics Society near Banff, Canada.

New Journal Editors
A new JARE editorial team will begin their term on January 1, 2027. Many thanks to Drs. Rafael Bakhtavoryan, Deepthi Kolady, William Ridley, and Andrew Stevens for their willingness to serve in this important role. Additionally, a new slate for WEF editors will begin their term on January 1, 2027. Special thanks to Drs. Jeffrey Vitale, Chris Bastian, Yuri Calil, and Matthew Dierson for stepping up serve our association and its members.

WAEA Officer Elections
Finally, WAEA officer elections are underway. Two candidates (Bridget Guerrero and Kristi Hansen) for WAEA President and four candidates (Ryan Feuz, Kelly Lange, Justin Bina, and Jon Biermacher) for WAEA Board of Directors have agreed to run for election. I greatly appreciate the willingness of these candidates to run for election and dedicate their time and efforts to serving the Association. You will find a link to the voting page and their nomination information in the following pages. Voting will close on November 23, 2026. I strongly encourage all current WAEA members to vote by the deadline.

If you have any questions or concerns about WAEA or the information contained in this newsletter, please do not hesitate to contact me, at kynda.curtis@usu.edu.

Best regards,

Kynda Curtis
2026-2027 WAEA President

WAEA Officer Elections

The following candidates are running for the WAEA election.

President	Director
Bridget Guerrero, West Texas A&M University Kristi Hansen, University of Wyoming	Jon Biermacher, North Dakota State University Justin Bina, Arizona State University Ryan Feuz, Utah State University Kelly Lange, Texas Tech University

Voting Instructions

Please click the **link** to submit your votes. The election deadline is November 23, 2026.

Candidate Statements – President

Bridget Guerrero, West Texas A&M University

Background

Bridget Guerrero is the Paul Engler Professor of Agriculture, Professor of Agricultural Business and Economics at West Texas A&M University in Canyon, TX. She received a Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness in 2002 and a Master of Business Administration in 2003 from West Texas A&M University. She earned her doctoral degree in Agricultural and Applied Economics from Texas Tech University in 2010. She is originally from Vega, Texas where her family farms. Bridget worked for the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service for 10 years prior to joining the faculty at West Texas A&M University and much of her research is focused on water-related issues pertaining to agriculture. Bridget's research interests include socioeconomic modeling, water policy, production agriculture, regenerative agriculture, and renewable energy. She has been part of many multi-disciplinary and multi-state research projects including the Ogallala Aquifer Program, the Ogallala Water CAP, Regen*Ag*, and SatRAP. She has been active in WAEA since she was a graduate student and first attended the annual meeting in Hawaii in 2009. To her, WAEA has always been an inviting organization with relevant research, creating meaningful collaboration with other members.

WAEA Vision Statement

WAEA has four main goals which encompass education, unity, professionalism, and collaboration to maximize the reach of our discipline for the betterment of agriculture across the western region. This region is diverse and faces unique challenges including declining resources, extreme weather, and limited access to fundamental needs in rural regions. I grew up on a dryland farm with a small cow/calf component. In many ways, agriculture provides the foundation for forming relationships. As president, I would foster the close-knit culture between higher education, agricultural organizations, and Extension groups to ensure that education pertaining to agricultural economics happens at multiple levels and is relevant to real-world happenings. One specific focus would be to increase student involvement in our annual meetings by adding events to the annual meeting such as career panels, speed-networking, student mixers, and professionalism workshops. I will maintain existing joint meeting efforts with AAEA and CAES and explore ways to enhance our regional association. WAEA provides a good platform for collaborations and I aim to utilize this as an opportunity to help involved individuals build solid leadership skills. Finally, I will prioritize building new avenues of sharing and learning to create effective change within the association.

