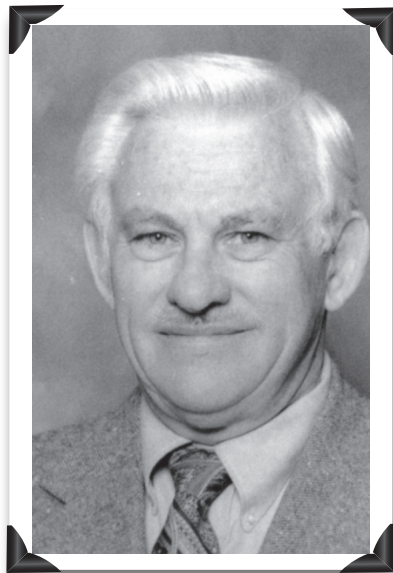




# Ag Econogram



## Dr. Luther H. Keller



The department lost one of its pillars recently with the passing of Professor Luther Keller at age 82. Keller was a major feature of the department for more than 30 years. He was an intellectual leader, taught many graduate and undergraduate courses, supervised the work of a large number of M.S. and Ph.D. students, produced a large volume of high quality applied research, and served the university in a variety of valuable

leadership capacities. He was an incisive thinker and insisted on high intellectual standards among those around him. During the latter half of his career, he was the “go-to” mentor for young faculty seeking wise counsel. He was a native of the Knoxville area and received his B.S. and M.S. degrees from our department and his Ph.D. from the University of Kentucky in 1966. He served as president of the UT Knoxville Faculty Senate in 1973-74 and served two terms on the UTK Graduate Council. During his career, he won many prestigious awards including the Gamma Sigma Delta Teaching Award, the Pendergrass Award for Professional Excellence, the college’s Outstanding Teacher Award, the Ronald McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Award, and the Chancellor’s Citation for Extraordinary Service. He retired in 1994 and is survived by his wife, Ruth; five children; and several grandchildren and great grandchildren.

## In This Issue

Dr. Luther H. Keller . . . . . 1

Department Head’s Comments 2

Gluttons for Education . . . . . 3

Alumni Spotlight . . . . . 4

What Are Recent Grads Doing? 4

Just No-tillin’ . . . . . 5

Department Adds a Couple of “Different” Faculty . . . . . 6

Dr. Rawls Honored by Cattlemen’s Association. . . . . 7

Dr. Riley Receives Sheep Industry Award . . . . . 7

Dr. Edward Yu Joins the Faculty 7

Please Support the Agribusiness Club . . . . . 8

*Agricultural & Resource Economics*

THE UNIVERSITY of  
**TENNESSEE**   
INSTITUTE of  
AGRICULTURE

# Department Head's Comments

---



“It was the best of times; it was the worst of times ...” (Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*). This oft-used quote may apply to many public universities as they face substantial budget restrictions. However, in the midst of these restrictions, some units are forging ahead to answer the educational and research needs of our society.

Like many land-grant university departments, the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics is facing significant uncertainty in 2011. We have, however, positioned ourselves to continue our excellent research and educational programs through the hard work of our talented faculty and staff.

That positioning is reflected by our current hiring situation. We are currently interviewing candidates for an 80 percent research/20 percent teaching faculty appointment. This position is defined as a farm management/environmental appointment and we look forward to welcoming a new faculty member this year.

We also have three open searches for Extension faculty. These three positions are in grain marketing, livestock marketing and an agribusiness chair. We are hoping to fill all three of these positions before the end of 2011.

We have recently added a bookkeeper and will soon add a research associate to our staff. How are we able to add faculty and staff in the midst of one of the most severe budget reductions in our history? First, many of these positions are replacing personnel who have retired or moved on to positions elsewhere. However, because of the budget shortfall, replacing a position because it happens to become vacant is not guaranteed anymore. Rather, positions are replaced because the

administration sees value in the position, both in terms of the work that has gone on before; and the future expectation of advancing the land grant mission, whether from the teaching, extension, or research perspective.

