

# The Syllabus

A newsletter for Master of Agribusiness students, alumni and friends

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## Welcome to the class of 2008!

**Marsha Boswell**  
Public Relations Officer  
Kansas Wheat Commission  
Manhattan, Kansas

**Jared Brown**  
Sales/Trader  
RCH Enterprises, Inc.  
Wichita, Kansas

**Brandy Carter**  
Livestock Specialist  
Carter Cattle Company  
White City, Kansas

**Sarah Chess**  
Coordinator of Membership  
Services  
National Cattlemen's Beef  
Association  
Denver, Colorado

**Emmanuel Foko**  
Production Supervisor  
Amy's Foods  
Santa Rosa, California

**Darmechie Hulbert**  
Agricultural Meat Grader  
USDA  
St. Louis, Missouri

**Catia Jorge**  
Wheat Trader  
Cargill Agricola S/A  
São-Paulo, Brazil

**Mohamed Labana**  
Partner/Manager  
Chemitec  
Cairo, Egypt

**Randy Lucas**  
Owner/Operator  
Triple L Farms  
Satanta, Kansas

**Miguel Marcano**  
National Supply Coordinator  
Alimentos Polar Comercial  
Caracas, Venezuela

**Clay Mead**  
Sales Agent  
Suther Feeds, Inc.  
NE Kansas

**Jeannette Muhareb**  
Research Chemist/  
Entomologist  
American Council for Food  
Safety and Quality  
Fresno, California

**Misty Perry**  
Senior Buyer - Poultry  
ConAgra Foods  
Omaha, Nebraska

**Joel Phelps**  
Business Team Lead  
Monsanto Choice Genetics  
St. Louis, Missouri

**Paula Prindiville**  
Retail Management  
The Children's Place  
St. Louis, Missouri

**Kate Repair**  
Loan Officer  
Farm Credit of the Virginias  
Forest, Virginia

**Mario Salazar**  
President/General Manager  
Agroinversiones Chavin  
Sac/Country Crop Distributing  
Lima, Peru & Sunrise, Florida

**Brent Schwenneker**  
Soybean Research Assistant  
Monsanto Global Seed Co.  
Ames, Iowa

**Michael Schuele**  
Production Manager  
General Mills Operations, Inc.  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

**Sam Sparks**  
President/Partner  
SRS Farms  
Mercedes, Texas

**Ed Stephenson**  
Marketing Manager  
Hayashibara International  
Broomfield, Colorado

**Brad Swartz**  
Assistant General Manager  
Pat's Blue Rib'n Barbeque  
Manhattan, Kansas

**Marcella Warner**  
Herdsman  
Black Diamond Angus Ranch  
Spearville, Kansas

**Ellon Waters**  
Lab Manager  
Benjamin P. Forbes Chocolate  
Company  
Cleveland, Ohio

## Congratulations to Winter 2005 MAB grads



**Fred Armstrong**  
**Cindy Birchmeier**  
**Craig Hagood**

**Keith Kennedy**  
**Dave Mace**  
**Angie Pierce**

## 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.*

### **Craig Hagood, class of 2005**

Utilizing Economic Order Quantity in a Multiple Input and Output Facility to Manage Inventory Flow

### **Fred Armstrong, class of 2002**

Competitive Positions in the Cattle Handling Industry

### **Michelle Evosovich, class of 2006**

Feasibility Study: Converting the Land O' Lakes Purina Ross Island Feed Mill from Conventional to Organic Production

## Scholarship donations help students

With the help of scholarship money supplied by MAB alumni, some MAB students are able to continue their education. We would like to thank those who have given money to these scholarships.

Emmanuel Foko, a first year student from Santa Rosa, California, is a recipient of an MAB scholarship. "My enrollment for the MAB program, class of 2008, was definitely a major path towards advancing my career. As an

out-of-state student, expenses such as flight, hotel and rental car were vital things to consider. I was so privileged to receive the MAB scholarship which completely took care of the above expenses and made my January 2006 session a successful one." Foko said.

