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The Council on Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics 1998 Annual Report

Over the last five years, The Council on Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics (C-FARE) has become a visibly recognized and important advocate for the agricultural economics profession at the national level. C-FARE representatives consistently and visibly make the case for continued public support of agricultural economics research, education and extension programs. Equally important, C-FARE works to make the results of the profession's research accessible to key public sector decision makers in the Administration and the Congress.

C-FARE's work is non-partisan. Like similar scientific associations, C-FARE has developed effective methods of outreach that do not depend on adoption of a particular point of view with respect to Policy or program outcomes.

C-FARE's mission is to increase the national presence of the agricultural economics profession through a combination of education, outreach and professional leadership. We focus our attention in Washington, D.C. on Congress, USDA and other agencies, professional associations, and other influential non-governmental groups. We rely on members of our profession to provide the analysis and input appropriate to the situation. We communicate with individual agricultural economists through periodic mailings to department heads, and by having a booth and sponsoring sessions at the American Agricultural Economics Association ([AAEA](#)) meetings.

Accomplishments

Input to Policy Makers: The U.S. Congress

C-FARE representatives look for opportunities to provide input to the congressional committees responsible for authorizing farm legislation, appropriating funds for agricultural programs, and other committees dealing with policies that affect areas of interest to the profession and stakeholders of the food and agricultural system.

Supported National Legislation That Will Increase Agricultural Economics' Visibility

At C-FARE's request, a section in the Agriculture Research, Extension and Education Reform Act of 1998 authorizes a national study on performance measurement guidelines for agricultural research, education and extension programs to be led by members of the agricultural economics profession. Once funds are appropriated, this study will greatly increase the profession's visibility among key congressional and other decision makers.

Communicated Budget Priorities to Congress

C-FARE submitted testimony to the House and the Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Agriculture. The testimony included budget recommendations for federal spending on formula funds, competitive grants, and USDA research agencies. C-FARE also requested funding for the study on performance measurement guidelines described above.

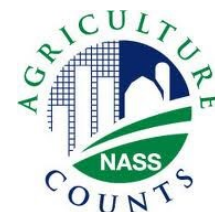
Sponsored a High-Profile Congressional Briefing

This past June C-FARE held its first and very successful congressional briefing in the Senate Agriculture Committee room. The objective of the briefing was to describe and promote the contributions of the agricultural economics profession in the context of a critical or emerging issue. Dan Sumner led the briefing based on C-FARE's document, Keys to Agricultural Growth and Profitability (C-FARE, 1998). We plan to plan to seek many more opportunities for briefings on important Policy issues.

Input to Policy Makers: The U.S. Department of Agriculture



[Agricultural and Applied Economics Departments](#)



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USDA has an equally important role in determining the course of agricultural economics research, extension and education programs. C-FARE monitors the activities of USDA to identify opportunities for the profession to be involved.

Advocated for More Agricultural Economics in New USDA Competitive Grants Programs

When a new USDA competitive grants program was authorized by Congress in 1998, C-FARE made sure that the agricultural economics profession's interests were heard by a number of key Policy makers. C-FARE held meetings with USDA staff and wrote letters to high-level USDA officials defining the current and potential contributions of agricultural economics research, education and extension programs. A position paper was developed that described specific contributions the agricultural economics profession could make toward solving problems related to biotechnology, agricultural genomics, food safety, and natural resources and the environment. The program was not funded by Congress in FY1999, but C-FARE is joining forces with other groups to request funding in FY2000.

Promoted Economics in the National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program

Peter Barry has been serving on a National Academy of Sciences committee analyzing the National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program (NRI). As a committee member, he has helped define the potential contributions of economics and other social sciences to the program. C-FARE was invited to comment on the type and quality of NRI research before members of the committee. Tracy Irwin Hewitt argued for increased access for the economics profession in research divisions other than Markets, Trade and Rural Development. Particular emphasis was given to increasing access by agricultural economists to grants from the Natural Resources and the Environment Division.

