

# The Syllabus

A newsletter for Master of Agribusiness students, alumni and friends

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## MAB receives USDA grant

The MAB program has been awarded a grant by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to enhance and expand the international elective, AGECE 710 Comparative Food and Agricultural Systems. As part of the grant, three new modules will be added to the course.

Currently, the course offers sections on the MERCOSUR, the European Union, Russia and the Former Soviet Union and East Asia. The three new additions will be sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and the Oceania countries. These additions will allow even greater global coverage and understanding of agricultural systems throughout the world.

The new sections will be taught by

instructors from each region so students will learn about the global food and agribusiness industry from people who have experienced it first hand.

Kansas State and the University of Florida will work in collaboration with our international partners in creating the new modules and then adapting the course for MAB students and eventually undergraduate students.

Dr. Allen Featherstone and Lynnette Brummett will travel to France in September to meet with other members and outline project goals and a timetable.

Be watching for more information on the enhanced course in the next few months!

## Students complete thesis projects

To access an electronic version or view a thesis defense, log onto K-State On-Line, [www.online.ksu.edu](http://www.online.ksu.edu), with your eID and password. Go to the MAB Community Page, go to Content and click on Theses.

### **Sandra Alton, class of 2006**

Demographic Factors Contributing to the Rise in Food-Away-from-Home Expenditures

### **Tyson Chick, class of 2006**

Strategic Alliance Evaluation and Development for Specific Assets of Agri Cooperative and Select Business Partners

### **Melissa Frick, class of 2006**

Bimbo Bakeries USA Productivity Savings Project

### **Zach Gaines, class of 2006**

Factors Influencing Consumption of Traditional Domestic Beer in the U.S.

### **Keith Harris, class of 2006**

Winning Bid Decision Determination: The Use of Combinatorial and Reverse Auctions as Price Discovery Mechanisms

### **Walden Hodges, class of 2002**

Analysis of Toll Blending Industrial Bakery Mixes and the Effect to Firm Value

### **Essien Ita, class of 2003**

Lessons Learned in Operating a Niche Aroma Chemical Distribution Company

### **Heather May, class of 2006**

An Economic Analysis of the Increasing Energy Cost Threat on Horticultural Vocational Rehabilitation Training Programs

### **Rod McNally, class of 2006**

Predicting Supplies of Chicken Boneless Breast Trimmings in the U.S.

### **Walter Von Muhlen Filho, class of 2005**

Estimating a Brazilian Demand Function for Wheat Imports

### **Mark Winger, class of 2002**

Financial Ratio Benchmarks for Kansas Farms 1995 to 2004

### **Jim Zook, class of 2006**

Chicago Board of Trade Ethanol Contract Efficiency

## *Congratulations to Dr. Allen Featherstone on recent awards!*

**Dr. Allen Featherstone**, Director of the MAB Program, was recognized with a **2006 Excellence in Teaching Award** from the University Continuing Education Association. The award is for outstanding teaching, course development, mentoring of students and service to continuing education. The award

was presented at the UCEA's April annual meeting in San Diego, Calif.

Dr. Featherstone was also the recipient of the Kansas State University's **College of Agriculture Excellence in Graduate Teaching Award**. The award was presented at a May reception.

## Visit MAB at IFT in Orlando, Fla.

The Master of Agribusiness will again have a booth at the Institute of Food Technologists Annual Meeting and Food Expo June 25 - 27, 2006. This year's meeting is at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Fla. MAB will share booth #4129 with the K-State Food Science department.

If you're going to be at IFT, stop by and visit Lynnette and Mary at booth #4129. We'd love to see you!



## *In the news*

**Essien Ita**, alum, left Kraft Foods and is now the owner of Melchem, Inc., a distributor of fine and speciality chemicals to the flavor and fragrance industry. Melchem, Inc. is located in Midland Park, New Jersey.

**Laura Roessler**, alum, Allen Featherstone and Peter J. Barry, AgEcon Professors, co-authored "Determining the Probability of Default and Risk-Rating Class for Loans in the Seventh Farm Credit District Portfolio." The journal article was published in the Spring 2006 Issue of the *Review of Agricultural Economics*.

