Zwick Center For
Food & Resource Policy
Report FY 2018-19

Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics
Department of Economics
University of Connecticut
CONTENTS

Mission & Focus .........................................................page 2
Advisory Board .......................................................page 3
Zwick Center Personnel ........................................... page 4
Faculty Affiliates.....................................................page 5
Highlights...............................................................page 6
Journal Articles.....................................................page 7
Outreach/Research Reports, ......................... page 8
Presentations............................................................page 9
Funding, Other Activities........................................page 10
Seminar Series........................................................page 11
Media Coverage.......................................................page 12
Examples of Impacts................................................page 12
Future Directions .....................................................page 13

Dr. Charles Zwick (left) working with President Lyndon B. Johnson
during his time as director of the U.S. Bureau of the Budget.
MISSION AND FOCUS

Mission

The Charles J. Zwick Center for Food and Resource Policy is driven by excellence in quantitative and policy oriented economic research on problems confronting food and energy markets, the use of natural resources, and the environment. The intent is to provide practical recommendations to improve the functioning of markets and related government policies and to advance and disseminate knowledge that impacts public policies to improve society's welfare. Key users include private firms, consumer organizations, non-profit organizations, scholars, public agencies, and policy makers.

Areas of Focus

The Center's endowment makes it possible to elevate the prominence of the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics and to focus on high-priority policy and quantitative studies to solve problems in three signature areas:

- Food Marketing and Industrial Organization
- Environmental and Natural Resource Economics and Policy
- Economic Development
Ronald Cotterill is Professor Emeritus of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Economics at the University of Connecticut, and Director Emeritus of the Food Marketing Policy Center—the predecessor of the Zwick Center. During his thirty years as a professor, he taught hundreds of students and authored dozens of books, monographs, journal articles, and other works. An internationally renowned expert on the organization and performance of the US food industries, he has testified before Congress and state legislatures regarding industrial and antitrust issues.

Richard DelFavero is the founder of the commercial construction company DelFavero Builders and an active supporter of the University of Connecticut. An alumnus of the University, he is a recipient of the Augustus and Charles Storrs Award and a lifetime member of the UConn Alumni Association. Mr. DelFavero provided the gift to endow the DelFavero Chair in Agricultural and Resource Economics.

Ben Freund is the owner and operator of Freund’s Farm, Inc., a dairy farm, and of Cow Pots, LLC, the manufacturer of biodegradable planting pots, both located in East Canaan, Connecticut. He serves on the board of the Federal Farm Credit Banks Funding Corporation. He is a member and former director of Farm Credit East, ACA.

Bryan Hurlburt is the current Connecticut Commissioner of Agriculture. In March 2019, he was appointed by Governor Ned Lamont to replace former Commissioner Steven Reviczky. Hurlburt, a former Democratic state legislator, has worked to promote farming in Connecticut and more recently as the head of a non-profit trade group.

Tom Cosgrove is Senior Vice President of Farm Credit East, ACA, which is part of the Farm Credit System, serving over 13,000 customers throughout seven Northeastern states through the provision of credit and affiliated services to those in agriculture and related industries. He has also worked with the CT delegation to the US Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Michael Willig is a Professor in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and Director of the Center for Environmental Sciences and Engineering at UConn. His areas of expertise include the application of quantitative and statistical techniques to understand the ecology and conservation of coupled human and natural systems.
2018-19 Zwick Center Personnel

Professor and head of the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics (2008-August 2019) and Director of the Zwick Center for Food and Resource Policy at the University of Connecticut (2011-August 2019). Dr. Lopez earned a Ph.D. in Food and Resource Economics from the University of Florida in 1979. His areas of expertise include agricultural and food policy, agribusiness marketing, and economic development. He has led research teams for various economic impact reports, including for the Connecticut dairy industry in 2009 and the first comprehensive economic impact study of Connecticut agriculture in 2010, and its update in 2017.

Rigoberto Lopez
Director, Professor
Food Marketing, Food Policy, Economic Development

Former postdoctoral fellow, jointly appointed to the Zwick Center for Food and Resource Policy and the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity at the University of Connecticut. She earned her Ph.D. in Nutrition Science from the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University in 2016. Her areas of expertise include dietary sustainability, food and nutrition policy, and local and regional food systems. During her time at the Zwick Center, Dr. Boehm was awarded substantial grants whose impact will outlast her time here. She has been published and cited various times this year for her work related to nutrition, health, and the environment, including in VICE Munchies, the Chicago Tribune, and The Washington Post. In December 2018, Dr. Boehm moved to Washington, DC, to work as an economist for the Union of Concerned Scientists.

