Charles J. Zwick ’50, ’51, has donated $1 million to the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics to support quantitative policy analysis of food and resource issues. The Food Marketing Policy Center has been renamed The Charles J. Zwick Center for Food and Resource Policy, effective November 9, 2010 after the UConn Board of Trustees’ approval.

Zwick earned Bachelors and Master’s degrees in agricultural economics at UConn, and earned a Ph.D. at Harvard University in economics with a specialization in quantitative and econometric analysis. He served as Director of the United States Office of Management and Budget under the Johnson administration. Thereafter he was CEO at Southeast Banking Corporation.

Dr. Zwick’s generous gift will allow the Center to greatly expand and support its work in food systems, natural resources, as well as food and agricultural markets, and pursue research as one of the University’s centers of excellence. The Food Marketing Policy Center is a world leader in policy analysis, and has been directed by Professor Ronald Cotterill, who has recently retired. The Center will be led by Professor and Department Head Rigoberto Lopez. Lopez said, “This gift will allow us to take the Department’s mission to the next level. We all know how important to have science-based studies be the voice for policy direction, and this gift will facilitate exactly that goal.”

Policy Perspectives—Joshua Berning on Food Taxes and Obesity

The obesity epidemic in the United States has been a serious concern for nearly two decades. A variety of factors that contribute to obesity have been identified, as have potential mechanisms to reduce rates of obesity. An important question is to what extent should the government be involved with obesity prevention in the United States?

A few states have enacted taxes on unhealthful food products like carbonated soft drinks; there are calls for similar efforts at the national level. Proponents of such taxes view them as an effective way to reduce the consumption of elastic (i.e. price sensitive) products or at the least, a source of revenue that may be put to better use. However, economic research to date suggests that only sizeable (and unrealistic) tax rates...
# Center Staff and Researchers

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Referred Articles:


Papers presented at conferences


Cohen, Michael “Evaluating Health Care Externality Costs Generated by (contd. on p.4)
Risky Consumption Goods” Selected Paper for the 25th Annual Congress of the European Economic Association, Glasgow, Scotland, UK, August 2010. (in absentia)

Cohen, Michael and Ronald Cotterill.


Huang, R., Fulginiti, L. and Peterson, W., “Health and Growth: Causality through Education”, International Conference of Agricultural Economists (IAAE), Beijing, China, August 2009.

Huang, R., Fulginiti, L. and Peterson, W., “Health and Growth: Causality through Education”, International Conference of Agricultural Economists (IAAE), Beijing, China, August 2009.


Assistant Professor Joshua Berning and graduate student Charles Rhodes visited Technische Universität München for the 1st Joint EAAE/AAEA Seminar, “The Economics of Food, Food Choice and Health” in Freising, Germany.
Research by Rigoberto Lopez quantifying the state of Connecticut’s dairy industry was instrumental in the formation of Public Act 09-229, which allocates funding from deed recording fees to the state’s dairy farmers for two years. Shown at the bill’s signing in July 2009, from left: Rigoberto Lopez, Connecticut Commissioner of Agriculture Phillip Prelli, Connecticut Governor M.Jodi Rell, and CANR Dean Gregory Weidemann.

Personnel News and Placements

Rigoberto Lopez will serve as Director of The Charles J. Zwick Center for Food and Resource Policy. He is also Professor and Department Head, Agricultural and Resource Economics.

Ronald Cotterill has become Professor and Director Emeritus, effective October 2010. He will continue to work with the Center in its newly expanded capacity.

Alessandro Bonanno (Ph.D. '07, UConn Assistant Professor in Residence 2007-2008) is Assistant Professor of Agricultural Economics at Penn State University.

Benaissa Chidmi (Ph.D. '06) is Assistant Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at Texas Tech University.

Michael Cohen (Ph.D. '09, UConn Postdoctoral Fellow 2009-2010, Assistant Professor in Residence 2010-2011) has accepted a position as Assistant Professor at New York University’s Stern School of Business (see p.12).

Xenia Matche left UConn in 2010 and is now Full Professor for International Economic Policy at Universität Trier in Trier, Germany.

