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# 2020 Annual Report





## Table of Contents

The Council on Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics: Mission, Goals.....	3
C-FARE's Core Values, Support the Agricultural and Applied Economics Profession .....	4
2020 Pandemic Statement, C-FARE's New Board Members .....	5
C-FARE's Events, Programming and Outreach.....	6-9
E-Commerce During Covid-19: Opportunities for Food Producers to Make Direct Market Sales Online.....	6
How Resilient Is The U.S. Meat Supply Chain? Lessons from COVID-19 .....	6
Local Food Markets, Farm Labor and Metrics in a Time of COVID-19 .....	7
NextUp – A Career Development Panel For Young Professionals + Students in Agricultural and Applied Economics .....	7
SNAP + Food Assistance in a Time of COVID 19.....	8
Cultivating Talent - Agriculture and Applied Economics at the nation's 1890 Universities .....	8
High-Speed Internet in the Heartland - The Challenges and Opportunities of Rural Broadband.....	9
Economic Perspectives on Wildfire – Preparation, Property and Health.....	9
Coalition Building 2020, C-FARE Social Media Update.....	10
C-FARE's Current Board Members, C-FARE's 2019 Sponsors and Partners, Contact Us.....	11



## The Council on Food, Agricultural, and Resource Economics

C-FARE is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code that promotes the work of applied economists and serves to incorporate economic thinking into the analysis of food, agricultural, and resource decisions. The council aims to be a conduit between the academic research community and Washington policymakers and agency leaders. Incorporated in 1993, C-FARE is based in Washington and governed by a board of applied economists representing a range of public and private sector interests.

## C-FARE's Mission

C-FARE's mission is to enhance national decisions concerning food, agriculture, and resources. The council achieves this by elevating agricultural and applied economics research, modeling, and analysis before federal lawmakers and policy advisors.

## C-FARE's Goals

C-FARE's Board of Directors has adopted a set of goals to serve the needs of the profession.

### GOAL 1

Advance the role of agricultural and applied economists in identifying and informing research and policy issues.

### GOAL 2:

Significantly increase the understanding that public and federal program audiences have of the value of food, agricultural, resource, and applied economics information and analysis.

### GOAL 3:

Foster opportunities, which build on human capital, for a vibrant national workforce equipped with skills required to inform private and public entities of economic policy.



## C-FARE's Core Values

**Collaboration:** C-FARE advances the applied economics profession through its continuous development of effective communication pathways that connect the profession to users of food, agricultural, natural resource, and applied economics information and analysis.

**Excellence:** C-FARE distills authoritative economic analysis from the agricultural and applied economics profession into information that communicates effectively with its critical audiences.

**INTEGRITY:** C-FARE is guided by the highest level of objectivity.

**INNOVATION:** C-FARE identifies and facilitates innovative analyses and engagement.

**RELEVANCE:** C-FARE's actions are timely, proactive, and responsive to critical issues.

## Support the Agricultural and Applied Economics Profession

### Facilitating Webinars, Seminars, and Briefings on Timely Topics

C-FARE develops webinars, seminars, and briefings. These activities are designed to inform and/or train stakeholders on economics relevance to current policy issues or legislative initiatives. C-FARE's actions highlight the strengths of economic analysis in multidisciplinary research and education.

### Monitoring Federal Policymaking

C-FARE monitors and reports on budgets, bills, legislation, rulemaking, and initiatives under discussion in federal policymaking circles. C-FARE also nurtures public comments that encourage federal policy and programs incorporating applied economic analyses in program development and policy implementation.

### Engaging Federal Stakeholders and Decision Makers

C-FARE volunteer experts regularly meet with decision-makers to provide information on the importance of economic research, extension, and education, as well as the value of much federal data series.

Advisory boards and panels offer opportunities for the profession to broaden its influence. C-FARE seeks to enhance the presence of food, agricultural, and resource economists on critical federal advisory boards.

### Providing Information to Students and Young Professionals

C-FARE's intern briefings and informational updates help support the professional growth of the next generation of applied economists. At the briefings, speakers talk about their backgrounds, skills, and academic experience. Experts elaborate on experiences and skills they've found necessary to build a career in the private, public or non-profit sectors in Washington.