Because of our past success and expectations, we are able to continue our dynamic educational and research programs in the department. We have seen significant growth in the number of undergraduate students over the past five years. We have also seen research output increase, along with outside funding to help support both research and extension programs.

So, in the midst of the “worst of times,” our relevance and productivity have helped to make much of what we do the “best of times.”

Thanks for your valuable continued support.

*Delton C. Gerloff*

---

**We have, however, positioned ourselves to continue our excellent research and educational programs through the hard work of our talented faculty and staff.**

---

# Gluttons for Education!

For some students, one B.S. degree is not enough. Currently, the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics has six students pursuing a second B.S. degree in another major. **Chad Covert**, a senior from Knoxville, is pursuing a degree in natural resource and environmental economics in our department and his second degree through the College of Business Administration with a major in public administration. He is also currently a Baker Scholar in the Howard Baker Center for Public Policy at UT Knoxville. After graduation, Chad hopes to enter an interdisciplinary graduate program in public policy. He hopes to find a career in the environmental policy arena.

The second degree for the other five students will come from the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. Both **Chaz LaFoe** from Harrison, Tennessee, and **Caroline Ellis** from Apison, Tennessee, will receive a second degree in animal science. Chaz started UT with a major in accounting but having worked on neighbors' and friends' cattle and horse farms had developed an interest in agriculture. He visited with Dr. Heitman in the Department of Animal Science and as Chaz said, "It was a no-brainer that I switch to animal science." His switch to animal science made it a natural for him to also switch from accounting to food and agricultural business. His job interests are in pharmaceutical sales or co-op management with a location "out west," as he puts it. Chaz is also considering our dual M.S./M.B.A. graduate program in agribusiness.

**Caroline Ellis** grew up on a small farm where they raised cattle and

she had a horse. She started her college studies at Berry College in Rome, Georgia. Tuition was high so when her brother started college, she switched to the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. But UTC had no agriculture program and that is what she wanted to pursue. Animal science was her major at Berry and business was her UTC major. Transferring to UT Knoxville allowed her to pursue the B.S. in both animal science and food and agricultural business. This summer, Caroline will be doing an internship with Pfizer. The summer includes one week of training in Philadelphia, eight weeks of visiting beef producers and co-ops in East Tennessee, and a final week in New York City for a presentation about her internship work project.

**Magen Shedden** grew up in Knoxville and became active in 4-H in the fourth grade. Her projects were sheep, swine and cattle. Magen's original plans were to be a pre-vet major at UT. She began to feel that she could be of greater assistance to the agricultural industry by combining business and engineering. She currently has majors in the production systems option in biosystems engineering and in food and agricultural business. When she graduates, she sees herself staying in Knoxville and working on her professional engineering license. Once that is obtained, it is off to a large agricultural corporation. Magen plans to someday have her own ag business.

**James Bickel** also sees himself as one day having his own business. James is from Nashville but worked on his grandfather's farm in West Tennessee and also helped friends

and neighbors of his grandfather on their farms. His second major is environmental and soil science with the agricultural systems technology concentration. James added the food and agricultural business major because he felt he could better present himself in the job market. "If I am designing a tractor for John Deere, the cost of that tractor is certainly going to be a major factor," he said.

**Jonathan Allen** is a sophomore majoring in natural resource and environmental economics with a second major in environmental and soil science. He grew up in Sullivan County, Tennessee, and always liked the outdoors which led him to our NREE major. He is a member of the Soil Judging Team and is a student assistant to Dr. Neil Rhodes in Plant Sciences. His first goal upon graduation is to get a job! However, his dream job is either with UT Extension or with the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

A second degree is not the same thing as a minor in a second program. Most minors require 18-21 hours in the minor program area and those hours can often be completed within the hour requirements for the primary degree. Receiving a second B.S. degree means that a student must complete at least 30 hours in addition to the 120 hours for the first degree. For most students, it takes more than the minimum number of hours. Magen Shedden has her two-degree program mapped out in 208 hours. That's commitment!