Candidate Statements – President

Kristi Hansen, Professor and Extension Specialist, University of Wyoming

Background

Kristi Hansen is a Professor and Extension Water Resource Economist in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at the University of Wyoming. She has a Ph.D. in Agricultural and Resource Economics from University of California, Davis. Dr. Hansen's research is in water resource economics and community resilience to weather and climate variability, especially within the agricultural sector. She conducts applied, interdisciplinary research on how agricultural, municipal, and recreational water users respond to changes in water availability in Wyoming and other water-scarce locations, with an emphasis on the impact of agricultural and water resource management on local rural economies. Her Extension program seeks to inform and improve regional decision-making in water management and allocation.

Dr. Hansen is a long-time member of W-5190, a multi-state research committee focused on water resource management and policy and has served one term as its Chair. She has been a member of WAEA since her graduate student days and a member of the Western Extension Committee since approximately 2019. She has also served as a WAEA Director (2020-2023). Dr. Hansen is also a member of the Colorado River Research Group whose members seek to bring scientific insights to Colorado River management and policy; and member of the leadership team of the Western Water Network, whose land-grant focused mission is to support collaborative, proactive, and science-based water decision-making in the western U.S. across state boundaries. Several of her MS students have won the WAEA Outstanding Thesis Award in recent years.

WAEA Vision Statement

I am honored to be considered for the position of WAEA President. WAEA provides valuable opportunities for researchers, Extension professionals, industry partners, and students to interact, exchange ideas, and learn from one another. The annual meeting is an especially important venue for graduate students and early-career faculty to share their work, receive constructive feedback, and build professional relationships. The association's publications, JARE and the Western Economics Forum, further extend this exchange, providing opportunities for members to communicate their research and ideas with one another, as well as with the policymakers we seek to inform and the stakeholders we serve.

As WAEA President, I would work to build on these strengths by continuing to facilitate the interactions and conversations that help our members find the resources, contacts, and support they need to do their jobs well. WAEA is already well positioned to encourage applied research, effective outreach, and collaboration among researchers, stakeholders, industry professionals, and conservation organizations. But we can also work to help WAEA remain responsive to changing needs. I would thus also welcome ideas from members about new ways the association can serve them and enhance their ability to address the challenges facing agriculture, rural communities, and our natural resource base. Thank you for your consideration.

Candidate Statements – Director

Jon T. Biermacher North Dakota State University

Background

Jon T. Biermacher is a Professor of Practice and Extension Livestock Development Specialist in the Department of Agribusiness and Applied Economics at North Dakota State University where he holds an 80% Extension and 20% Research appointment. Prior to joining NDSU in 2022, Biermacher served as an Agricultural Economist for 16 years (2005-2021) at the Noble Research Institute (formally the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation, LLC) where he advanced through the ranks from Assistant Professor to Full Professor in 2018. He earned his Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Oklahoma State University and a M.S. and B.S. in Agricultural Economics for Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Dr. Biermacher's research and extension programs focus on the farm- and ranch-level economics of livestock production and marketing systems; crop production systems; technology and biotechnology adoption; and rural and community economic development. His publications span 68 peer-reviewed journal articles in flagship agricultural economics journals as well as in interdisciplinary journals. He has also contributed to over 300 extension articles, reports, presentations, TV segments, radio interviews, webinars, and podcasts addressing a variety of issues. In addition, he has served as Principal or Co-Principal Investigator on 24 grants with total funds requested greater than $73 million, securing over $2.1 million in funded grants (3% of total amount requested; 7.6% of total amount funded).

Biermacher has been an active member of the Western Agricultural Economics Association (WAEA) since 2007 and has attended 16 out of the past 18 meetings, providing 19 research presentations to the members during these meetings. In addition, he has served as a member of the Outstanding Publications Awards Committee and has served as an outside reviewer for the editors of the Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics (JARE) and WAEA annual meeting abstracts. In addition to the WAEA, Biermacher served as At-Large Director of the AAEA Extension Section for five years (2012-2018).

Dr. Biermacher's engagement with WAEA aligns with his commitment to advancing agricultural economics through rigorous research and practical extension outreach all of which will strengthen WAEA's mission.

