



National Food and Agribusiness Management Education Commission

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Dr. Mike Boland, Kansas State University
Dr. Jay Akridge, Purdue University

Collaborators:
United States Department of Agriculture
Kansas State University
Purdue University

Contributors:
American Agricultural Economics Association Foundation
Farm Foundation

Preparing Students for an Evolving Industry



NFAMEC Objectives

- Describe current state of food and agribusiness management education programs
- Identify a set of key issues facing these programs
- Develop a set of recommendations on these issues
- Communicate the recommendations broadly

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NFAMEC Activities

- Formation of Industry Steering Committee
- Formation of the Commission
- Development of 6 work areas for the Commission:
 - Curriculum Assessment and Revision
 - Communication/Writing/Critical Thinking Skills
 - Industry Linkages
 - Student Recruitment
 - Introductory and Capstone Undergraduate Courses
 - Graduate Programs in Food and Agribusiness Management

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NFAMEC Activities

- Two day workshop (St. Louis) with the Commission members to define the issues, assess current situation, and develop recommendations
- AAEA Preconference 2004
- AAEA Organized Symposium 2006
- Final Report published in the fall of 2006
- USDA Seminar – October 2006
- Note: number of working papers and presentations available at NFAMEC web-site:

<https://www.agecon.purdue.edu/cab/NFAMEC/home.htm>

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Curriculum Assessment and Revision

Dave Schaffner, Cal Poly SLO (Team Leader)

- Improve the integration across the curriculum of key concepts: communications, problem solving, ethics, etc.
- Pursue strategies for broadening student understanding of diversity, and working in a multicultural business environment
- Support the inclusion of agricultural sciences in programs
- Consider development of courses in the areas of interpersonal communications/team building, public policy, international trade/marketing, and strategy
- Require an internship experience as part of major
- Encourage minors in food and agribusiness management
- Support the development of teaching materials to provide industry focus

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Communication/Writing/Critical Thinking Skills

Cynda Clary, New Mexico State University (Team Leader)

- Incorporate development of oral communications, writing, teamwork, critical thinking, and ethics at all levels
- Recognize the role of co-curricular activities in developing these skills, and the resulting implications for counselors/faculty
- Support faculty development in non-traditional teaching approaches: experiential learning, team-based assignments, problem based learning, simulations, etc.
- Support research into the role of co-curricular activities in student learning/effective models for integrating these experiences
- Create a dialogue on the role of faculty in co-curricular activities and how that role is recognized in promotion

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Industry Linkages

Lisa House, University of Florida (Team Leader)

- Maintain NFAMEC/other forum for regular discussions between faculty and industry on curriculum issues
- Increase industry visibility on campus
- Create a Certified Internship template which would help insure a productive internship experience for student and industry
- Pursue other forms of student-industry interaction including special projects, on-site visits, in-class lectures, virtual mentoring programs, and executive in residence programs
- Develop a national database which catalogs food and agribusiness firms with certified internship programs, virtual mentoring programs, those willing to offer guest lecturers for classes, etc.

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Student Recruitment

Chris Peterson, Michigan State (Team Leader)

- Recognize barriers and challenges to recruiting quality students
- Develop an answer to the question: "Why should a student study food and agribusiness management?"
- Develop communication strategies for high potential target audiences
- Pursue a 'culture of quality', keeping programs in touch with industry needs
- Fund research focused on the value of an agribusiness management degree; the mobility of the skill set provided; the key needs of the industry in new hires; and the relationship between program size and graduate quality
- Continue USDA funding of initiatives to develop faculty to teach in food and agribusiness programs

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Introductory and Capstone Courses

John Foltz, University of Idaho (Team Leader)

- Utilize active learning techniques including case studies, simulations, team assignments, student presentations, etc.
- Utilize strategies to keep course content relevant and focused on contemporary industry issues
- Create a national forum for sharing teaching practices and materials
- Pursue opportunities to develop faculty skills in non-traditional teaching methods
- Fund the development of teaching materials which focus on the food and agribusiness industries

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Graduate Programs in Agribusiness Management

Tom Sporleder, The Ohio State University (Team Leader)

- Encourage a forum for discussion of the content and structure of an M.S. program in food and agribusiness management
- Encourage a forum for discussion of the structure and focus of doctoral training in food and agribusiness management
- Insure that key food and agribusiness journals are included in the Social Science Index
- Encourage the continued focus of the USDA National Needs Fellowship program on developing faculty members in food and agribusiness management
- Explore opportunities to utilize distance education to share doctoral courses in food and agribusiness management

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Strategic Response

- Agribusiness programs must consider a niche strategy
- Agribusiness programs must be more than a collection of courses
- Agricultural economics can be a point of difference
- Industry engagement is key
- Successful programs will aggressively pursue partnering
- Professional development for agribusiness faculty is a necessity

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NFAMEC Commission Members

Allen Anderson	Marvin Miller
Joe Coffey	Steve Miller
Gary Brester	Pat O'Rourke
Bob Broeckelman	Bob O'Toole
Cynda Clary	David Parker
Bradley Clow, Sr.	Paul Patterson
Dennis Conley	Chris Peterson
Penny Deibel	Lee Rulon
John Foltz	Dave Shaffner
David Gordon	Surendra Singh
Elle Grothaus	Jodie Smith
Mike Gumina	Todd Smith
Jim Hagen	Tom Sporleder
Lisa House	Kevin Still
Karen Howard	Siva Sureshwaran
Tu Jarvis	Scott Swenson
Eluned Jones	Randy Westgren
Joe Kozlerek	Todd Zehner
Donald McDowell	Jim Zellner
Ted McKinney	Jay Akridge
	Mike Boland

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