# Alumni Spotlight



**MELISSA COONEY**

Melissa Cooney, a 2004 MS graduate (BA 2001, language and world business), is regional operations manager for the Nature Conservancy with an office in Brazil. She worked in international sales for a Knoxville firm after she graduated, but always wanted to work for a nonprofit. In 2005, she got that opportunity when

she was hired as a paralegal working at the headquarters of the Nature Conservancy in Washington, D.C.

One of the things Melissa likes about the Nature Conservancy is the opportunity they have given her to move up the career ladder. She was promoted to her current position in 2008. In this position, she is responsible for office infrastructure standardization working across 16 countries and 30 offices.

While her focus is on operations, she says she has a great set of bosses who have given her the opportunity to work on side projects in agriculture. Melissa is interested in conservation agriculture and has looked at how Cargill in Brazil sources soybeans. As a part of that, she has studied Chinese soybean demand and the implications for conservation. The Nature Conservancy has worked with Cargill so they only purchase soybeans from producers who adhere to Brazilian law, which requires that a portion of each farm be left in its natural state.

Most recently, she spent four months in Argentina working on sustainable sheep ranching. She studied grassland management conservation identifying the flora and fauna in the area and documenting the impact of overgrazing. Melissa made suggestions for landscape-wide changes in practices. As a part of her work to help producers change their production practices, the Nature Conservancy works to identify U.S. purchasers of wool who are willing to offer a price based on the full cost of production including biodiversity in the farm management plan.

She is basing her work on the concept of ecosystem management. So, if one looks at clean water, the question is “what is clean water worth?” “How do you put a value on nature?” Melissa asks. Is a downstream city willing to pay farmers upstream for practices that keep the water clean and enable the city to reduce its water treatment costs?

Melissa is very proud to be working for the Nature Conservancy. “I have a way to continue developing in a career I love,” she said.

## What Are Recent Grads Doing?

**Alejandro Dellachiesa**, M.S. 2005, received his Ph.D. from the Department of Economics, University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 2010. He is now assistant professor in the Economics Department at Bates College in Lewiston, Maine. Alejandro teaches courses in international trade and development with a focus on agriculture. He is also participating in a conservation agriculture project with Harwood Schaffer, research assistant professor in our department.

**Yu Zhang**, M.S. 2004, received her Ph.D. from the Department of Finance, University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 2011. Yu is an assistant professor in the Finance Department at Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan. Yu has already published several important journal articles.

**Hiroyuki Takeshima**, M.S. 2004, received his Ph.D. from the Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. He is now a postdoctoral fellow with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). He works in the Nigeria Strategy Support Program.

# Just No-tillin'

**Dr. Dayton Lambert** and **Dr. Michael Wilcox** have jointly witnessed many amazing sights throughout their careers. Though, whether as students together in graduate school (Auburn and Purdue) or as Peace Corps trainees headed to Burundi and Cameroon, nothing had quite prepared them for the soil erosion problem in Lesotho, a small kingdom in South Africa. "You could see the maize crop still standing in the soil that had eroded off of the farm and onto the road!" exclaims Wilcox.

Lambert and Wilcox, along with **Dr. Neal Eash** and **Dr. Forbes Walker**, faculty from Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science, form a research and Extension team from UT's Institute of Agriculture (UTIA) that was recently awarded a five-year grant for almost \$1.4 million. The grant is from the Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Collaborative Research Support Program supported by the United

States Agency for International Development. The team visited Lesotho in November and December 2010. They will return to Lesotho in May 2011 to continue the work as this time coincides with the main harvest.

"Basically, we are taking the knowledge and know-how gained in Tennessee over the last 40 years and applying it to a desperate situation in southern Africa where food security is constantly on the minds of many people," says Eash. "No-till was pioneered here in Tennessee and our experience from providing a solid scientific basis for conservation agriculture (no-till is an example) to convincing farmers to adopt it places us in a unique position to help."