**Alex Offerdahl**, alum, was selected as the recipient of the 2005-06 Outstanding Master in Agribusiness Thesis Award by K-State AgEcon faculty for his thesis, "Empirical Yield Probability Distributions, *De Minimus* Yields, and Insurance Incentives in Wheat."

**Laura Link**, class of 2005, is now the Biodiesel Development Manager for Cargill in Minneapolis, Minn.

**Brandy Carter**, class of 2008, is now working for CivicPlus in Manhattan, Kans. as a Product Developer.

**Ray Hammarlund**, alum, was named the Director of Ag Marketing and Community Development at the Kansas Department of Commerce in Topeka, Kans.

**Nate Broders**, class of 2006, has taken a position with U.S. Bio Energy as the Merchandising Manager in the distillers division. The position is based out of Wichita, Kans.

**Jeff Lloyd**, class of 2006, has accepted a position as a Credit Analyst for New Frontier Bank in Greeley, Colo. He and his family have relocated to Eaton, Colo.

**David Mace**, alum, accepted a position as a Senior Brand Strategist for Sullivan, Higdon & Sink in Wichita, Kans.

**Greg Newham**, class of 2000, has taken a new position with WhiteWave Foods, a subsidiary of Dean Foods, in Broomfield, Colo. He is the Director of Commodities.

**Ron Seeley**, class of 2004, is now a Senior Account Manager serving the Biopharm, Dairy and Beverage Markets for Niro Soavi North America.

**John Borchers**, alum, and his fiancé, Connie, were married on April 22. Connie is the Youth & Family Ministries Director for First Lutheran Church in Algona, Iowa. The couple reside in Clear Lake, Iowa.

**Mark Winger**, alum, has been selected to fill an unexpired term on the Board of Trustees of Colby Community College in Colby, Kans. He will be up for election in 2007.

**Lon Frahm**, class of 2002, has been appointed to the board of the Kansas Geological Survey at the University of Kansas in Lawrence.

**Sam Sparks**, class of 2008, and his fiancé, Shannon Marie Trolinger became engaged on April 28. They plan to marry on June 30 at the Four Season's Resort in Costa Rica.

**Rex Nelson**, alum, has had his MAB thesis republished in the Spring 2006 Issue of *Great Plains Research*. "Underlying Causes and Implications of Nebraska Retail Trade Patterns" was co-authored by Bruce Johnson of UNL and David Darling of Kansas State.

**Laura Roessler**, alum, and her husband announce the birth of their son, Jack on March 11. He was 6 lbs. 11 oz and 20 inches long.

**Keith Schoenfeld**, class of 2004, and his wife, Jennifer, announce the birth of their daughter, Ava Shirley Grace. Ava weighed 8 lbs. 10 ounces and was 20 inches long.

**Randy Dalinghaus**, alum, and his wife, Michelle, announce the birth of their son, Ryder Frank on February 13. Ryder has two older brothers, Hunter (7) and Tanner (4).

**Joel Karlin**, class of 2001, has joined Western Milling in Goshen, Calif. as the WDG Sales Manager and Commodity Sales Coordinator.



# Alumni Spotlight

**Dave Rock**

MAB Class of 2003

Division Sales Manager, John Deere Company  
Dallas, Texas



by Cristina Mansfield

*The Alumni Spotlight focuses on an MAB alum, and is written by Cristina Mansfield, a 2004 graduate.*

When Dave Rock enrolled in K-State's M.A.B. program he already had experience developing strategic business plans for Deere & Co.'s Agricultural Equipment Division, traveling as far as China to develop a business plan for their joint venture combine business. At the time he was looking to learn new analysis and quantitative decision making skills. During the program Dave left Business Planning and became manager for the Ag Division's parts and service sales. The new responsibilities included sales as well as development of dealer parts and service management practices and electronic parts marketing information systems. Not having anticipated the promotion, he was relieved to find that the flexibility of the program allowed him to balance his increased responsibilities and prepare a thesis that was directly related to his new position. Also, a majority of the classes related directly to the new job's responsibilities.