## 2020 Pandemic Statement

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C-FARE recognizes that 2020 was an atypical year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to this, C-FARE did not engage in in-person activities as per usual. Instead of hill visits and in-person forums, C-FARE held online webinars monthly. Once the pandemic is no longer a threat to our members and in-person events can continue, we plan on bringing back our Hill Visits and in-person events.

## C-FARE's New Board Members

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The Council on Food, Agricultural, and Resource Economics (C-FARE) thanks its board of directors — saluting its new directors and thanking those who rotated off. In 2020, the volunteer organization strove to advance the non-profit's dedication to strengthening the national presence of the agricultural and applied economics profession. C-FARE's directors provide leadership, governance, and oversight of the organization and its programming. C-FARE added three professors to its board of directors:



Chyi Lyi (Kathleen) Liang, North Carolina A&T



Matt Holt, Virginia State



Rod Rejesus, North Carolina State University

C-FARE ensures that the knowledge generated by agricultural and applied economists is effectively communicated to the broader agricultural policy community. In 2020, past Board Chair Spiro Stefanou rotated out of C-FARE, and Rutgers University economist Gal Hochman was elected to the Board Chair position.

### C-FARE thanked its veteran board members who rotated off in 2020:

- Roger Coupal, University of Wyoming
- Spiro Stefanou, USDA ERS



# C-FARE's Events, Programming and Outreach

## WEBINAR, April 24th – E-Commerce During Covid-19: Opportunities for Food Producers to Make Direct Market Sales Online



### Moderator:

Gal Hochman, Rutgers University

### Presenters:

Jeffrey O'Hara, USDA Ag Marketing Service

Chyi Lyi "Kathleen" Liang, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University

Gary Matteson, Farm Credit Council

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, e-commerce has become more popular than ever and created new opportunities for food producers to sell directly to consumers. More than 500 registered for the webinar that was hosted in partnership with the [Northeastern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association \(NAREA\)](#). This event had the largest registration since the council began producing lunchtime webinars.

### Key Takeaways:

- The USDA has many resources available for free to assist producers with e-commerce and provides access to data and case studies of farmers who successfully migrated to e-commerce.
- The potential merit of e-commerce for direct sales from producers to consumers could open up new markets for small producers.
- When engaging with new markets, it is critical to emphasize business planning with clear goals for inputs such as time, money.

## WEBINAR, June 5th – How Resilient Is The U.S. Meat Supply Chain? Lessons from COVID-19



### Moderator:

Sean Cash, Tufts University

### Presenters:

Glynn Tonsor, Kansas State University

Josh Maples, Mississippi State University

Kenny Burdine, University of Kentucky

Despite a steep decline in meat processing and a 92% jump in the price of wholesale boxed beef earlier this spring, the U.S. livestock sector has demonstrated resilience and relative supply chain stability throughout the early months of the Covid-19 pandemic, three agricultural economists say. The [Council on Food, Agricultural, and Resource Economics \(C-FARE\)](#) co-hosted a free webinar with the [Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy](#) at [Tufts University](#) to discuss the impacts of the pandemic on the nation's meat sector.

### Key Takeaways:

- The U.S livestock sector demonstrated resilience after a 35% reduction in livestock processing in April 2020.
- The U.S. meat supply chain is on the path to recovery but is still in the process of recovering.
- Consumers engaging in meat hoarding before the supply issues occurred due to COVID-19 could be a contributing factor to the resilience of the U.S. food system because of consumers being able to fulfill their meat wants even though production was unstable. These actions bought the system more time to stabilize.

# C-FARE's Events, Programming and Outreach

## WEBINAR, June 26th – Local Food Markets, Farm Labor and Metrics in a Time of COVID-19



### Moderator:

Jane Kolodinsky, University of Vermont

### Presenters:

Cesar L. Escalante, University of Georgia

Ben Feldman, Farmers Market Coalition

Lilian Brislen, The Food Connection

Despite a surge in unemployment nationally and broken supply chains for many consumer goods during the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, a panel of three agricultural experts say much of the agricultural sector has proven resilient to the most disruptive forces of the pandemic. About 280 registered for the third webinar of our Covid-19-related series. This one, like the first, was co-hosted with the [Northeastern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association \(NAREA\)](#).