Eash said, "We cannot stress enough the importance of our partners." The team has cultivated solid partnerships with the National University of Lesotho (NUL, led by Dr. Makoala Marake), Growing

Nations (a non-governmental organization that is conducting training and promoting the adoption of conservation agriculture in Lesotho) and the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center. "We essentially have a UTIA/NUL Experiment Station set up in Lesotho," explains Walker. "In the village of Maphutseng, you will find equipment, field trials, students (from UT and NUL) and extension programming all actively being deployed."

Ultimately, the goal is the development of a sustainable system that addresses social, economic, and environmental issues and provides opportunities for the adoption of best practices. From an environmental standpoint, the team is determining the carbon sequestration potential of conservation agriculture and testing a range of cover crops that will not only keep the soil in place but will also have the benefit of additional income and food.

---

Ultimately, the goal is the development of a sustainable system that addresses social, economic, and environmental issues and provides opportunities.

---



DAYTON LAMBERT WITH WORKERS IN LESOTHO.

# Department Adds a Couple of “Different” Faculty

Most observers probably feel that diversity adds strength to organizations that must deal with diverse issues and problems. The Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics certainly is required to deal with a broad spectrum of issues ranging from those that are more people and preference oriented to those that relate to the economics of physical or biological systems. Recently, the department acquired the services of two new faculty members who add substantial diversity to our personnel resources. These new research assistant professors are **Dr. Chad Hellwinckel and Dr. Harwood Schaffer**. The diversity feature of these two faculty members is that neither of them has a Ph.D. in agricultural economics or economics even though both have M.S. degrees in Ag Econ.

Chad is a recent (2008) Ph.D. graduate of the UT Knoxville Department of Geography. His doctoral research was in the area of agricultural geography, climate and soils. He entered that Ph.D. program while he was a research associate with our department’s Agricultural Policy Analysis Center (APAC). Chad had eight years’ experience with APAC after receiving his M.S. in Ag Econ from our department in 1996. He also has experience as a Peace Corps volunteer in Panama and with the U.S. Forest Service in Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. He continues his research work — now as a faculty member — in APAC focusing on agricultural policies, climate change mitigation, biofuels analysis, and defining long-term agricultural land use policies in a “post peak-oil world.”

Harwood is also a recent (2010) Ph.D. graduate from UT Knoxville,

but his degree is from the Department of Sociology. His area of work during his graduate program was economic sociology related to food consumption. He also has joined the faculty in APAC as a research assistant professor. Prior to becoming a faculty member, Harwood was a research associate with APAC during which time he received an M.S. in Ag Econ from our department. He also has broad experience as a newspaper publisher, minister and high school math teacher. He now works primarily in the creation of the widely circulated agricultural policy column that is produced by APAC each week, sharing authorship with Dr. Daryll Ray. The pair of authors has produced more than 550 columns during Harwood’s time here.

The department is extremely pleased to have both Chad and Harwood in its stable of human resources!



