Welcome to the 13th MAB Cohort, Class of 2012

Muhsin Abdi  
Operations Resource  
Frito-Lay North America  
Topeka, Kansas

Katlin Anderson  
Accounting Supervisor  
Cargill  
Sioux City, Iowa

Sarah Bernard  
Assistant to CFO  
Burns Farms  
Pikeville, Tennessee

Jose Castillo  
New Project Analyst  
Avibel de Mexico  
Teqatitlan, Talisco, Mexico

Mark Davis  
General Manager  
Scott Pro  
Scott City, Kansas

Travis Davis  
Regional Superintendent  
ADM  
Hutchinson, Kansas

Ty Fickenscher  
Precision Ag Coordinator and Agronomist  
Cooperative Producers, Inc.  
Hastings, Nebraska

Larry Gilmore  
VP Corporate Strategy  
Yongye International  
Beijing, China

Marvin Goertz  
Sr. Project Leader R&D  
Bunge Oils  
Bradley, Illinois

Arturo Gonzalez de Cosio  
Barron  
Agronomy Director  
Tecnologico de Monterrey  
University Queretaro, Mexico

Kristen Greer  
County Extension Agent  
Texas AgriLife Extension  
Palestine, Texas

Amber Hanna  
Sales Staff Associate  
Bayer Healthcare LLC  
Shawnee, Kansas

Erin Jordan  
Transportation Analyst  
ConAgra Foods  
Omaha, Nebraska

Brandon Laws  
Agronomy Sales  
Crop Production Services  
Smith Center, Kansas

Charles Loubersac d’Hotel  
Export Director  
Chopin Technologies  
Paris, France

AJ Munger  
General Manager  
Eagle Pass Lodge  
Ree Heights, South Dakota

Kevin Newkirk  
Manager  
CK Processing  
Manhattan, Kansas

Christy Pepple  
Assistant Facility Manager  
Horizon Milling  
Culpeper, Virginia

Seth Post  
Grain Marketer  
The Scoular Co.  
Wellington, Kansas

Fernando Rodriguez  
Grower  
Desert Glory Invernaderos  
Cd Guzman, Mexico

Natasha Sadofsky  
Assistant Commercial Manager  
ADM Milling Company  
Arkansas City, Kansas

Matt Shekels  
Reproductive Specialist  
Southeast Select Sires  
Sublette, Kansas

Kevin Newkirk  
Manager  
CK Processing  
Manhattan, Kansas

Matt Smith  
Insurance Account Specialist  
Farm Credit Services of America  
Huron, South Dakota

Audra Weber  
Product Structure Lead  
John Deere Company  
Bettendorf, Iowa

Chris Witt  
Planning Manager/PCA  
Sara Lee  
Dallas, Texas

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Inside this issue:  
• AGEC 710 Update  
• Thesis projects  
• Alumni Spotlight  
• Scholarships  
• In the News
The MAB's award-winning international elective, Comparative Food and Agriculture Systems, isn't just for K-Stater's anymore. The course is still offered at K-State through the MAB program, but it is also now available at partner universities around the world.

Faculty at the Moscow State University in Moscow, Russia, the University of Missouri, the University of Florida and Massey University in Palmerston North, New Zealand have all offered versions of the international course. The UF and MU courses are offered at the same time as the K-State course, so students at all three universities gather once a week in the same virtual classroom to interact with international faculty.

“The [Comparative Foods] course I took from the University of Florida allowed me to step outside the box in terms of thinking and analyzing agriculture. We so often discuss production practices and crops within the United States that we forget other regions of the world and their key crops and ideas. The professors from the different regions of the world we studied gave us an insider’s perspective that cannot be found in any conventional United States university,” Trevor Murphy, student at the University of Florida, said.

The course is taught by faculty at K-State's partner institutions in Uruguay, France, Russia, New Zealand, Uganda, India and Thailand. It gives students a first-hand account of the history and conditions of each of the regions: the MERCOSUR, the European Union, Russia and the FSU, Oceania, sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and East Asia. A North America module is in production for use by international faculty.

The K-State course is open to students in the Master of Agribusiness program, but may also be taken by individuals not currently participating in the MAB program. Anyone with a bachelor's degree, two years of professional work experience and an interest in the food and agriculture sector is encouraged to enroll. This is an excellent opportunity for anyone thinking about joining the MAB program to test the distance technology and get a feel for the program.

The summer offering of AGEC 710 will begin in mid-April and enrollment for the three-credit hour course will be open soon. If you are interested in enrolling or would like more information, please contact Lynnette or Mary at 785-532-4495.

Students complete thesis projects

To read current or previous thesis projects, go to http://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/ and search by author, title or keywords (no log-in required). To read a thesis written before 2008 or view thesis defense, log onto K-State On-Line, www.online.ksu.edu, with your eID and password. Go to the MAB Community Page, go to Files & Content and click on Theses.