### Key Takeaways:

- Leaning on H2A Visas for foreign farm labor appears not to have substantively been disrupted by the pandemic as of June 2020.
- Local farm markets didn't experience supply chain disruptions due to COVID-19 for the most part.
- One of the most significant challenges for producers was a lack of guidance, or conflicting advice, from state and federal authorities regarding how to engage in business during the early pandemic.

## WEBINAR, July 22nd – NextUp – A Career Development Panel For Young Professionals + Students in Agricultural and Applied Economics



### Moderator:

Gal Hochman, Rutgers University

### Presenters:

Dr Cynthia Nickerson, USDA

Dr. John Newton, American Farm Bureau Federation

Barbara Patterson, Michael Torrey Associates

This event aimed to introduce young professionals and graduate — or graduating — students to the kinds of work done in a large government agency, a non-profit industry advocacy group, a private government and regulatory affairs firm, and media and communications. The agricultural and applied economics profession is brimming with young talent preparing to lead the next wave of research projects, policy changes, and innovation.

### Key Takeaways:

- The agricultural and applied economist profession has many opportunities within large government agencies, non-profit industry advocacy groups, regulatory affairs firms, and media and communications.



# C-FARE's Events, Programming and Outreach

## WEBINAR, August 31st – SNAP + Food Assistance in a Time of COVID 19



### Moderator:

Sean Cash, Tufts University

### Speakers:

Parke Wilde, Tufts University

Shewana Hairston McSwain, North Carolina A&T State University

George Davis, Virginia Tech

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act gave the U.S. Department of Agriculture the authority to ease state requirements for reporting and proving need. The department suspended the program's three-month cap on benefits for unemployed adults under 50 without dependents. The year 2020 has focused a great deal more attention on the nation's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and the logistics of food assistance. All of these changes in food security led to C-FARE hosting a webinar to update the status of SNAP and food assistance programs within The United States.

### Key Takeaways:

- While important, food banks and food pantries are just a fraction of the aid laid out in SNAP, school nutrition programs like Head Start, and the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) supplemental nutrition program.
- Due to a bump in food price inflation, there has been the most significant increase in total SNAP benefit adjustment for inflation in years.
- Policymakers must know that along with money, time is critical to how we gauge SNAP benefit adequacy.

## WEBINAR, September 14th – Cultivating Talent - Agriculture and Applied Economics at the nation's 1890 Universities



Sarah Jacobson, Williams College

David Anderson, Texas A&M

Glynn Tonsor, Kansas State University

The 19 institutions established under the Second Morrill Act of 1890 comprise a group of historically black universities (HBCU's) seeded with federal dollars to strengthen research, extension, and education in food and agricultural sciences. The Council on Food, Agricultural, and Resource Economics brought together representatives of 1890 schools and national and regional agricultural and applied economics associations to discuss the importance of this nexus in 1890 universities' curriculum and the greater importance of 1890 universities' graduates in the nation's food and commodities' policy work.

### Moderator:

Chyi Lyi "Kathleen" Liang, North Carolina A&T State University

### Presenters:

Kenret Jefferson-Moore, NC A&T State

Raymon Shange, Tuskegee University

Dawn Mellion-Patin, Southern University

Dawn Thilmany, AAEA President/Colorado State University

### Key Takeaways:

- The webinar emphasized the importance of 1890 university graduate students in the nation's food and commodities policy work.
- The webinar argued that diversity in the sector of economics is low, and the field would benefit from becoming more representative of the American population's demographic.
- The webinar recommended increasing scholarship access to increase diversity within agricultural and applied economics.

