

# The Syllabus

A newsletter for Master of Agribusiness students, alumni and friends

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## Welcome MAB class of 2009! *Program celebrates its 10th cohort of students*

Ayuba Adedibu  
Substitute Teacher  
Newark Public Schools  
Newark, New Jersey

Elizabeth Conzo  
Senior Forecast Analyst  
Deere and Company  
Moline, Illinois

Stephen Olson  
Contract Laborer  
SS Olson, LLC  
Rexburg, Idaho

James Arati  
Regional Service  
Coordinator  
Genex Cooperative, Inc.  
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

Clair Doan  
Manager Commercial  
Banking - Agriculture  
National Bank of Canada  
London, Ontario, Canada

Rick Palermo  
Breeder Supervisor  
Foster Farms  
Fresno, California

Mauro Bergerman  
Commercial Manager  
Alfred C. Toepfer  
International  
São-Paulo, Brazil

Heath Hampton  
Owner  
Hampton Farms  
Holton, Kansas

Chris Reeves  
FSC Operations Lead  
Cargill, Inc.  
Oxford, Nebraska

Earl Biggers, Jr.  
Field Supervisor  
Dairy Farmers of America  
North Sioux City, South  
Dakota

Jacob Harmon  
Cherryvale, Kansas

Doug Regehr  
Territory Customer Support  
Manager  
John Deere Company  
Lebanon, Ohio

Chad Bontrager  
Assistant Facility Manager  
and Head Miller  
Horizon Milling LLC  
Chattanooga, Tennessee

Brian Hobbs  
Territory Manager  
Claas North America  
Paducah, Kentucky

Nate Schroeder  
Winner, South Dakota

Becky Bradwell  
Microbiologist II  
Kansas Department of  
Agriculture  
Topeka, Kansas

Koe Kla  
Research Assistant  
Westat, Inc.  
Rockville, Maryland

Leslie Shuler  
Senior Editor  
CHS, Inc.  
St. Paul, Minnesota

Amy Bruska  
Administrative Officer  
K-State College of Vet  
Med Dean's Office  
Manhattan, Kansas

Piercarlo Marletta  
Researcher  
Cinisello Balsamo, Milano,  
Italy

Chris Simms  
Senior Loan Officer  
Colonial Farm Credit  
Waverly, Virginia

Brandon Nordmeyer  
Sr. Regional Merchant  
Cargill, Inc.  
Sidney, Ohio

Meng-Yee Tee  
Nursery Manager  
Speedling, Inc.  
Watsonville, California

## Congratulations to Fall & Winter 2006 MAB grads



**Shannon Grapes-Kelly**  
**Diego Lozano**  
**Cameron Nightgale**

## 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.

### **Chris Carver, class of 2005**

Online Transaction Fees and Their Impact on Conversion

### **Diego Lozano, class of 2006**

Developing a Coffee Venture Capital Investment Fund in Colombia

# MAB Alumni event taking shape

MAB alumni, students, Advisory Board members and guests are invited to attend the second MAB alumni event in Junction City, KS (located 15 miles west of Manhattan). Events are scheduled for April 19-21, 2007 and will be held at the Courtyard by Marriott. The event will kick-off Thursday afternoon with professional programming and will continue through Friday afternoon. Saturday will be a day of food, fellowship, fun and networking.

The big topic of the weekend will be biofuels. With many sides to this issue affecting everything from the grain and corn markets, livestock industry, food companies and more, the roundtable discussion and presentation, should have something for everyone.

Another topic we are planning to include is a session on perspectives of international agribusiness from different regions such as South America and

Europe. As part of this international focus, there will be an in-depth review of the alumni trip to Russia and discussion of the next international trip destination. A session on ag policy and the Farm Bill is also in the works.

On Saturday the group will enjoy a tailgate party in Cat Town and then attend the K-State spring football game between the Purple and White Squads for a preview of the 2007 Wildcat team at Bill Snyder Family Stadium.