Gautham Tripathi has accepted a visiting professor position at the Universität Mannheim in Mannheim, Germany.

Tirtha Dhar (Ph.D.‘01) is now Assistant Professor in the Marketing Division of the Sauder School of Business at the University of British Columbia.
Activity Reports 2009-2010

Rigoberto Lopez

Xiaoou Liu (Ph.D., August 2009): “Food Pricing and Addiction.”


Special Achievement Award, Connecticut Farm Bureau Association, November 2009 for work on dairy policy.

Connecticut Farm Bureau Association and the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, “The Impact of Agriculture on Connecticut’s Economy,” May-August 2010, $18,000, Principal Investigator.


Member, Editorial Board of SMEA’s Book Series on Economics of Agriculture and the Food System (Catholic University of Sacred Heart, Italy), 2010-present.


Met with U.S. Representative Rosa DeLauro (CT-3) in September 2009, and U.S. Congressman Joe Courtney (CT-2), member of the Agricultural Committee and co-chair of the Dairy Caucus, in February 2010 to discuss food policy priorities for the state of Connecticut and the nation.


Summary of interviews/media coverage related to Economic Impacts of Connecticut’s Agricultural Industry:


Radio: National Public Radio, The Talk of Connecticut with Brad Davis (syndicated), Sunday Show with John Voket (Cox Radio),

Television: Fox News 61
**Ronald Cotterill**


Castellari, Elena (MS 2009): “The Fluid Milk Market in Italy: Consumer Behavior and Industry-level Brand Competitiveness”


**Julie Caswell**

Member of The National Academies, Institute of Medicine, Committee on Review of the Food and Drug Administration’s Role in Ensuring Safe Food. The Committee report Enhancing Food Safety: The Role of the Food and Drug Administration was issued by the National Academies Press in June, 2010.

Appointed member of the Food Forum sponsored by the Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences.

Fulbright Distinguished Lectureship at the Università degli Studi della Tuscia (University of Tuscia), Viterbo, Italy, April-June, 2009. Taught a Masters course, “Economics of Food Quality” and a Ph.D. Course, “Multi-Factorial Risk Management in the Food System: Integrating Economics into Decision-Making.”


**Encouraging and Sustaining Healthy Food Choices.** Invited participant in Roundtable Discussion of Twenty Thought Leaders organized by Wageningen University and Research Centre and Royal Ahold, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 4 February 2010.


The Economics of Standards, Certification, and Quality Signaling: Where is the Market and Regulatory Oversight Going? Invited INEA (Istituto Nazionale di Economia Agraria)/Associazione Rossi-Doria Presentation at University of Rome 3, Italy, June 2009.

**Standards and Labeling as Barriers versus Catalysts for Exports from Developing Countries.** Invited Presentation at the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, Rome, Italy, May 2009.

**A Multifactorial Approach to Risk Prioritization.** Invited presentations at:

- Facolta di Agraria (Faculty of Agriculture), Università degli Studi di Foggia, Italy, June 2009.
- Facoltà di Scienze Statistiche (Faculty of Statistics), Università di Bologna, Italy, April 2009.
Activity Reports 2009-2010


Joshua Berning


Allied Social Science Associations Annual Meeting, January 2-5 2010 in Atlanta, Georgia.

First joint AAEA/EAAE Seminar, September 15-17 2010 in Freising, Germany.

Northeast Rural Summit: Generating Rural Innovation and Regional Partnership, April 12-13 2010 in Burlington, Vermont.

“Does television advertising cause us to buy more carbonated soft drinks?” University of Connecticut, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, Departmental Seminar, April 2, 2010.

Michael Cohen

January to April, 2009: Visiting Ph.D. Student of Marketing, University of Chicago, Booth School of Business.

International Industrial Organization Conference, Vancouver, British Columbia, May 2010


2010 FDRS Applebaum Award for Best Dissertation in Food Marketing, October 2010

Summer Institute in Competitive Strategy 2010, Berkeley, CA, USA July 2010

Rui Huang

Agricultural & Applied Economics Association Annual Conference, Denver, CO, July 2010

NBER Health Economics Program Spring Meeting (invited), Cambridge, MA, May 2010

International Conference of Agricultural Economists (IAAE), Beijing, China, August 2009

Christian Rojas

Brendan Larkin-Connolly. Chair. Graduation year: (MS 2008). "Cost-Pass Through. What have we learned?"