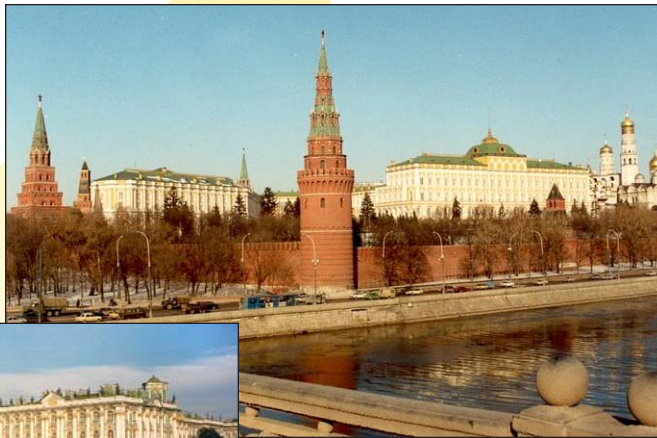
Money provided to MAB scholarship accounts is very helpful to students unable to receive financial aid or company reimbursement. Thank you again to those who have contributed.

*Congratulations to  
Dr. Allen Featherstone  
on recent award!*

**Dr. Featherstone**, Director of the MAB Program, was selected as one of two recipients of the **2005-06 Commerce Bank Distinguished Graduate Faculty Award**. The award was presented at the December Graduate School Commencement.

## Update and itinerary on 2006 Russia trip

The MAB is hosting its biennial international trip. The trip will focus on Russian agriculture with stops in Moscow and St. Petersburg. The 12-day trip will include stops at various crop and livestock operations, as well as, agricultural and food related industries. Time will also be set aside for site seeing. A \$500 deposit is due February 15.



the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography  
**August 13**  
• Visit to residence of Peter the Great by bus  
• Free time. Can include stops at Hermitage, cathedrals and palaces

### Russia Itinerary

#### August 4

Arrive in Moscow

#### August 5

- Moscow city tour by bus
- Excursion to Kremlin, Oruzheynaya Palata (Museum of Russian Arms), Russian Diamond Fund

#### August 6

- Moscow Metro, Botanic Garden, Timiriazevskaya Academy
- Free time. Visits to Izmailovo market of national goods or walk along Arbat street and nearby lanes

#### August 7-8

- Moscow State Agricultural University
- Russian Grain Union
- U.S. Grain Council or U.S. Poultry and Eggs Export Council (USAPEEC) offices in Moscow
- Large meat processing plant in Moscow
- Dairy and/or vegetable farm operations near Moscow
- Meeting with agricultural office of the U.S. Embassy

#### August 9

Travel to Tver

- Visits to farms and agribusinesses

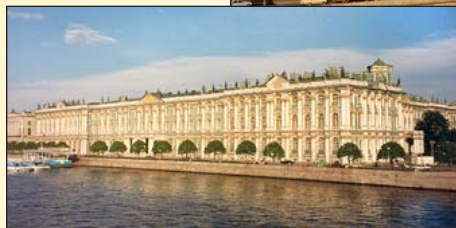
#### August 10

Travel to St. Petersburg

**August 11-** Professional program

#### August 12

- St. Petersburg city tour by bus
- Excursion to Petropavlovskaya fortress, Kunstcamera, Peter



#### August 14

Professional program

#### August 15

Return to the United States

### Rates

#### Single

\$4,150\* without continuing education credit

#### Individual+companion

\$7,140\* without continuing education credit

\*These are current estimates

### Cost Breakdown

**Airfare:** \$1,000 to \$1,300 per person (based on economy)

**Hotel:** Rooms are roughly \$1,100 per person and \$770 per person for double occupancy (covers the entire trip and includes breakfast).

**Registration:** Covers in-country logistics and runs \$1,250 for the first person and \$750 for a companion

**Meals and other incidentals:** Meals will be roughly \$400 per person

**Visa charge:** Approximately \$100 per person to get a visa.

**Optional tuition:** Continuing education credit is \$1,000

*For more information, contact Mary Bowen,  
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# Alumni Spotlight

## Leah Suellentrop

MAB Class of 2001  
International Dairy Trader, Hoogwegt US, Inc.  
Libertyville, Illinois



by Cristina Mansfield

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

Most MAB students and alumni will remember eating pizza at Leah Suellentrop's Gambino's franchise in Aggieville during the January and March campus sessions.

