

# MU Breimyer Seminar Unpacks

## Farm Bill, Sept. 3

**COLUMBIA, MO.**

**F**armers must make a choice on government program participation before the next crop year. The 2008 farm bill gives a new option, based on farm revenue. Or farmers can stick with the old farm bill program based on commodity prices.

The new farm bill options and much more in the new legislation will be explained at a Breimyer Seminar, Sept. 3, at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

"The new farm bill offers a major departure from traditional policy," said Brent Carpenter, program coordinator with MU Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute (FAPRI).

Just before the seminar, MU FAPRI will run a new analysis of farm bill impact, based on a mid-year baseline to be completed by the end of August, Carpenter said.

"Farmers have a choice to make, and that choice to participate in the program is irrevocable," Carpenter said. "Interpreting the complex legislation is tedious."

The purpose of the seminar, called "Unpacking the 2008 Farm Bill," is to explain the most important provisions and provide expert analysis, Carpenter said.

This is the first time in the history of the Breimyer Seminar that two policy seminars have been held in one year. The program honors Harold Breimyer, a long-time MU professor of agricultural economics who specialized in farm policy. Prior to joining MU, he spent a career at the USDA in Washington, D.C.

The new farm bill took a long time in the writing, Carpenter said. "It took eight temporary extensions of the expiring law and two overridden vetoes to pass the Food Conservation and Energy Act in June 2008."

The bill has five new titles with special provisions for horticulture and organic agriculture, commodity futures, livestock, taxes, and a new

permanent disaster assistance program.

The farm bill provides crop producers a price-based safety net or a switch to a new revenue-based farm program.

Pat Westhoff, co-director of FAPRI, has made a major computer analysis of the new ACRE (Average Crop Revenue Election) program as well as the overall farm bill. He will discuss both.

Chad Hart, Iowa State University, will tell of "Disaster Programs and Crop Insurance."

Carpenter will explain "Conservation Provisions."

Joe Outlaw, of the Agricultural and Food Policy Center at Texas A&M University, will discuss "Payment Limits and Southern Crop Provisions."

Scott Brown, MU FAPRI livestock economist, will cover "Livestock and Dairy Provisions."

At noon, James R. Wiesemeyer of the Washington bureau of Informa Economics will tell how the 2008 farm bill was written. Wiesemeyer writes "Washington Insights," a blog on AgWeb.com in which he follows political deals being made.

Missouri commodity organization leaders will end the day with a panel discussion and question session.

Advance registration is required. The \$25 fee includes lunch and an on-campus parking permit. To register, contact Joyce White at [whitej@missouri.edu](mailto:whitej@missouri.edu) or 573-882-6533 by Aug. 27.

MU FAPRI is a policy think-tank that provides independent analysis of pending legislation for the U.S. Congress. It is funded in part by the Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station.

An earlier Breimyer Seminar this year discussed "Manure Entrepreneurs" on recycling animal wastes.

For more information, see <http://fapri.missouri.edu/>. △