Healy Endowment Grant - University of Massachusetts: “Testing Economic Theories of Collusion with Economic Experiments,” 2009-2010 [$7,000].


Outside Accreditation Reviewer (PhD program at the Universidad de Chile), Comisión Nacional de Acreditación, Chile, May, 2009.
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<th>Manuscript Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>Demand for value added pork in Sweden: A latent class model approach</td>
<td>Liljenstolpe, Carolina (contact)</td>
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<td>The Turkish Wheat Market: Spatial Price Transmission and the Impact of Transaction Costs</td>
<td>Brosig, Stephan (contact); Glauben, Thomas; Götz, Linde; Weitzel, Enno-Burghard; Bayaner, Ahmet</td>
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<td>Integrating Auction Theory with Traditional Measures of Market Power</td>
<td>Chung, Chanjin (contact); tostao, emilio; Wade, Broersen</td>
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<td>The Impact of Biofuels Policy on Agribusiness Stock Prices</td>
<td>Du, Xiaodong (contact); Tepe, Fatma; Hennessy, David</td>
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<td>Constraints and determinants of compliance with EurepGap standards: A case of smallholder French bean exporters in Kirinyaga District, Kenya</td>
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<td>Do consumers’ attitudes and preferences determine their FAFH behavior? An application of the Theory of Planned Behavior</td>
<td>Bhuyan, Sanjib (contact)</td>
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<td>Do chain goals match consumer perceptions? The case of the traditional food sector in selected EU countries</td>
<td>Molnár, Adrienn (contact); Gellynck, Xavier; Vanhonacker, Filiep; Gagalyuk, Taras; Verbeke, Wim</td>
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would have any relevant impact on consumption. Further, the regressive nature of such taxes makes them unappealing from a welfare perspective.

Advertising of unhealthful products has also seen its fair share of criticism, particularly advertising directed at young children. Interestingly, meaningful efforts to reduce advertising of unhealthful products have been driven by public interest groups and voluntary industry participants, not by government agencies.

Providing nutrition information via nutrition labels is one government effort that has generated important benefits. Although the federal government was once the sole provider of nutrition labels, private manufacturers and retailers now provide their own proprietary nutrition labels as well. The primary advantage of government involvement in the provision of nutrition information is creating standards for determining nutritional quality and for how nutrition information can be displayed. Industry developed nutrition labels, backed by government standards, may prove to be more effective at delivering complex information to consumers.

If the end game is to improve health outcomes, it seems government efforts may be best spent as a facilitator of activity rather than paternally influencing the behavior of consumers and firms. Clearly standards and rules are important for functioning markets, but the market itself may provide more efficient ways to help consumers behave in a healthful manner.
Michael Cohen will join the Marketing Faculty at New York University Stern School of Business as an Assistant Professor.

There he will continue his research in Quantitative Marketing and Bayesian Econometric Models as well as teach undergraduate courses in "Marketing Principles" and a Ph.D. course in "Bayesian Statistics in Marketing."

Dr. Cohen earned his undergraduate degree with honors from Western Connecticut State University in 2004. He completed his Ph.D. at UConn in 2009; his dissertation was titled "Differentiated Product Demand Analysis with a Structured Covariance Probit: A Bayesian Econometric Approach" and won the 2010 William Applebaum Outstanding Ph.D. Dissertation Award from the Food Distribution Research Society.

During his Ph.D. studies, Dr. Cohen was a visiting Ph.D. student in economics at Yale University in spring 2008 and in marketing at University of Chicago Booth School of Business in winter 2009.

As a post-doctoral fellow in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at UConn, and later as Assistant Professor in Residence, Dr. Cohen continued his research on quantitative marketing, industrial organization, and applied econometrics.

Cohen said, "My access to research and travel funds from UConn’s Food Marketing Policy Center, along with creative freedom, has made my move to a premier university possible."