WAEA Vision Statement

I have been incredibly fortunate to have had the opportunity to be an active member of the WAEA for the past 19 years—it is by far my favorite professional organization. Each year in the fall, I always find myself looking forward to the WAEA annual meetings because the members are very likeminded in research and extension spaces, and because many of the members are some of my closest friends, mentors and collaborators. And, at each new meeting I attend, I have been fortunate to meet and develop friendships with first time members that often have newer, advanced skills (compared to me) with fresh ideas and

perspectives. It is important to the we continue to nurture and help develop these new members.

As a Director I will work with the leadership team to continue to promote and add value to the WAEA's mission, goals and objectives by (1) helping plan and manage activities that are necessary to host our annual meetings, including our popular Extension tour; (2) to promote and help maintain our highly reputable journals (JARE, WEF); and (3) further develop programs that help develop our members, especially our younger members (e.g., employment networking programs, funding to help offset constantly growing costs associated with attending our annual conference). I do believe that individual member budgeting issues and higher costs for memberships and conference participation will likely continue to be a leading threat to our members and association so I will work closely with leadership and the members to seek out solutions to help provide solutions over time. I would be honored to serve as WAEA Director and continue to add value to our members and our association.

Candidate Statements – Director

Justin Bina, Arizona State University

Background

Justin is an Assistant Professor in the Morrison School of Agribusiness at Arizona State University. He received his Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Kansas State University in 2024, where his research explored issues in livestock price risk management, meat processing, and consumer demand. His recent research examines how consumer health trends, including GLP-1 adoption and exercise, affect food demand.

Justin teaches food supply chain courses focused on developing students' business communication skills and knowledge of the entire U.S. agrifood system. His service focuses on supporting early-career professionals. He currently serves as faculty advisor for the ASU Young Farmers and Ranchers chapter and as the founding organizer and inaugural Chair of the AAEA Early Career Section.

Justin became involved with WAEA in 2019 as an undergraduate, participating in a symposium on CME feeder cattle futures at the annual meeting in Coeur d'Alene. Since then, he has been a consistent participant and presenter at WAEA annual meetings, continues to serve as a referee for the JARE, and served on the 2026 Outstanding Master's Thesis Committee.

WAEA Vision Statement

I am honored to be considered for the role of WAEA Director. Since attending my first WAEA annual meeting as a senior undergraduate, I have valued the Association's commitment to advancing research, teaching, and extension in agricultural and resource economics while addressing issues of practical importance to industry and government. If elected, my goal will be to build on WAEA's longstanding strengths while positioning the Association to thrive in a changing academic and professional environment.

First, as part of the Directors' primary responsibilities, I will work to strengthen WAEA's core programs by supporting outstanding annual meeting programming, meaningful networking opportunities, and recognition of excellence through the Association's awards.

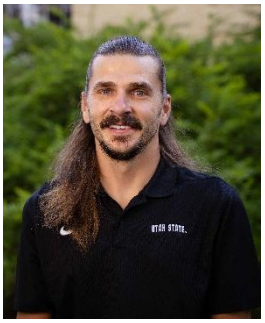
Second, I would advocate for expanding the year-round value of WAEA membership. In addition to exceptional annual meetings and publication opportunities through JARE/WEF, WAEA should explore new opportunities for professional development and networking that encourages members to remain engaged throughout their careers. As academic positions become less common and more economists pursue careers in industry and government, strengthening engagement with these professionals and reconnecting with less-active departments can help maintain and grow WAEA's membership.

Third, I will support efforts to increase the visibility and influence of WAEA and JARE/WEF research by strengthening partnerships with industry and government and communicating the real-world impact of our scholarship. Demonstrating the value of agricultural and resource economics to

policymakers, businesses, and the public is essential to maintaining the relevance of our profession and strengthening confidence in academic research.

If entrusted with the opportunity to serve, I will strive to provide thoughtful, dependable leadership grounded in integrity, sound judgment, and a commitment to listening to our members as we work together to strengthen WAEA for the future.

