



# Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics Newsletter



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Dear Alumni, Students, Colleagues and Friends:

Welcome to the first edition of the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics Newsletter. As you peruse these pages, we hope you'll agree with us that this has been a good year for the Department: Our faculty are highly productive scholars, our students and alumni excel, and we continue to provide outstanding learning opportunities locally and around the world.

We welcome a new Assistant Professor, Dr. Rui Huang (PhD 08, University of California-Berkeley) as well as Dr. Boris Bravo-Ureta who is resuming his Professorship position after serving 10 years as UConn's Director of the Office of International Affairs.

This past year has been marked by awards that have increased the visibility of the Department: Ms. Rebecca Cleary (BS 05, MS 07) won three national outstanding Master thesis awards, Kevin Molloy (BS 93, MS 98) was chosen as one of UConn's 40 most outstanding alumni under 40 years old, and Kathy Segerson (Economics; joint appointment in ARE) was elected as a Fellow of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association.

Obviously, everyone at UConn is facing severe budget constraints as external events have reached historic

proportions in our state, national and global economies. Our key constraint is restoring the number of faculty to achieve pre-2007 levels in order to maintain excellence. The administration has committed to fill two permanent faculty vacancies when things turn around and we remain optimistic and as ready as ever to take the Department to the next level.

I invite all of you to bring forth suggestions you might have and any additional assistance you might need. On behalf of the Department, I deeply appreciate everyone's dedication and continued commitment to our success.

I look forward to another productive 2009!

My best wishes for the Holidays.

**Rigoberto Lopez**  
Professor and  
Department Head

## Rebecca Cleary (B.S. '05, M.S. '07) wins three national awards



Rebecca Cleary, B.S. '05, M.S. '07, was the winner of the "Outstanding M.S. Thesis" by The Northeastern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association and the Outstanding Master's Thesis Award of the American Agricultural Economics Association's Outstanding for her thesis, "The Impact of Wal-Mart Supercenters on Incumbents' Pricing Conduct: The

Case of the Dallas/Fort Worth Milk Market." She was also the winner of the William Applebaum Memorial Scholarship for the best masters thesis from the Food Distribution Research Society. Her research shows that when Wal-Mart enters the marketplace, milk prices fall to the benefit of consumers.

Her examination of Wal-Mart's pricing strategies found pressure on other retailers to

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## New Faculty Member: Rui Huang



Above: New faculty member Rui Huang

Growing up in China, Rui Huang knew that she had an aptitude for mathematics and an interest in how the world worked. She excelled in her schoolwork and became focused on economic policy.

During her time as a undergraduate at Renmin University in the mid-1990s, globalization had become a focus—the internet was taking shape and websites and e-mail became household terms. Dr. Huang was able to see first-hand the ways that the information age was changing society in a developing country and how the strengthening of companies in China was strengthening the entire country.

A meeting with a professor deeply influenced her in pursuing an academic career, and Dr.

Huang set out for the University of Nebraska to work on a Master's degree in Agricultural Economics, and, following graduation, to the University of California-Berkeley, where she completed a Doctorate in Agricultural and Resource Economics.

Dr. Huang joined the Department in August 2008, and her current research focuses on the effect of social interaction on obesity. Using the national Adolescent Health Survey, Dr. Huang is using new methodology to determine if adolescents are more likely to be overweight if their friends are overweight. The obesity epidemic in the United States, she says, is caused by a variety of factors that point to changes in social and behavioral patterns. Addi-

tionally, Dr. Huang is looking at how advertising to children affects consumer choices on high-calorie food items such as soft drink or candy, culprits for the increasingly overweight society. She is also teaching ARE 3222: Marketing and Consumer Behavior in the spring.

Though she has a soft spot for California and its balmy climate, Dr. Huang has become a fan of UConn's football and basketball teams and looks forward to exploring New England. The Department, she says, stands out for its support of her interests and she looks forward to working with the faculty and getting to know Resource Economics students.

## More Faculty News

**Robert Pomeroy** has been named as a Senior Research Fellow for the WorldFish Center in Malaysia, through 2011.

**Kathleen Segerson** (joint appointment with Economics) was named the Phillip Austin chair by the Board of Trustees for a three-year term.

**Ronald Cotterill** assisted Kelly Wallace of CBS National News in May 2008 for a story on milk prices. In April he welcomed Dr. Michelle Lowe from the University of Surrey School of Management, UK, to the Food Marketing Policy Center to discuss a forthcoming project on retail planning policies in the United Kingdom.

**Rigoberto Lopez**, with Kristen Fantuzzi (Ph.D. '08), presented "Carbonated Soft Drink Consumption: Implications for Obesity Policy" at the

Canadian Agricultural Economics Association/ Northeastern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association joint conference in Quebec City, Quebec June 30–July 1, 2008. He also published an article entitled "Community Food Security Across Connecticut Towns" in the Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition, July 2008, with co-authors Sylvie Tchumtchoua, Jiff Martin, and Linda Drake.

**Syma Ebbin** was recently appointed by Governor Rell to be an academic representative on the state's Eastern Long Island Sound Advisory Council. She has also been appointed to the Town of Groton Task Force on Climate Change and Sustainable Community. This semester she has been chairing the Avery Point Environmental Advisory Committee and coordinating environmental activities on the AP campus of UConn. Her article, *Institu-*

*tion and Ethical Dimensions of Resilience in Systems: Perspectives from Co-Managed Fisheries in the Pacific Northwest*, was just published in the journal *Marine Policy* Volume 33, Issue 2, March 2009, Pages 264-270. She also had an article, *Recounting the Hurricane of 1938: Local memories of a Regional Disaster*, published in *Wrecklines*, Fall/Winter 2008 Volume 8 Number 2, pp. 3-7.