**DR. CHAD HELLWINCKEL**



**DR. HARWOOD SCHAFFER**

## *Dr. Rawls Honored by Cattlemen's Association*

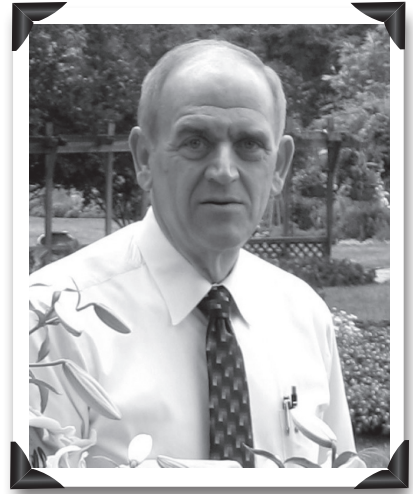
Dr. Emmit Rawls was honored by the Tennessee Cattlemen's Association (TCA) at its annual conference and trade show in January. The association established the **Dr. Emmit Rawls Outstanding Stocker Producer Award** to be awarded annually to an individual who has excelled in the areas of stocker cattle production and marketing. The TCA noted that Dr. Rawls is retiring after 37 years as professor and livestock marketing specialist, dedicating his working life to educating and assisting cattle producers in Tennessee. "Rawls has played a key role in promoting retained ownership as coordinator of the Tennessee Beef Cattle Improvement Initiative and coordinator of the Tennessee Beef Evaluation Program. He also helped organize the first video sale in Tennessee."



**STEVE SCOTT, TCA PRESIDENT, WITH DR. EMMIT RAWLS**

## *Dr. Riley Receives Sheep Industry Award*

Dr. John Riley was honored with the 2010 Friend of the Tennessee Sheep Industry award at the 2010 annual meeting of the Tennessee Sheep Producers Association. Riley grew up on a sheep farm near Staunton, Virginia. He and his family were instrumental in the success of the Eastern Stud Ram Sale. He is a former Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at UT and is currently a professor of Agricultural Economics. Dr. Riley has shown his support of the Tennessee 4-H sheep project by serving as ring master and as a facilitator of the sheep skillathon at the Tennessee Junior Sheep Exposition for several years. He currently provides a \$500 scholarship for the exhibitor of the reserve champion ewe bred by an exhibitor.



**DR. JOHN RILEY**

## *Dr. Edward Yu Joins the Faculty*

The department's resources for analyzing biofuels as alternative crops for Tennessee farmers have been enhanced significantly by the employment of Dr. Tun-Hsiang Yu as an assistant professor. Edward, as he prefers to be called, came to UT from Iowa State University where he was an international oilseed and biodiesel analyst. He had been working at Iowa State since receiving his Ph.D. in agricultural economics from Texas A&M University in 2005. He is focusing his research at UT in the area of logistics of the biomass feedstock system. This area of work has been identified as critical to development of a viable biofuels industry, given the bulkiness of the biomass, seasonality of production, and the anticipated wide geographic dispersion of biomass production. Edward is highly active with other researchers and with graduate students working in closely related areas. He is a native of Taiwan but lives with his wife and young son in Knoxville. Welcome, Edward!



**DR. EDWARD YU**

The University of Tennessee  
**Department of Agricultural and  
Resource Economics**  
2621 Morgan Circle  
302 Morgan Hall  
Knoxville, TN 37996-4518

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage

**PAID**

Permit No. 481  
Knoxville, TN

**Econogram Committee:** Dan McLemore, John Riley,  
Harwood Schaffer, Mark Clark, David Harper, Design  
and Layout by Kimberly Stallings, Edited by April Moore

R11-1215-012-012-11 1.3M-5/11

The University of Tennessee is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title  
IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA institution in the provision  
of its education and employment programs and services.

## *Please Support the Agribusiness Club*

The Agribusiness Club is getting reorganized and revitalized. The club is an important element in the lives of our students, and its impact is directly related to the size of its membership and the level of club activities. The organization provides a social opportunity but also is a means for students to learn more about careers and to network with industry personnel and faculty. Three meetings have been held so far this year and included presentations from Farm Credit Services and from Dr. Burt English, who spoke about biofuels. On the social side, the students have had a make-your-own-root-beer-float activity and, at the last meeting, held the "great oreo cookie race."

To be successful, the club needs the support of alumni. Would you be willing to be a speaker at one of the club meetings, or if you are close to Knoxville, host the club for a field trip? Having incentives, such as door prizes, to get students to the meetings also helps.



*Agribusiness Club Members*

If you can help the club to be more effective, contact Dr. John Riley, who serves as adviser to the club, at [jriley@utk.edu](mailto:jriley@utk.edu) or 865-974-7465.