Becky Bradwell, Class of 2009, Time Savings from Paperless Processes in a Container Freight Company

Piercarlo Marletta, Class of 2009, The Economics of Bagoss Cheese Production in Bagolino, Italy

Andy Smarsh, Class of 2005, Financial Performance Profile and Evaluation of Alternative Equity Management Programs for Farmers Cooperative Equity Company

Meng Tee, Class of 2009, The Economics of an Alternative Bio-energy Feedstock – The Case of Jatropha Curcas
Alumni Spotlight

Mike Frame
Class of 2004
Refined Fuels and Lubricants Sales Director
West Region
CHS Inc.
Spokane, Washington

Energy industry energizes K-State Master of Agribusiness graduate
by Mary Bowen

The energy industry is changing. Just how much is anyone’s guess, but supply fluctuations due to instability in the Middle East and Hurricane Katrina are just a couple of examples of how sensitive the energy market can be. Mike Frame has held positions in the energy industry since graduating from the University Missouri in the mid-’80s and is used to managing challenges faced by the industry.

Starting with Farmland Industries in Energy Sales, he has moved up in the industry and is now Sales Director of Refined Fuels and Lubricants of the West Region for CHS Inc., which includes Northwest Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Utah. As Sales Director, Frame manages headquarters office staff and a field staff of eight district managers who call on customers, distributors, independent businesses and cooperatives.

Frame was originally attracted to the Master of Agribusiness program because he wanted to position himself for personal growth, as well as growth within his company, and wanted to prove he could be successful in a rigorous program while maintaining his family and work environments. The program helped fulfill these goals and more.

“The MAB program was outstanding. It’s more than a ‘paper’ master’s degree—you sit in the classroom, take tests and work with the faculty. There are some key take aways from the program that stay with you. For one, my time management and staff development skills changed as I went through the program, making me a better manager. The other key is the macro perspective I have developed – learning to look at issues with a long-term perspective,” he said.

The macro perspective has been an advantage when addressing current challenges in the industry. One of the biggest tests has been on the refined fuels side of the business. Over the last few years, the market has shifted from tight supply and increasing margins to shrinking margins and plenty of supply, giving customers and competitors greater options.

“It is easy to sell fuel and make money when supply is tight, but now that supply has increased, managing the business appropriately has become very important in staying competitive,” Frame said. “Long-term projections forecast crude oil prices to rise. But the big question is how refineries will respond. I think it will still be a profitable industry, but not like it has been in years past.”

The House Waxman-Markey Bill and Senate Kerry-Boxer Bill could bring even greater challenges. As worded, the bills places refiners in the same category as the transportation industry, but more importantly forces them to buy allowances for every gallon of fuel they make, leaving them competing for a decreasing number of federally issued allowances. With greater allowances slotted for foreign entities, domestic refiners, such as CHS, will face even more competition and higher prices when purchasing carbon credits. Smaller businesses likely will not be able to compete and be forced out, while others will survive by further reducing their green-house gas emissions and passing on the cost to consumers.

“CHS is a strong company and we will move on with our plans with or without Cap and Trade,” Frame said. “If Cap and Trade passes as is, I think there will be a major shift to off-shore refining. However, this will create opportunities to bring product back into the country.”

His MAB thesis project, “Market Study of Retail Fueling Sites in Yellowstone County, Montana” has continued to be a useful tool. The project sought to better understand the number of fueling

CHS is the largest cooperative refiner and manufacturer of lubricants and one of the largest propane wholesalers. CHS sells more than 3 billion gallons of refined fuels annually under the brand of Cenex®.

Alumnus Mike Frame provides the perspective from the energy industry on the effects of climate change regulation at the MAB Professional Development conference in August 2009.

Frame continued on pg 5
Scholarships help fund MAB education

Many MAB students rely on financial aid and employer support to fund their continuing education. However, some look to another option to help cover the expenses of participating in the MAB program: scholarships.

Knowing where to look for scholarships can be overwhelming, but one area most overlook is professional associations. First-year student Travis Davis, Regional Superintendent for ADM has been a member of the Grain Elevator and Processing Society (GEAPS) organization since 2003. One of the benefits GEAPs provides is financial support for students.

GEAPs established the Harold Reese Memorial Scholarship in memory of their 1995-96 president and Member of Distinction for individuals interested in the study of grain-handling operations for career purposes. Davis applied for the Harold Reese Memorial Scholarship and was selected as one of five recipients.

“K-State has a long tradition in grain-handling education and we’ve awarded many scholarships to KSU students. We were pleased to provide an award for Travis as he begins the Master of Agribusiness program,” said Chuck House, GEAPs Manager of Professional Development.

House noted the application deadline for 2010-11 awards is around May 1 and GEAPs membership is not required. The application will be available soon at www.geaps.com.

