Western Economics Forum

Call for Papers

Spring 2027 |Deadline 12/16/2026 | ~2,500 words (12 pages)

Managing Scarcity in a Drier West

Economic Solutions for Water, Cattle, and Communities Under Drought

This issue seeks applied research and Extension work that helps farms, ranches, and communities adapt to a drier West. Water supplies are tightening and climate change is bringing more frequent drought. We invite papers that give producers and local leaders usable answers on water, cattle, finance, and community development that make socially optimal use of the region's human and natural resources.

FARMS

Water

- Aquifer depletion and pumping rules
- Compacts, curtailment, water markets and leasing
- Deficit irrigation and crop switching

Climate adaptation

- Crop mix, technology, and timing

Finance and risk

- Crop insurance and cash flow under water cuts

RANCHES

Cattle management

- Destock, early wean, cull, or hold: the timing call
- Heifer retention and herd rebuilding
- Hay, feed, and pasture lease markets

Finance and risk

- PRF, LFP, and disaster program performance

Climate adaptation

- Ranch management practices

COMMUNITIES

Water

- Ag and municipal water sharing deals

Economic development

- Peri-urban land conversion
- Local economies tied to ranch and irrigation income
- Workforce, youth retention, ranch succession

Climate adaptation

- Community resilience and rural renewal

AI and decision tools

- Hydro-economic and farm models producers can use

- Drought grazing plans, virtual fencing, screwworm

AI and decision tools

- Herd and forage decision tools

Extension

- Programs that reached producers and towns

Submission Guidelines

Abstract deadline: December 16, 2026 (subject to confirmation).

Abstract format: One-page proposal describing the research question, methodology, expected or preliminary results, and practical economic implications.

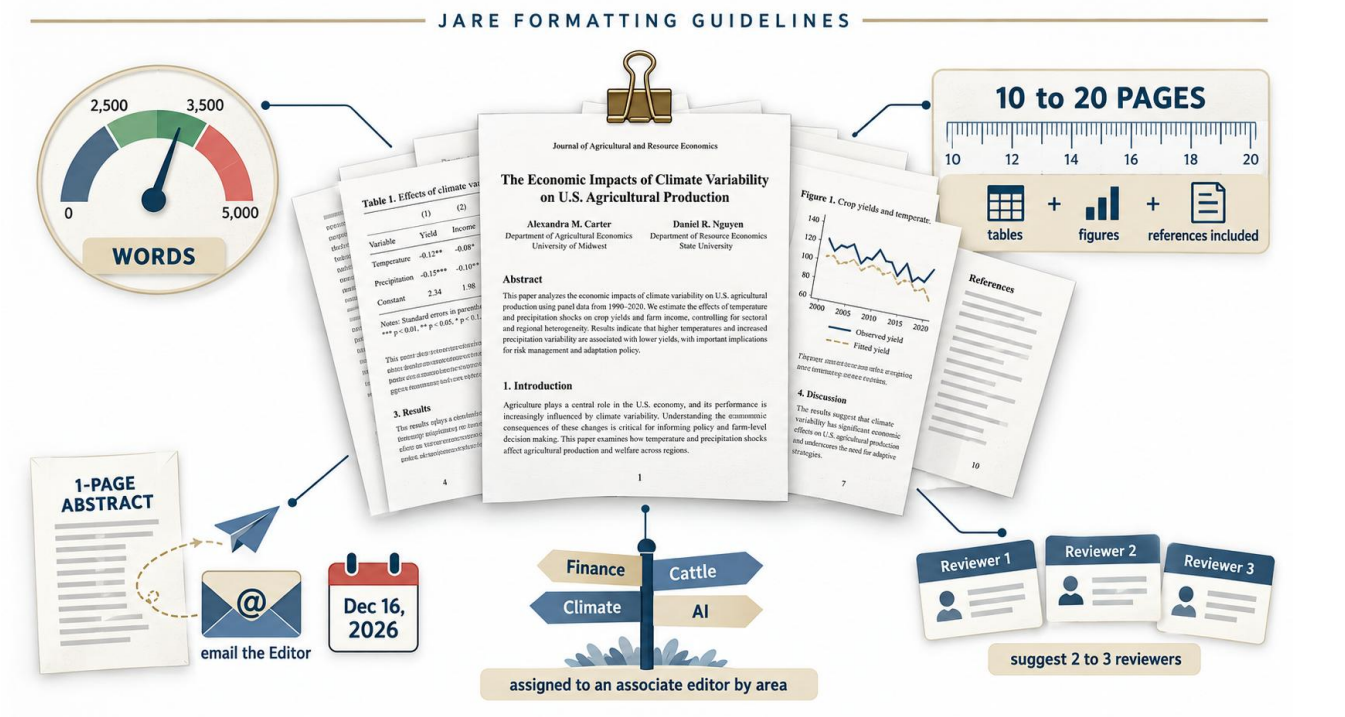
Full manuscript deadline: To be announced.

Submission address: Jeffrey Vitale, jeffrey.vitale@okstate.edu.

Manuscript requirements: Regular articles should be approximately 2,500–3,500 words, including references, tables, and figures. Short Extension case studies (1,000–1,250 words) are also encouraged. Manuscripts must follow the *Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics (JARE)* formatting guidelines and be submitted in Microsoft Word format.

Review process: All manuscripts undergo double-blind peer review following WEF editorial policies. Authors must suggest 2–3 potential reviewers, providing their names, institutional affiliations, and email addresses. Suggested reviewers should have relevant expertise and no conflicts of interest.

Additional information: http://www.waeaonline.org/publications/jare/submission-guidelines



What we are looking for

Work that a producer, lender, Extension agent, water manager, or community leader could act on. We value clear decision rules, transparent budgets and models, and honest reporting of what did not work. Multi-state and interdisciplinary teams are encouraged. Short Extension case studies are welcome alongside full research papers.

About the Western Economics Forum

The Western Economics Forum publishes peer-reviewed economic research on contemporary issues affecting the Western United States. Content is written to be accessible to economists, professionals, and stakeholders. The forum reaches agency personnel, policy makers, community practitioners, and technical assistance providers. WEF is sponsored by the Western Agricultural Economics Association. Past issues: http://www.waeaonline.org/publications/western-economics-forum

WEF Editorial Board

Jeff Vitale (Editor)
Area: Farm Management, Artificial Intelligence, and Decision Tools
Dept. of Agricultural Economics
Oklahoma State University
(405) 744-6175
jeffrey.vitale@okstate.edu

Matthew Diersen (Associate Editor)
Area: Finance and Risk
Ness School of Management and Economics
South Dakota State University
(605) 688-4864
matthew.diersen@sdstate.edu

Chris Bastian (Associate Editor)
Area: Cattle Management and Econometrics
Dept. of Agricultural and Applied Economics
University of Wyoming
(307) 766-4377
bastian@uwyo.edu

Yuri Calil (Associate Editor)
Area: Production and Resource Economics, Technology Adoption, Risk Management,
Dept. of Agricultural Economics
Texas A&M University
(361) 698-7400
yuri.calil@ag.tamu.edu