Unsure of her path after high school, Leah followed her brother to K-State where she developed a passionate interest in agricultural economics. She chose international trade as her specialty and studied international agriculture in France as part of K-State's Agecon exchange program. Leah married after her freshman year in college. She, her husband, his brother and sister-in-law were all in school and

needed to earn a living. They opened a pizza delivery franchise, making pizzas all night after a day of classes. Leah and her husband eventually took over the business and opened two more franchises, before opening Gambino's in Aggieville. After graduation, Leah did a summer internship at USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service. It was there that she realized she would need a master's degree to continue in the field.

### Dairy Trivia

Milk can be broken down into three components: **fat**, which usually stays in the U.S., and **protein** and **lactose**, both of which are used as (1) animal feed ingredients and (2) bakery applications such as condensed milk. Lactose in particular is a surplus item in the U.S.

When it was time to write her MAB thesis Leah wanted to do a real project and called the USDA Trade Division in Topeka for a list of companies that had recently contacted them. She found one that was willing to pay her to research an international marketing plan. During the process, she learned a number of practical skills that remain important to her current work such as the 8-step market research guide that she found on the Kansas World Trade Center website and how to pull data out of USDA's Harmonized Tariff System ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)). "The information is very useful in finding emerging markets," she said.

After completing the MAB, Leah moved to Denver to work for the U.S. Meat Export Federation as a Market Specialist focusing on marketing programs in Southeast Asia. With no previous experience in Asia or beef, Leah learned to conduct in-depth market research studies and -- more importantly -- realized that she did not want it to be her chosen field: "Market research was a little grey for a hands-on personality. I realized that I wanted to be in sales." Three years later she moved to Chicago to work for Hoogwegt U.S., a Dutch dairy trading company. The move was not ideal (her husband commutes to his business in Denver) but an interview at the firm sold her on the prospect: "The company backs me financially. I can go anywhere and sell anything - I can buy anything too as long as I sell it."

As an International Dairy Trader, Leah spends 25% of her time traveling to dairies across the U.S. buying dairy products and selling them in Asia. Ninety percent of her sales are U.S. products, mostly milk and whey. According to Leah, the trading industry basically

makes money on opportunities and relationships. Relationships with U.S. dairies make her business. To dairy owners, this means paying bills on time, representing their products well, and providing help within reason, such as occasionally reducing margins to assist them.

The main challenges to her work are language and cultural barriers. "I sometimes visit up to seven countries in one trip and have to be very adaptable... Developing relationships through a translator is also very challenging." Other challenges include free trade agreements when the U.S. is subject to tariffs and logistical problems. As head of a logistical team, logistical challenges, such as a port on strike, create headaches for Leah.

When asked about current trends in the international dairy trade industry, Leah points to a number of interesting events:

- Food trends such as diet fads like the Atkins diet make whey protein more expensive because higher domestic demand increases the international price.
- As a country becomes more economically developed, the population increases its dairy consumption. For example, China is transitioning from a country where people never drank milk to raising their children on milk. These countries will naturally develop their own dairy industries, which is why U.S. firms want to enter emerging markets as early as possible.
- Fuel surcharges from trucking companies to shipping lines are raising the price of dairy products and current energy surcharges in the U.S. are increasing the cost of production.
- International traders watch currency fluctuations, in particular the Euro, which has been fluctuating a fair amount, because of their effect on international prices.
- The internet is making it easier for traders and customers to find each other. Internet telephone applications, which permit free international calling, are becoming increasingly popular, especially for agents who work on small margins. Text messages, virtually ignored in the U.S., are widely used overseas. On an average day, Leah receives 5-10 overseas text messages on her telephone.



*Leah Suellentrop buys and sells U.S. dairy products around the globe for Hoogwegt.*

What skills make a good international dairy trader? According to Leah, core knowledge of the culture is essential. This means doing one's research ahead of time rather than expecting to learn along the way. "Do your research before you go. Talk to people who have been there, who have done business there, who are from there. Visit websites, read books." Any final words of advice? "When doing business overseas, and Asia in particular, avoid getting down to business too quickly."



# In the news

**Ben McClure**, class of 2006 and his wife, Lanie, announce the birth of their son, Carter Dale. Carter was born on November 22 and weighed 6 pounds, 14 ounces.

