



28th Annual Agribusiness Conference

February 16, 2022

Conference Speakers

Grayson Daniels is vice president for grain sales and procurement at Riceland Foods, Inc., a farmer-owned cooperative headquartered in Stuttgart, Ark. Prior to joining Riceland in 2002, Grayson was an agricultural policy analyst at Sparks Companies, Inc. in Washington, D.C. Reared on his family's rice and soybean farm near Paragould, Ark., Grayson earned his B.S.A. in agricultural business from Arkansas State University and his M.S. in agricultural economics from Purdue University.

Bert Greenwalt is a professor of agricultural economics at Arkansas State University, director of the A-State Agribusiness Conference, and farms with his family at Hazen, Ark. From 1999 to 2004, he was elected to two terms as a director of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, and later served eight years on the St. Louis Fed Agribusiness Council. Bert currently serves as a director of the Agricultural Council of Arkansas. He earned a B.S.A. in agricultural business and economics from Arkansas State University, an M.S. from the University of Arkansas, and a Ph.D. from Mississippi State University.

Jeff Johnson is vice president and head of U.S. domestic sales at Allenberg Cotton Company in Memphis, Tenn. He has 28 years of experience in originating and merchandising U.S. cotton for the Louis Dreyfus Group. Jeff is past president of the Southern Cotton Shippers Association, past president of the Memphis Cotton Exchange and is currently president of the American Cotton Shippers Association. He currently serves as a merchant delegate and director of the National Cotton Council. Jeff earned his B.S. in marketing management and M.S.A. in agriculture from Arkansas State University.

Chelsie Keys is a senior professional staff member of the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee where she works on livestock, poultry and climate related issues. Prior to joining the committee in 2015, Chelsie served as the director of government affairs for the National Pork Producers Council. She was raised on her family's grain and cow-calf farm in southern Minnesota and earned a bachelor's degree in applied economics from the University of Minnesota.

Michael Klein is vice president of marketing & domestic promotion for USA Rice. A writer and filmmaker by trade, he tells the story of U.S. rice in the USA Rice Daily, on social media, and in the Whole Grain newspaper his team launched in 2014. He is also the co-host of The Rice Stuff podcast launched in 2020.

Mickey Latour is dean of the College of Agriculture at Arkansas State University. Previous positions include dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences at Southern Illinois University and associate dean at Purdue University. A native of Louisiana, Mickey earned his B.S. in animal science at Southeastern Louisiana State University and his M.S. and Ph.D. at Mississippi State University.

Sarah Moran is vice president of international marketing programs for USA Rice. Prior to working with the rice industry, Sarah worked for the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service on capacity- building programs. She previously served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Timor-Leste.

David Newman is an associate professor of animal science at Arkansas State University. Prior to joining A-State in 2016, he was an associate professor and extension specialist at North Dakota State University, where in 2009 he received the Myron and Muriel Johnson Excellence in Extension Award. David is the owner of his family's diversified livestock farm in southern Missouri which focuses on direct marketing specialty meats across the U.S. He currently serves as past-president of the National Pork Board and serves on the United States Meat Export Federation advisory board. David earned his B.S. in animal science with a minor in international agriculture from the University of Missouri and his Ph.D. in meat science from North Dakota State University.

J.B. Penn retired from Deere & Company in April 2020, after serving 11 years as the company's chief economist and three years as senior adviser to the chairman. In those roles, J.B. helped guide the company's policy development and corporate growth initiatives by analyzing global trends in economics, business conditions, and governmental policies. Prior to joining Deere, J.B. served more than five years as undersecretary for farm and foreign agricultural services at the USDA. Before appointment to the USDA, J.B. had a career in the private sector including serving over 12 years as senior vice president and manager of Sparks Companies, Inc.'s Washington office. J.B.'s government experience also includes service as deputy administrator for economics of the USDA's Economics and Statistics Service and as senior staff economist for the President's Council of Economic Advisers. A native of Lynn, Ark., J.B. earned his B.S.A. in agriculture from Arkansas State University, a M.S. in agricultural economics from Louisiana State University, and a Ph.D. in agricultural economics from Purdue University.

James Wiesemeyer has been the agricultural policy and political analyst for Pro Farmer since rejoining the company in 2017. He is also a frequent guest on Farm Journal's AgriTalk radio programs and an editor for The Agriculture Letter. An agricultural journalist since 1978, Jim previously served as the Washington consultant for Informa Economics and Doane's Agricultural Report. Jim received his B.A. in history from Southern Illinois University. He previously spoke at the A-State Agribusiness conference in 2007, 2019 and 2020.