## Lifestyle customers

are large property owners who buy tractors and implements to care for their property and grow plants and crops.

Dave's 2003 thesis examines parts and service sales outlet options for agricultural machinery dealerships. Production agriculture continues to consolidate: large commercial farms and "lifestyle customers" are

steadily increasing in numbers while traditional and small farms are decreasing. Concurrent with this change in the ag equipment customer base, dealerships are consolidating and providing product support via flexible approaches such as mobile repair services and on-farm parts stocking. The traditional and small farmer represents a significant amount of the repair parts business and ease of access to purchase these parts is needed to retain that business. Dave's thesis evaluated one potential response to the changing environment, creating dealer owned, low overhead "all makes" parts and service centers. As a result of the findings of the thesis, pilot locations were established with results continuing to be monitored. The thesis exercise allowed Dave to prepare a business-level analysis and present it to management. "While we had been informally kicking the idea around at the time, the thesis motivated me to develop the concept so it could be taken to the pilot stage."

Since September 2005, Dave has been Division Sales Manager for the west side of the Mississippi Delta covering the states of Louisiana, Arkansas and the Missouri Bootheel. He is responsible for machinery, parts and service sales, dealer location and development and John Deere's overall market success for the region.

Primary crops produced in the Mississippi Delta are cotton, rice and soybeans. The increased costs of fuel and fertilizer, seed

technology fees and need to be globally cost competitive has producers looking for enabling production cost management tools that improve productivity and efficiency. The emergence of precision ag technology is providing those tools. Cotton in particular responds readily to intensive management of inputs such as water, fertilizer, growth regulators and insect control to insure optimum yields are achieved. Tractor guidance systems eliminate over-lap or skips in coverage when working with wide equipment and allow mixing 6, 12 and 18 row equipment in the same field without problems handling the "guess-row."

Some systems are capable of sub-inch variation. Additional benefits are reduced operator fatigue, improved productivity and improved performance from lower skilled operators. Variable rate application equipment enables planting and spraying to a prescription to control inputs and achieve the highest economic yield. These variable rate prescriptions are written based on information from yield maps created from the previous harvest, soil sampling or from aerial images taken of the growing crop.



*John Deere Ag Management Solutions (AMS) provides precision ag products such as GreenStar™ AutoTrac with RTK (Real Time Kinematic) that allows the operator sub-inch, repeatable accuracy when making passes through the field. Photo from JohnDeere.com*

An important aspect of Dave's division sales manager job is working to develop the John Deere dealer organization to sell and support these new technologies and services to meet the customer's needs and provide the desired experience today and in the future. The MAB financial analysis and management course learnings are used daily in working with field managers and dealers. The logistics course content on the agricultural food value chain increased his awareness of changes occurring beyond the ag machinery business and gave insight into opportunities broader than being an equipment provider. Its critical to understand the interconnectedness of agriculture - it is about so much more than machinery - including the impact of agricultural policy and globalization of agriculture on producers, dealers and his company. Dave sees an extremely bright future for agriculture for those who are willing to adapt to change and apply innovative solutions to these emerging opportunities.

## Dave's personal philosophy:

**"Keep moving the ball forward! It is not a perfect world, there are things you can't control."**



The pace of the M.A.B. program taught him that he had the capacity to handle a full workload and get the class assignments done.

# Congratulations to Spring 2006 Master of Agribusiness grads

Sandra Alton  
Tyson Chick  
Michelle Evosovich  
Melissa Frick  
Zach Gaines

Keith Harris  
Walden Hodges  
Essien Ita  
Heather May  
Rod McNally

Walter Von Muhlen Filho  
Mark Winger  
Jim Zook



## Upcoming Events

**August 3 - 15**

MAB Alumni trip to Russia

**August 11**

Last day to defend and final thesis copies due to graduate school to be a summer graduate

**October 15**

Applications due for class of 2009

**December 1**

Scholarship applications due for January 2007

## Master of Agribusiness

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