**Cathy Forshee**, alum, is now the Title III Project Assistant at Cloud County Community College in Concordia, Kansas. She also teaches Economics I and II evening courses.

**Erich Olson**, alum, has begun working for Thrivent Financial for Lutherans in Mitchell, South Dakota as a Financial Associate.

**Dave Rock**, alum, recently transferred to the John Deere Sales branch as a Division Sales Manager in Dallas, Texas.

**Travis Gullickson**, class of 2005, has been promoted to Sr. Transportation Manager at Land O'Lakes Dairy Foods in St. Paul, Minnesota.

**Cameron Nightingale**, class of 2005, has been promoted to Regional Manager of the Alltech Rocky Mountain Region. The new position will begin May 1.

**Zach Gaines**, class of 2006, is engaged to Dana Nancarrow. A February 19 wedding is planned.

**Greg Newham**, class of 2000, is now the Supply Chain Finance Manager (Dips and Variety Pack initiatives) at Frito Lay in Plano, Texas. He and his wife are also expecting their third child in June.

**Michael Vogt**, alum, and Terry Kastens, AgEcon Professor, co-authored "A Study of the Financial Impact of Dairy Manure Storage Systems in Northeast Kansas." The journal article was published in the Fall 2005 Issue of the *Review of Agricultural Economics*.

**Mike Hofer**, class of 2007, is now the Vice President of Agriculture at Western Sugar Cooperative headquarters in Denver, Colorado.

**Young Hoon Jung**, class of 2007, was married to Soo Y. Lee in a traditional Korean Traditional Wedding on December 3.

**Sandra Alton**, class of 2006, has accepted a position at Agricorp as a Research Assistant in Guelph, Ontario.

**Jeff Bennett**, class of 2007, was promoted to the rank of First Lieutenant and is now an ICBM Crew Commander at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota.

**Scott Snider**, class of 2007, has begun working for Great Western Bank as a Business Development Manager covering Northern Missouri and Southern Iowa.

**Ray Parker**, class of 2003, and his wife announce the birth of their daughter, Audrey Monet on November 6.

**Clint Imel**, class of 2004, and his wife announce the birth of Mason Gregory on September 28. Mason weighed 5 pounds, 11 ounces.

**Kate Repair**, class of 2008, has been promoted to CRM Project Manager/Trainer with Farm Credit of the Virginias. She will be relocating from Virginia to North Carolina for the new position.

**Miguel Marcano**, class of 2008, married his fiancée, Andreina on January 20.

**Eliana Cobos**, alum, has been promoted to Export Manager with EXPROPALM in Ecuador and is now in charge of sales and exports of Hearts of Palm all over the world.

**Brett Oelke**, alum, was named the 2005 Extension Educator of the Year by the Minnesota Farm Bureau Foundation. Oelke is a regional Extension Educator for the University of Minnesota.

**Carlos Piana**, alum, Allen Featherstone and Michael Boland, AgEcon Professors, co-authored "Vertical Integration in Ecuador: The Case of Fresh-Cut Pineapples." The journal article was published in the Winter 2005 Issue of the *Review of Agricultural Economics*.

## Upcoming Events

### February 8

Last day to change KSU eID password.

### March 19-24

Campus session

### mid-April

International elective, AGEC 710, begins.

### May 1

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

### May 12

K-State spring commencement.

### May 19

Final copy of thesis due to graduate school.

## February 8 password-change deadline for K-State eIDs

University security policy requires everyone to change passwords on their eIDs at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters. For spring 2006, the password change period is January 1 through February 8.

To change your password, go to <http://eid.k-state.edu> and sign in. Select Password "Change" and follow the prompts.

Unchanged passwords will stop working on February 9.

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.

## International elective begins in April

The MAB's international elective, Comparative Food and Agriculture Systems, will begin again mid-April.

AGEC 710 is team taught by faculty at K-State's partner institutions in Uruguay, France, Russia and the Former Soviet Union, and Thailand. 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, and East Asia. The graduate level course is 3 credit hours and is \$1,500.

Those interested in the elective should register with Lynnette or Mary.

### Master of Agribusiness

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