# C-FARE's Events, Programming and Outreach

## WEBINAR, October 16th – High-Speed Internet in the Heartland - The Challenges and Opportunities of Rural Broadband



**Moderator:**  
Roger Coupal, University of Wyoming

**Presenters:**  
Alexander Marre, Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond  
John Pender, USDA ERS  
Anne Read, Pew Charitable Trust  
Mike Malandro, Choptank Electric Cooperative

The Council on Food, Agricultural, and Resource Economics (C-FARE) hosted a free webinar on the challenges and opportunities facing increased broadband access in rural America. With Americans becoming more reliant than ever on broadband due to the pandemic and an expectation to compete with the larger market, which is now accessible via the internet, broadband inequities are becoming more evident.

The panelists, Alexander Marre (Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond), John Pender (USDA ERS), Anne Read (The Pew Charitable Trusts), and Mike Malandro (Choptank Electric Cooperative), discussed ongoing research into rural broadband-related issues. The panelists elaborated on the potential ways we could adapt our current infrastructure to increase broadband access.

### Key Takeaways:

- Every dollar spent on broadband infrastructure results in three to four dollars in economic growth.
- Rural areas typically have a low population density and are a sizeable distance from existing broadband infrastructure, making expanding infrastructure a problematic value proposition.
- Electric cooperatives are well-positioned to provide broadband service because their service footprints are often in rural areas that are unserved by broadband; they invest in fiber optic infrastructure to support their electric operations because they have the infrastructure (e.g., poles) necessary for broadband deployment.

## WEBINAR, November 16th – Economic Perspectives on Wildfire – Preparation, Property and Health



**Host:**  
Sean Cash, Tufts University

**Moderator:**  
Karen Palmer, AERE/RFF

**Presenters:**  
Matthew Wibbenmeyer, Resources for The Future  
Patty Champ, U.S. Forest Service  
Eric Zou, University of Oregon

C-FARE covered the topic of wildfires due to the threat of wildfires becoming an increasingly significant challenge

faced by many Americans. As of October 1st, over 44,000 wildfires have burned nearly 7.7 million acres in the United States. This growing threat is partly due to increasing temperatures and changing weather conditions, making the fires far more challenging to control and easier to spread. C-FARE joined forces with the Association of Environmental and Resource Economics (AERE) to host this discussion.

### Key Takeaways:

- The expansion of building more housing in high wildfire risk areas shows no sign of stopping, with a prediction of 600 thousand – 1.2 million new homes being built in the wildland-urban interface in California between 2000-2050.
- 70% of the area burned in the Western United States in recent wildfires has been federal land.
- Wildfire smoke causes around 12,000 premature elderly deaths per year, accounting for \$4.2 billion in mortality cost. The health repercussions of a wildfire are not limited to that of the immediate area, and recent studies have shown that smoke plumes can travel hundreds or thousands of miles. A smoke plume can travel the distance between New York and Los Angeles potentially.



## Coalition Building 2020

The council, per its memorandum of understanding with the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association, held activities and meetings with the following groups and coalitions:

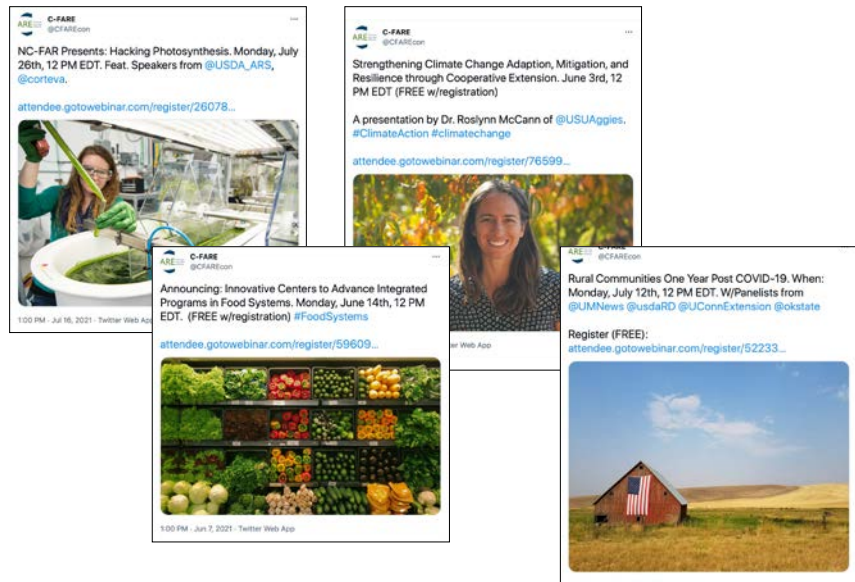
- The Friends of Agricultural Statistics and Analysis
- National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research
- AFRI Coalition
- Supporters of Agricultural Research
- USDA Agencies Tour