Rebecca Boehm
Postdoctoral Fellow
Economics of Food, Health, and the Environment

Former postdoctoral fellow, appointed to the Zwick Center for Food & Resource Policy in May of 2017. Dr. Burney earned a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics at the University of Kentucky, after which he joined the Zwick Center team as one of the core personnel, where he worked for a year. In the fall of 2018, he relocated to the University of Wisconsin-River Falls as an assistant professor.

Shaheer Burney
Postdoctoral Fellow
Food Policy and Food Marketing
FACULTY AFFILIATES

Tatiana Andreyeva – Associate Professor
Health Economics, Food Policy

Emma Bojinova – Lecturer
International Economics, Industrial Organization

John Bovay – Assistant Professor and Extension Economist
Food Policy, Environmental and Resource Economics

Boris Bravo-Ureta – Professor
International Agricultural Development, Production Economics

Ronald Cotterill – Emeritus Director, Emeritus Professor
Food Marketing and Industrial Organization, Food Policy

Richard Dunn – Associate Professor
Health and Public Economics, Applied Microeconomics

Syma Ebbin – Associate Professor in Residence
Fisheries and Environmental Management

Nathan Fiala – Assistant Professor
Food Security, Environment, Development

Sandro Steinbach – Assistant Professor
Agricultural Trade, Health and Environmental Economics

Robert Pomeroy – Professor
International Development, Fisheries, Marine Policy

Farhed Shah – Associate Professor
Natural Resource and Environmental Economics, Water Policy

Stephen Swallow – Professor
Natural Resource and Environmental Economics, Ecosystem Services, Land-Use Policy

Charles Towe – Associate Professor
Environmental Economics, Land Use, Policy Evaluation

FELLOWS

Chen Zhu
China Agricultural University

Michele Baggio
University of Connecticut

SUPPORTING

Mahdi Fallahi
Data Management

Andrew Rukakoski
Written Communications Assistant
During 2018-19 fiscal year, the Zwick Center for Food and Resource Policy continued its mission of developing policy-oriented research, outreach reports, and recommendations to address problems and opportunities associated with food, natural resources, and the environment.

Some highlights include:

* Center director Rigoberto Lopez was appointed to Governor-elect Ned Lamont’s Committee on Agriculture in October 2018, and continues to serve on this committee.

* During summer 2018, Drs. Lopez, Boehm, and Burney presented five papers at the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association annual meeting in Washington, D.C. During fall 2018, Rebecca Boehm, Jaime Foster (Rudd Center), Jiff Martin (Department of Extension), and Rigoberto Lopez conducted an update of the Connecticut food security study, which included the prevalent rates of obesity at the town level.


* Dr. Shaheer Burney took an assistant professor position at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls in August 2018, and Dr. Rebecca Boehm took the position of Economist in the Food and Environment program at Union of Concerned Scientists in Washington, D.C. in December 2018.

* Grant activity by core personnel included a FINI grant for $200,000 by PI Rebecca Boehm, transferred to ARE faculty (John Bovay and Nathan Fiala) after Dr. Boehm’s departure. Another collaboration involved an NSF grant application that included Rigoberto Lopez as a collaborator to estimate impacts of alternative energy sources in New England.

* As industrial hemp is now a top priority in Connecticut’s agricultural policy, the Center will be responding by updating the cost of production and enterprise budget for this crop as well as agricultural activity that is currently being conducted without the benefit of quantitative analysis. Rigoberto Lopez is also conducting two economic impact studies funded by stakeholders, one for the University of Connecticut and another one for the Connecticut green industry.

* Looking forward, Kimbery Rollins has been appointed ARE Department Head and Interim Director of the Zwick Center, starting August 23, 2019. She will conduct long-term planning for the Center and develop a plan for its sustainability and growth.
Affiliates of the Zwick Center disseminate work at academic conferences and through the publication of the Working Paper Series, Outreach Series, and Research Report Series. Over 200 publications have been widely distributed since 2011 through these three publication series, in addition to over 100 presentations in academic and outreach settings.

