

*Spring 2015: Volume 14, Number 1*



*Marketing & Agribusiness*

*Natural Resources & the Environment*

*Policy & Institutions*

*Regional & Community Development*

# Western Economics Forum

Volume XIV, Number 1

SPRING 2015

## Table of Contents

Scott N. Lieske	
Cost of sprawl in the metropolitan West: census block group evaluation of public service expenditures .....	1
Xiaowei Cai and Christiane Schroeter	
What Would Popeye Choose: Trends of U.S. Western Organic vs. Conventional Spinach Purchase .....	12
Jeffrey Williams, Jon Brammer, Richard Llewelyn, and Jason Bergtold	
Producing and Harvesting Perennial Grasses for Cellulosic Biomass versus Alfalfa in Northeast Kansas .....	22
Nicole S. Ballenger	
The U.S. Farm Bill ... Way out West.....	32

## ***The Western Economics Forum***

A peer-reviewed publication from the Western Agricultural Economics Association

### Purpose

One of the consequences of regional associations nationalizing their journals is that professional agricultural economists in each region have lost one of their best forums for exchanging ideas unique to their area of the country. The purpose of this publication is to provide a forum for western issues.

### Audience

The target audience is professional agricultural economists with a Masters degree, Ph.D. or equivalent understanding of the field that are working on agricultural and resource economic, business or policy issues in the West.

### Subject

This publication is specifically targeted at informing professionals in the West about issues, methods, data, or other content addressing the following objectives:

- Summarize knowledge about issues of interest to western professionals
- To convey ideas and analysis techniques to non-academic, professional economists working on agricultural or resource issues
- To demonstrate methods and applications that can be adapted across fields in economics
- To facilitate open debate on western issues

### Structure and Distribution

The *Western Economics Forum* is a peer reviewed publication. It usually contains three to five articles per issue, with approximately 2,500 words each (maximum 3,000), and as much diversity as possible across the following areas:

- Farm/ranch management and production
- Marketing and agribusiness
- Natural resources and the environment
- Institutions and policy
- Regional and community development

There are two issues of the *Western Economics Forum* per year (Spring and Fall).

### Editor – Send submissions to:

Dr. Don McLeod

*Editor, Western Economics Forum*

Dept. of Ag & Applied Economics

University of Wyoming

Dept. 3354 1000 E. University Avenue

Laramie, WY 82071

Phone: 307-766-3116

Fax: 307-766-5544

email: [dmcleod@uwyo.edu](mailto:dmcleod@uwyo.edu)

## **Spring 2015 Western Economics Forum offers 4 articles**

Lieske provides analysis as per the Cost of Community Services focusing on spatial distribution of rural residential development; Cai and Schroeter look at factors affecting consumer spinach choices; Williams et al. conduct a comparative analysis of returns to biomass versus forage production; and Ballenger offers insights as to the relevance and benefits of the Farm Bill to six Rocky Mountain states.

Regards,  
Don McLeod, editor  
Western Economics Forum