Registration materials will be available on the MAB website soon. A block of rooms have been set aside at the Courtyard and reservations can be made by phoning 785-210-1500. Make sure to mention the "Master of Agribusiness" or "MAB Alumni" to receive the group rate.

If you have questions about registration and hotel reservations, please contact Mary at [mjbowen@ksu.edu](mailto:mjbowen@ksu.edu).

## International elective begins in April

The MAB's award-winning international elective, Comparative Food and Agriculture Systems, will begin again in mid-April, but with new additions.

AGEC 710 is team taught by faculty at K-State's partner institutions in France, New Zealand, Russia, Thailand, and Uruguay. The course gives students a first-hand account of the history and conditions of each of the significant economic zones studied – MERCOSUR, European Union, Russia and the FSU, Oceania, and East Asia.

The graduate level course is 3 credit hours and is \$1,576.92. It runs from late April to mid-August.

Those interested in the elective should register with Lynnette, [lynnett@ksu.edu](mailto:lynnett@ksu.edu) or Mary, [mjbowen@ksu.edu](mailto:mjbowen@ksu.edu).

# MAB

*in the Heartland*

## MAB Advisory Board gains new members

The Master of Agribusiness Advisory Board plays an integral role in the success of the program.

**Steven Brody**  
Senior Manager  
Six Sigma and Planning  
Pioneer Sales and Marketing

**Raymond Cesca**  
President and CEO  
GAEA  
Retired, McDonald's

**Terry J. Garvert**  
Specialty Foodgrains Team Leader  
Grain and Oilseed Supply Chain NA  
Cargill, Incorporated

**Keith Harris**  
Director Corporate Purchasing  
Farmland Foods

**Don Hecht**  
Retired Director, Sales & Marketing  
Elanco Animal Health

**Glenn McClelland**  
President and CFO  
M2P2

**Bill Newham**  
Retired, Senior Vice President  
Food360°  
Vance Publishing

**Steve Packebush**  
President  
Koch Nitrogen  
Company

**Roy Robinson**  
Vice President,  
Communication,  
Education and  
Investigations  
Archer Daniels  
Midland

**Dave Rock**  
Division Sales  
Manager  
John Deere  
Company

**Marsha Webster**  
Group Controller - Fresh Meats  
Tyson, Inc.

*Thanks to all members for sharing their valuable time and insights.*

### *Master of Agribusiness Advisory Board*



Front Row, left to right: Dr. Mike Wolverton, Marsha Webster, Dave Rock, Keith Harris, and Dr. Allen Featherstone. Back Row: Dr. Bryan Schurle, Roy Robinson, Bill Newham, Don Hecht, Terry Garvert and Steve Packebush. Not pictured: Steve Brody, Ray Cesca and Glenn McClelland.



# Alumni Spotlight

## Michelle Evosovich

MAB Class of 2006  
Quality Supervisor, Land O'Lakes  
Portland, Oregon



by Cristina Mansfield

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

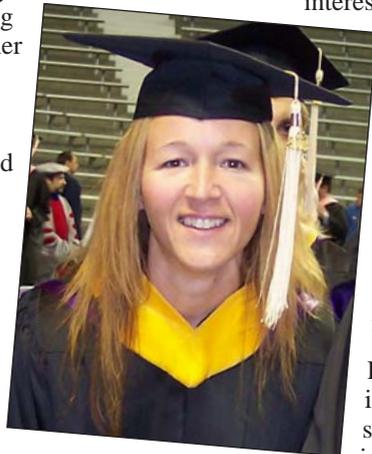
Michelle Evosovich grew up on a farm in Lowell, Indiana, and studied Animal Science at the University of Illinois where she considered pursuing veterinary medicine. After graduation, her life took a different turn when APL in Urbana, IL hired her to make chemicals using metal halides, which is used in street lights, stadium lights, and high-end car head lights.