**Journal Articles**


  *Finalist for 2019 Best General Education Material Paper, Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*

  *Best Economics Paper in Food Safety and Nutrition for 2018, AAEA*


Outreach and Research Reports


Working Papers

- Alicia Barriga and Nathan Fiala. 2018. "The supply chain for seed in Uganda: Where does it all go wrong?" wp50
Presentations


Funding

- Rigoberto Lopez and Steven Lanza, “Economic Impact of the University of Connecticut on the State Economy,” $29,775. Sponsored by UConn Office of Budget and Planning.
- Rebecca Boehm, Implications for Market Structure and Farm Profitability of Expanded Production of Food in Greenhouses in the Northeast to Serve Local Markets. Role: Co-PI with Drs. John Bovay, University of Connecticut and Pengfei Lui, University of Arkansas. USDA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative Foundational grant ($490,000). Not funded.
- Zhang, Chuanrong (Principal), Helton, Ashley (Co-Investigator), You, Liangzhi (Co-Investigator), Willig, Michael (Co-Investigator), Li, Baikun (Co-Investigator), Briggs, M (Supporting), Boyer, Mark A (Supporting), Li, Weidong (Supporting), Lopez, Rigoberto (Supporting), Luh, Peter B (Supporting), Paxton, Alexandra E (Supporting), Rajasekaran, Sanguthevar (Supporting), Segerson, Kathleen (Supporting), Bayulgen, Oksan (Supporting), Day-Lewis, F. (Supporting), Fahey, Robert T. (Supporting), Fu, P. (Supporting), Parent, Jason R (Supporting), Swallow, Stephen (Supporting), Presley, S. (Supporting), Wang, Bing (Supporting), Varanka, D. (Supporting), Witharana, Chandi (Supporting), Zhang, Peng (Supporting), "INFEWS/T2: Towards a Resilient and Sustainable Food, Bioenergy, Water, and Biodiversity (FEWB) System in Northeastern United States". Sponsored by NSF, Submitted. $2.3 million. Not Funded.

Other Activities

Data purchases:
- Kilt Marketing Center datasets, University of Chicago, cost-shared ($5000 out of $7000) with the Rudd Center, the Dept. of Economics, and the School of Business:
  a) Consumer Panel Homescan dataset
  b) IRI Retail Scanner dataset
  Being used by ARE, Business, and Economics faculty members and PhD students, faculty members and grad students.
- Global Trade Atlas dataset on recycling materials flows ($3000), cost-shared with Prof. Sandro Steinbach (total data cost: $10,000).

Student, staff, and postdocs:
- Funded ARE PhD students Xi He (5 hours/week in fall 2018) and Sijia Chen (5 hours/week spring 2018 and fall 2019) to work on food and health research and an employment report for Connecticut agriculture.
- Partial support (50%) for postdoc Rebecca Boehm in fall 2018 and January 2019 and support for postdoc Shaheer Burney in July/August 2018.
- Student labor to post reports and update website.
- Co-sponsored ARE seminars in fall 2018 and spring 2019.
Seminar Series

FALL 2018

* September 29 – Speaker: Rebecca Boehm, Dept. of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Connecticut.
* October 3 – Speaker: Thomas Krumel, Dept. of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Connecticut
* October 3 – Speaker: Deepak Saraswat, Dept. of Economics, University of Connecticut.
* October 10 – Speaker: Tim Murray, Dept. of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Connecticut.
* October 17 – Speaker: Wei Zhang, Dept. of Economics, Connecticut College.
* October 29 - Xi He, Dept. of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Connecticut.
* November 1 – Julian Alston, Dept. of Agricultural and Resource Economics, UC Davis.
* November 14 – Keith Evans, School of Economics, University of Maine.
* November 28 – John Bovay, Dept. of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Connecticut.