**Professors Linda Lee and Boris Bravo-Ureta** are on sabbatical leave this semester and will resume their regular teaching, research and extension duties in Spring 2009.

### Visitor

**Yadong Fan**, Deputy Dean and Professor, Chengdong College, has been a visiting scholar with the Department and will return to China in February 2009.

## Welcome new Resource Economics majors!

Welcome to the Resource Economics major! We are glad to have you join the ranks of over seventy motivated students in the Department.

We've compiled a list of Frequently Asked Questions for new majors and hope they will be of help. As always, contact

ResourceEconomics@uconn.edu with your questions, concerns, or suggestions.

### Frequently Asked Questions:

1) Where can I find information on internships?

*The Departmental website, [www.are.uconn.edu](http://www.are.uconn.edu), has a new jobs and internships section for students and alumni. Updated frequently, the website is a great resource for internships opportunities. Email blasts also alert majors to Resource Economics specific*



*opportunities.*  
2) What kinds of jobs can I get with this major?  
*Job opportunities for majors vary widely and depend on your individual interests. In past years, majors have found exciting and well-paying positions in finance and small business, NGOs and government agencies, insurance companies, banks, and lending agencies.*

*Many students open their own small businesses or work in consulting. Others pursue higher education in the field or enter Law School or MBA programs.*

3) I'm interested in studying abroad. How do I go about doing

this?

*The University's Office of Study Abroad ([studyabroad.uconn.edu](http://studyabroad.uconn.edu)) is the go-to resource for finding study abroad opportunities. Additionally, the Department circulates Resource Economics-specific opportunities in emails and on the web at [www.are.uconn.edu](http://www.are.uconn.edu)*

*An exciting scholarship opportunity for study abroad, the Dorothy Goodwin International Experience Fund, was introduced this year. This endowed fund provides funds for up to \$5000 per year for Resource Economics majors to study abroad.*

4) How do I make an appointment with my advisor?

*Please contact Karen Nye at 860-486-2836 to make an appointment .*

## More Student News

**Joseph Moriarty** is working in Stoneham, Massachusetts as Vice President, Sales for TR3 solutions (TR3solutions.com), a technology company that assists retailers in using data to increase sales and profitability. A successful entrepreneur and innovator, Joseph has developed software for Wal-Mart for supply chain management. His company is offering internships to Resource Economics majors and has some job openings to which graduating majors can apply to. He will graduate in Spring 2009.

Two students have been funded under the Dorothy Goodwin International Experience Fund.

**Damiana Serafini** will spend the Spring 2009 semester in Buenos Aires, Argentina as an intern in a think tank, setting national policies for bio-fuels.

**Chelsea Williams** will spend the intermission break in Oaxaca, Mexico in a study abroad program, living with a Mexican family, studying Spanish, and immersing herself in the culture.

**Michael Cohen** will be an intern at the University of Chicago Business School in spring 2009, working directly with Professor Jean-Pierre Dubé.

**Sylvie Tchumtchoua** defended her Ph.D. dissertation in November 2008, entitled "Advertising and Dynamic Demand for Differentiated Products." She will continue working on her Ph.D. in Statistics.

To all students: Please send us any noteworthy activities to .publish in this column.

# Alumni News



**Jessica Kukielka (B.S. '05, M.S. '07)** is working as an Energy Analyst at SAIC in Pittsburgh. She will be responsible for learning and working on the National Energy Modeling Systems model through the NETL and DOE.

**Shelby Grant (B.S. '06)** recently visited the Department in her capacity as NE Marketing Agent with Crop Growers crop insurance.

**Alessandro Bonanno (Ph.D. '07)** has taken a position at Pennsylvania State University as an Assistant Professor of Agricultural Economics.

**Jose Maripani (Ph.D. '07)** is Associate Dean of the School of Business at the University of Magallanes, Chile.

**Wonil Kim (M.S. '08)** is working as Senior Deputy Director in the Bureau of Agricultural Marketing Policy in South Korea.

**Gustavo Fabra (M.S. '08)** is in Madrid, Spain, working as a customer marketing manager with Wurth Company.

**Kristen Fantuzzi (Ph.D. '08)** is working at Biovid in Princeton, New Jersey as a market research analyst.

**Kevin Molloy (B.S. '93, MS. '98)** was selected as one of UConn's "40 under 40" and was featured in UConn Magazine's Fall/Winter 2008 issue.

Following graduation from UConn, Kevin worked as an analyst at Sands Brothers and at the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis. He joined AXA Equitable Life Insurance Company, in 1999 and worked as head of investor relations.

Last year Kevin was promoted to senior vice president of distribu-

tion finance.

Kevin visited the Department on November 7th and spoke to Resource Economics majors about his career path and what majors can do to ready themselves for careers related to this field. Networking and strong analytic skills, he said, coupled with technical aptitude and a desire to get the job done will serve majors well in any role.



*Above: Kevin Molloy, photo by Peter Morenus*

## Rebecca Cleary, B.S. '05, M.S. '07: Award Winner



*(continued from front page)*

lower their prices, resulting in lower prices for consumers as a whole.

Rebecca is a native of Bridgewater, Connecticut. Her professional interests date back to her days at FFA. She is currently enrolled in the Ph.D. program at the University of Wisconsin at Madison in Agricultural and Applied Economics.

*Left: Otto Doering III, the AAEA President from Purdue University presents Rebecca Cleary with the award for Outstanding Master's Thesis.*