In 2003 and after nine years with APL, Michelle submitted an online application for a position at Land O'Lakes where a recruiter directed her towards manufacturing. Today she is a Quality Supervisor and is responsible for ensuring that one of two Portland plants are up to standards set by Land O'Lakes Purina Feed (LOLPF) and that all documentation is in place for product traceability.

An article in the Land O'Lakes Cooperative magazine inspired Michelle to research online agribusiness programs and lead to K-State's MAB. In her opinion one of the best aspects of the MAB was the networking. "I met people from many different industries and feel I can call them if I have a question." In this sense the program opened a lot more doors for her for future growth.

Michelle holds the distinction of being one of the few MAB students to finish her thesis early. This was due mainly to the relevance of her topic to current Land O'Lakes strategic thinking. In other words, they were eager to hear her findings. Currently, there are several large dairies in Portland but few feed plants, making Land O'Lakes one of the main feed producers in the area. The Tillamook Creamery is the largest local dairy cooperative and many of the producers for Tillamook are Land O'Lakes customers. Since many producers are moving towards organic production, Land O'Lakes decided to examine the implications of organic conversion of one of its feed plants.

Entitled *Feasibility Study: Converting a Conventional Feed Mill to Organic*, Michelle analyzed demand



According to regulation, **organic livestock** must receive feed ration of organically produced and handled (if applicable) products. This precludes the use of:

- animal drugs/hormones
- excessive feed supplement/additives
- plastic pellets for roughage
- feed formulas containing urea or manure
- mammal/poultry by-products to feed mammals/poultry
- additives/supplements in violation of federal regulations.

Organic feed must have all organically-produced ingredients unless not available in organic form.

for livestock feed, consumer demand of organic livestock products, and the cost of conversion and continued operation of the Ross Island Mill in Portland. To assess demand for livestock feed, Michelle sent a mail survey to certified producers in Oregon and Washington states listed as raising feed crops, pasture, and/or livestock. The response rate for the producer survey was 42%. Michelle found that based on survey results, organic production of grain, forage, and livestock appears to be increasing. Comments suggested that availability of feed would influence decision of herd size. Additionally, not many farmers are obtaining feed in the area and import it from California.

On the consumer side, Michelle used the Kansas State Web Survey System to develop an online survey to assess consumer interest in organic products. She then asked various websites with audiences pre-disposed to organic products to post a link to the survey. Sites included local radio and television stations, Think Local Portland and others. While only 4 of the 17 agencies approached posted the link, 265 responses were received -- some from very far away. The survey did not result in any surprises and generally confirmed media reports that consumer demand for organic dairy products will increase, particularly among people with young children. Consumers most interested in organic products are from middle and upper income levels.

Finally, Michelle's budgeting and simulation exercises indicated a substantially greater profit potential by switching to organic production. Her analysis consistently indicated that Ross Island Mill would likely be profitable from year 1 and recommended conversion.

How great was the change in moving from the Midwest to the Northwest? There were not many changes in the pace or the workplace, but learning to function in a union environment was a challenge. Michelle joined Land O'Lakes just as the acquisition of Purina Feed took place. Takeovers invariably generate animosity and coming on board during a transition is never easy. The effects in this case were mitigated by a management decision to incorporate Purina standards into their plants. Michelle trained at a Purina plant in Gainesville, GA - which placed her in the Purina camp in the eyes of Land O'Lakes staff. While it took a lot of time and effort to get the plant up to standards, getting people on board was not that difficult and Michelle found that she had a lot of support. Michelle attributes her success to her open attitude: "I avoided being critical. I just kept asking questions, tweaking them until people reached the conclusion I was looking for on their own."