SPRING 2019

* January 28 – Matthew Woerman, Dept. of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of California, Berkeley
* February 1 – Sandro Steinbach, Dept. of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Connecticut
* February 4 – Marianne Bitler, University of California, Davis
* February 15 – Mahesh Dahal, Dept. of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Connecticut
* March 8 – Carolyn Dimitri and Juan Carlos Sanchez Herrera, Dept. of Nutrition and Food Studies, New York University
* March 25 – Chen Zhu, College of Economics and Management, China Agricultural University
* March 27 – Teevrat Garg, School of Global Policy & Strategy, University of California, San Diego
* March 29 – Brandon McFadden, Dept. of Applied Economics and Statistics, University of Delaware
* April 5 – Kenneth Gillingham, School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, Dept. of Economics, School of Management, Yale University
* April 17 – Rigoberto Lopez, Dept. of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Connecticut
Media Coverage


February 2, 2019. Naturally@UConn. “Researchers study food security and obesity in Connecticut.” Available at https://naturally.uconn.edu/2019/02/05/researchers-study-the-link-between-food-insecurity-obesity-in-ct/

Examples of Impacts

To illustrate some of the Center’s impacts, we have outlined a few examples of recent work of applied research integrated with outreach programs in partnership with governments, academics, and stakeholders.

Growing Local Milk

One example of the type of impact the Zwick Center has had in recent years is with the dairy program research performed by the Center since 2011. This research has resulted in over a dozen publications from the Zwick Center, as well as support for the administration and continuation of a dairy support program to aid dairy farmers in Connecticut. In support of Public Act 08-164, An Act Concerning Assistance for Dairy Farmers, the Center was pivotal in supplying the legislature-required economic impact study as well as quarterly cost of production estimates needed to release payments to state farmers. Over $6 million has been distributed to dairy farmers resulting in the addition of about 75 jobs per year and roughly $10 million in additional annual sales for the industry. Finally, the Center has continued to profile and quantify the segments likely to buy local milk, identify price premiums associated with locally labeled milk, and assess the effectiveness of alternative marketing practices to expand consumption of local brands in New England.
Community Food Security
A second example is the community food security work that the Zwick Center has continued with the most recent report’s release in January 2019. After the initial report in 2005 and the subsequent 2012 report, this research has generated substantial media attention through television, print, and the internet, not just in Connecticut but across the United States, including Washington, DC and San Francisco, California. This report has facilitated the organization of several advocacy groups and has prompted legislators and NGO’s to focus on the problems associated with food security in Connecticut towns. The report focuses on the population at risk for food insecurity, participation in public assistance programs, mapping the areas of food insecurity and obesity incidence, and measurements of food affordability throughout the state. The Zwick Center has also sponsored a study of food and economic choices by the extreme poor in the inner cities of Connecticut, led by Professor Nathan Fiala and a PhD student.

Economic Impacts
A third example is the 2017 study of the considerable economic impacts of Connecticut’s agricultural industries. Not only does the $4 billion estimated impact lend support to agricultural policies in the state, but the study was covered nationally, reaching 65 million readers. In addition, the Zwick Center has produced four more economic impact reports on agriculture in the region: the 2009 report for the Connecticut State Legislature in support of dairy payments, the first comprehensive report on agricultural impact in Connecticut in 2010, and two reports, in partnership with Farm Credit East, on Northeastern agriculture, forest products, and commercial fishing. Currently, two economic reports have been commissioned and funded externally, one by the University of Connecticut on UConn’s impact on the state economy and another one by the Connecticut Landscape and Nursery Association on the economic impact of the green industry. Both are due to be released in early fall 2019.

Future Directions
The Zwick Center for Food and Resource Policy at the University of Connecticut is positioned to lead cutting edge research, education, and outreach in economic and business analyses in Connecticut. This includes a combination of compelling research studies on agricultural impact, quantitative evaluation of public policies, feasibility studies, increasing local and healthy food consumption, and enhancing food security and environmental sustainability. In addition to established relationships with state agencies and agricultural industry stakeholders, potential partners with whom we have existing relationships include state and city governments, the Connecticut Food Policy Council, and the Governor’s Council for Agricultural Economic Development, in addition to collaborations within UConn with the Department of Extension, the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity, and the Center for Environmental Science and Engineering. Dr. Kimberly Rollins, the incoming interim director of the Zwick Center, will develop a 10-year strategic plan for the Center. Because one purpose of the Center is to enhance programmatic areas in the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources (CAHNR), this exercise will be cast simultaneously with the
strategic plans for CAHNR and ARE. In the next 10 years, the Zwick Center will continue on its path of excellence in research and outreach, with a focus on quantitative assessments of policy impacts that inform policy decisions to ensure that the agriculture, forestry, and fishery industries in Connecticut and beyond are both economically and environmentally sustainable for current and future generations.