Candidate Statements – Director



Ryan Feuz, Utah State University

Background

Ryan Feuz is an Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at Utah State University, where he holds a 50% teaching, 45% research, and 5% service appointment. He earned his Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Oklahoma State University and also holds an M.S. in Applied Economics from Utah State University, an MBA from the Royal Agricultural University, and undergraduate degrees in Economics and Finance from Utah State University. His research focuses on agricultural risk management, consumer demand and willingness-to-pay analysis, and the economics of livestock production and agribusiness, with an emphasis on livestock insurance and other risk management tools for western producers. He has secured more than $1 million in extramural funding and published more than 30 refereed journal articles, including in JARE and the Western Economics Forum. A WAEA member since 2015, Dr. Feuz has presented regularly at the annual meetings, reviewed for both of the association's journals, and served on the 2023 Outstanding Extension Project Award committee. He leads Utah State's M.S. Agribusiness program, teaches courses in agribusiness and agricultural marketing, and has mentored numerous graduate students who have presented their own research at WAEA. His teaching has been recognized with USU's CAAS Early Career Teacher of the Year Award and a NACTA Teaching Award of Merit.

WAEA Vision Statement

I am honored to be considered for the role of WAEA Director. What I value most about WAEA is its culture of mentoring, where experienced members take time to help those earlier in their careers. I benefited from that firsthand. When attend my first WAEA meeting as a master's student, a couple of more senior members spoke with me and offered advice that helped me decide where to apply for my Ph.D. Those conversations shaped the path I took, and many other members have influenced my career in the same generous way since. Feedback I first received at WAEA meetings made my research better and shaped work I later published in JARE and the Western Economics Forum.

Among WAEA's many strengths, I think its value as a career-building tool for young professionals is one of the greatest and most underappreciated. The association is small enough to be welcoming, yet rigorous enough that the feedback you get here genuinely improves your work. For a graduate student or early-career faculty member, it is a rare place to build a network, test developing ideas, get honest feedback, and strengthen the research before the next meeting.

Now I bring my own students to these meetings and watch the same thing happen for them. As Director, I would work to expand the settings where students and junior faculty can present early work and leave with useful feedback, to encourage the informal mentoring that shaped my own career, and to help keep participation

affordable. These are improvements that serve the whole association, not only its newest members, and I would work on behalf of members at every career stage. WAEA gave me a strong start, and I would be honored to help it do the same for the next generation while continuing to serve the members who have built it.

Candidate Statements – Director

Kelly Lange, Texas Tech University

Background

Kelly Lange is an Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics (AAEC) at Texas Tech University. She received her Ph.D. in Agricultural and Applied Economics, with a minor in Personal Financial Planning, from Texas Tech University. Dr. Lange worked as Instructor in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at Virginia Tech and Assistant Professor in the Department of Agriculture at Texas State University prior to returning to Texas Tech. In addition to her role as a faculty member, Dr. Lange served as Director of Farm Operations at TTU for 11 years. She currently serves as Director for AAEC's newly developed undergraduate certificate program, Excellence in Agricultural Finance, as well as Director for AAEC's Master of Agribusiness program. She currently teaches courses in agribusiness enterprise management and agribusiness finance. Her research focuses on farm and ranch management, agribusiness finance, and personal financial planning, with an emphasis on financial literacy education in agriculture.

WAEA Vision Statement

It is an honor to be considered for the position of Director of the Western Agricultural Economics Association. I attended my first WAEA meeting in 2012 as a graduate student and the association has remained my favorite professional agricultural economics organization.

The WAEA holds many fond memories for me, and my involvement has been instrumental in fostering research and educational collaborations. If elected, I would like to help promote this collaborative atmosphere for both current and new members, particularly students and early career professionals. The opportunity to cultivate the next generation of agricultural economists through the WAEA is strong.

Additionally, fostering relationships with industry stakeholders and policymakers provides the opportunity to promote the work being done by WAEA members. Demonstrating how the research transitions to the field showcases the real-world impact contributed by the association.

I am also committed to continuing WAEA's excellence in professional development activities including the annual meeting, awards program, and student development opportunities. WAEA has always been a welcoming and non-intimidating organization, while making great contributions to the agricultural economics profession. In my role as Director, I would like to help to continue the success into the future.