**Land O'Lakes** was incorporated as the Minnesota Cooperative Creameries Association in 1921. In 1924 a contest was held to find a more marketable name. The \$500 prize went to Mrs. E.B. Foss and Mr. George L. Swift who came up with the name as a tribute to Minnesota's lakes. Today the cooperative processes the milk of 4,000 dairy farmers across the country. While primarily known as a producer cooperative, Land O'Lakes also acts as a consumer co-op, selling feed, seed and nutrients through a network of 1,200 independently owned and operated farmer cooperatives. In 2001, Land O'Lakes purchased Purina Mills, which is not affiliated with the dog and cat brand pet foods. (LOL and Purina websites)

## February 14 password change deadline for K-State eIDs

University security policy requires everyone change passwords on their eIDs at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters. For spring 2007, the password change period is January 1 through February 14. Passwords must have a minimum of seven characters (*this is up from the previous six*) and must contain characters from 3 of the 4 following: uppercase letters, lowercase letters, numbers and special characters.

To change your password, go to <http://eid.k-state.edu> and sign in. Select "Change your eID password" and follow the prompts. Unchanged passwords will stop working on February 15.

After changing your password, you may need to change password settings in programs such as e-mail, K-State dial-in, etc.

Need help? Contact the K-State IT Help Desk, 313 Hale Library, e-mail [eid@k-state.edu](mailto:eid@k-state.edu), (785) 532-7722.

## Upcoming Events

### February 14

Last day to change KSU eID password.

### March 18-23

Campus Session

### mid-April

International elective, AGECE 710, begins.

### April 19-21

Alumni Event & spring football game.

### May 2

Deadline to attend spring commencement - Approval to schedule final examination and diploma information forms due.

### May 11

K-State spring commencement.

### May 18

Final copy of thesis due to graduate school.

## In the NEWS...

**Dominic Melendez**, class of 2002, is now a Strategic Procurement Manager for Hill's Pet Nutrition, Inc. in Topeka, Kans.

**Katy Venard**, class of 2007, has accepted a position as a Feed Operations Specialist for Murphy-Brown LLC Western Operations in Ames, Iowa. She is working with regulatory, QA, formulations and ingredient purchasing.

**Andy Smarsh**, class of 2005, and his wife, Ricci, announce the birth of Colby David on November 22. Colby weighed 5 lbs, 9 ounces.

**Alison Rosenblum**, class of 2004, has accepted a contract with Nike producing their Nike Women catalog.

**Melissa Frick**, alum, and her fiance, Jim Gomez, announced their engagement. A wedding is planned for 2007.

**Doug Claussen**, alum, has taken the position of President/General Manager at Decatur Co-op Association. DCA has seven locations in Northwest Kansas.

**Jeff Bennett**, class of 2007, has been honorably discharged from the U.S. Air Force and is now a full-time ag engineering student at Iowa State University.

**Randy Dalinghaus**, alum, has been promoted to General Manager and transferred to a Denison, Iowa facility for Farmland Foods.

**Ryan Dunn**, class of 2007, was promoted to National Account Manager for Tru-Test, Inc. focusing on sales to large distributor customers in the U.S. and Canada.

**Clint Imel**, class of 2004, and his wife, Cheryl, are expecting their second child in April.

**Chris Nobles**, class of 2004, and his wife, Beth, announce the birth of their second child, Liam Edward, on December 29. Liam weighed 8 lbs, 2 ounces and was 21 inches long.

**Cameron Nightingale**, alum, left his position at Alltech and has joined Cargill Animal Nutrition as a Dairy Consultant.

**Mel Troyer**, class of 2007, has begun a new job at Red Star Yeast in Cedar Rapids, Iowa as a Lab Manager.

**Joel Phelps**, class of 2008, is now working for Meadowbrook Farms Cooperative as V.P. Livestock Services. MFC is a farmer-owned pork packing plant in Belleville, Ill.

**Kurt David**, alum, is now Chief Financial Officer for Eagle Communications in Hays, Kans.

**Alana Nichols**, alum, has accepted a position with the University of Georgia as an Agricultural Specialist at the Tifton location.

**Lautaro Perez**, alum, Michael Boland and Sean Fox, AgEcon Professors, co-authored "Grass-Fed Certification: The Case of the Uruguayan Beef Industry." The article will be published in the April Issue of the *Choices*, a publication of the American Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA).

## Master of Agribusiness

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235