Responded to USDA's Call for Stakeholder Input to New Food Safety Programs

C-FARE responded to three calls from USDA for input to new food safety programs. We described current and potential contributions of the agricultural economics profession toward improving food safety. Stakeholder input is included in the formal record and must be considered by USDA when designing research programs. Several follow-up activities will be conducted as appropriate in 1999.

Outreach and Education: Influential Scientific Societies

Provided Input to the Coalition on Funding Agricultural Research Missions

C-FARE has a seat on the board of directors of the Coalition on Funding Agricultural Research Missions (CoFARM), a coalition of more than 100,000 scientists representing groups such as the Federation of Animal Science Societies, the Crop Science Society, the American Society of Microbiologists, and the American Society of Agronomy. Through CoFARM the profession is represented at key meetings with high-level Policy makers at USDA, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Office of Science and Technology Policy. The contributions of economics research are often discussed.

The CoFARM budget document, written with extensive C-FARE involvement, gives the agricultural economics profession another vehicle to promote economics research and make recommendations about the level and direction of research funding.

Outreach and Education: Annual Conference

Brought Economic Analysis to Capitol Hill and Other Key Policy Makers

Every year C-FARE sponsors a conference on an important economic Policy issue as a way to promote the current and potential contributions of the profession. The 1998 conference, "Partnerships in Agricultural Research and Education," was well-attended and received. Speakers included Eileen Kennedy, Deputy Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics. A short summary document is available.

Outreach and Education: Congressional Science Fellowship Program

Initiated the First Agricultural Economics Congressional Science Fellow Program

For several years, C-FARE has been working to raise money for an individual agricultural economist to participate in the prestigious Congressional Science Fellowship Program sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences (AAAS). This year, AAAS agreed to fund a C-FARE proposal that will make it possible for the first Agricultural Economics Congressional Science Fellow to be placed in the fall of 1999.

Supported Free Sessions on Current Topics

C-FARE sponsored or participated in three free sessions at the 1998 AAEA meeting. The first session offered a chance to provide input to the planning of our 1999 conference. The second free session discussed trends in social science research funding at the national level. The third session discussed the value and use of C-FARE's 1997 publication, "Economics Research and Education Priorities for an Efficient and Sustainable Food System."

Outreach and Education: C-FARE on the Web

C-FARE launched its website in 1998 (www.cfare.org). The primary purpose of the site is to educate people about C-FARE by sharing relevant and timely information about accomplishments and activities.

Plans for 1999 and 2000

C-FARE will:

- Work with other groups and scientific societies to maintain and strengthen appropriations for agricultural research and education programs generally.
- Secure appropriations for the national study on performance measurement guidelines to be led by representatives of the agricultural economics profession.
- Conduct a national conference on "Smart Environmental Policies for Animal Agriculture." We plan to have a prominent Senator give the keynote address, and hold the event in one of the Senate office buildings.
- Sponsor an organized symposium at the AAEA meetings on the implications of current trends in federal support for agricultural research, education and extension programs.
- Continue outreach efforts to and collaboration with other disciplines, USDA, Congress and other organizations that influence the course of agricultural research, extension and education.
- Support the Agricultural Economics Congressional Science Fellow by organizing an orientation program focused on agricultural Policy issues.
- Organize briefings for congressional, administration and other audiences on current issues.

For more information about C-FARE, please contact Peter Barry, Chair, at 217-333-1827, or Tracy Irwin Hewitt, Executive Director, at 703-524-2145.

The Council on Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics (C-FARE) is a non-profit organization created in 1993 to strengthen the national presence of the agricultural economics profession and to enhance its effectiveness. C-FARE is actively working to: 1) Prioritize and publicize key economic issues within the research, extension and resident instruction agendas; 2) Help agricultural economists contribute more effectively to public and private sector decisions; 3) Establish linkages with organizations and institutions for the benefit of the entire profession; and 4) collaborate with other disciplines on issues of mutual concern.

In pursuit of these goals, C-FARE will periodically conduct priority setting exercises for input into funding processes, develop nonpartisan issue papers to enhance the Policy dialogue, and hold Policy briefings on key economic issues.

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For information regarding this website, please email Caron Gala at C-FARE.

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