“I am grateful that GEAPS is helping me fund my continuing education,” Travis Davis, said. “Completing a Master’s of Agribusiness degree will give me the analytical and quantitative business tools I need to mesh with the operations skills I already have to provide my company a competitive business advantage.”

When looking for funding for education, don't forget the professional organizations in your industry. They may be a good source to supplement financial aid and company contributions.

Congratulations to MAB scholarship winners

The MAB program awards scholarships from two different funds annually: the Agricultural Economics Department and MAB Alumni fund for producers. These gifts donated by MAB alumni and supporters, allow some MAB students to continue their education.

The following students received awards for 2010:

Agricultural Economics Department Scholarship
- Dustin Ploeger ('10)
- Virginia Guardia ('10)
- Kevin Heikes ('10)
- Fred Phillips ('11)
- Kristen Greer ('12)

MAB Alumni Scholarship for Producers
- Abby Dechant ('10)

Scholarships allow us to attract students who otherwise may not be able to enter the program due to financial reasons, including individuals from throughout the United States and international students. The diversity that these students bring to the program benefits all participants. Thank you for your support of MAB scholarship funds!

When looking for funding for education, don't forget the professional organizations in your industry. They may be a good source to supplement financial aid and company contributions.
sites and brands a given market can support; determine the
gallon volumes and site profitability; and identify potential
sites to convert to the Cenex® brand.

“I have used the market study while talking with customers
to demonstrate more than one branded site can be
successful in a market. It has also been a useful model for
estimating gallons for sites we have considered building
or estimating what competitors are pumping,” he said.

Whatever direction the market
takes, Frame feels he has the skills,
background and experience to help his
company meet the challenge.

Not all about work, Frame enjoys
expending a lot of his personal energy
with his family. Married to Betsy for
23 years, they have three children, Madison, a sophomore
at Washington State University; Hank, a freshman at
Washington State; and Ellie, a junior in high school. He
is active in church, and spends as much time as possible
enjoying outdoor activities with his family.

“The MAB program
was outstanding. It’s
more than a ‘paper
master’s degree—you
sit in the classroom,
take tests and work
with the faculty.
I continue to
recommend it.”

Frame enjoys discussion with MAB alumni Walter
von Muhlen Filho (left) and Matt McKamey (right) in
August 2009.

Upcoming Events

February 15
Australia/New Zealand trip
registration payment due

March 14-19
Campus Session

April 12
AGEC 710, Comparative Food and
Agriculture Systems begins

April 16-May 1
Trip to New Zealand & Australia

May 4
Deadline to attend spring
commencement - Approval to
schedule final examination and
diploma information forms due

May 10
Final electronic copy of thesis due to
graduate school for May graduates

May 14
K-State spring commencement

May 21
Final electronic copy of thesis due to
graduate school for August graduates

Join MAB on Facebook!
Master of Agribusiness (Kansas
State University). Get updates, see
photos and connect with classmates.

Sandra Alton, class of 2006, and her
husband announced the birth of their
son, Gushart Alexander Reynolds Reid
on October 23rd. Gus was 8 lbs 3 oz and
20 ½ inches.

Oussama Alaoui, class of 2005, and his
wife, Mounia, announced the birth of
their second child, Ismail, on December
17th.

Marilyn Vass, class of 2004, has moved
to Evansville, Wyoming, and taken a
job with the Wyoming Health Medical
Group as an Account Representative.

Brent Schwenneker, class of 2008, and
his wife welcomed a son, Bryce Edward
on October 31st.

Miguel Marcano, class of 2008, and his
wife announced the birth of their first
child, Isabella, on December 30th.

Travis Holt, class of 2004, has been
promoted to President and CEO at
Citizens State Bank of Loyal.

Evan Winchester, class of 2004,
announced his son, Trevor, graduated
from K-State with a bachelor’s degree in
Agribusiness, and accepted a position at
First National Bank in Syracuse.

Amber Hanna, class of 2012, and her
husband announced the birth of Michael
Raymond on October 6th.

Clay Mead, class of 2008, and wife,
Lindsay, welcomed Anna Leigh on
August 26th.

Mike Schuele, class of 2008, has been
promoted to Mill Manager at General
Mills’ Kansas City Flour Mill, the 3rd
largest flour mill in North America.

Ivan Mills, class of 2010, has accepted a
position as Operations Assistant Manager
for Viterra, and will be moving to Ray,
North Dakota.

Sarah Velasquez, class of 2007,
has accepted a position as the Senior
Coordinator of the Kansas IDEA Network
for Biomedical Research Excellence
(K-INBRE) at KU Medical Center and
has relocated to Olathe, Kansas.

Katy Venard, class of 2007, and her
husband announced the birth of their son,
Levi David on November 24th.

Jeff Bennett, class of 2007, has taken a
Product Engineer position in the Sprayer
Group of John Deere Des Moines Works.

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