## C-FARE Social Media Update



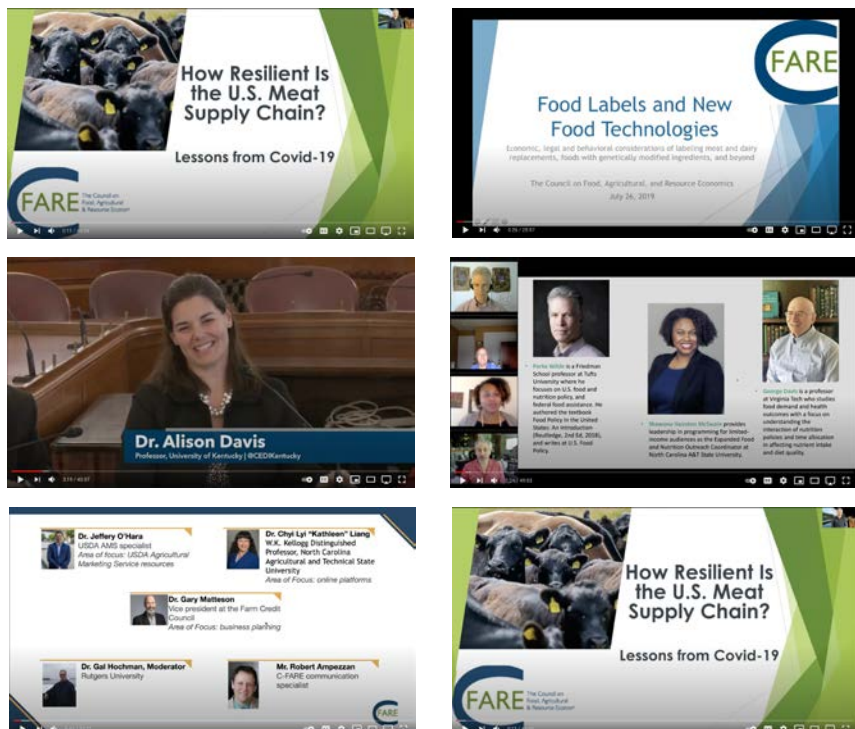
### C-FARE Twitter Growth

- ★ 150 New followers
- ★ 227 New Tweets
- ★ Over 1,000 Followers
- ★ 144,016 Total Impressions



### C-FARE YouTube Growth

- ★ 11 New Feature Videos
- ★ 2,026 New Content Views
- ★ 211.7 Total Hours of View Time
- ★ 51 New Subscribers



## C-FARE's Current Board Members

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Gal Hochman, Rutgers University

Luis A. Ribera, Texas A&M

Matt Holt, Virginia Tech

Chyi Lyi "Kathleen" Liang, NC A&T

Duncan Chembezi, Alabama A&M University

Rod Rejesus, North Carolina State University

Barry Barnett, University of Kentucky

Andrew Muhammad, University of Tennessee

Sean Cash, Tufts University

Jane Kolodinsky, University of Vermont

Michael Adjemian, University of Georgia

Kimberly Morgan, University of Florida

## C-FARE's 2020 Strategic Partners and Sponsors

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- Agricultural & Applied Economics Association
- National Association of Agricultural Economics Administrators
- American Farm Bureau Federation
- Office of the Chief Economist
- Economic Research Service
- National Institute of Food and Agriculture
- National Agricultural Statistics Service
- Regional economic associations such as the Southern Agricultural Economics Association (SAEA) and the Northeastern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association (NAREA)
- Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

## CONTACT US

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