



**Keith Coble** is a Giles Distinguished Professor and Agricultural Economics Department Head at Mississippi State University. Previously, Coble worked at USDA Economic Research Service and studied at Texas A&M and the University of Missouri. Coble focuses on risk management, agricultural policy, insurance, and precision agriculture. Within the profession, Coble served on the Board of Directors of AAEA (2012-2015) and as Associate Editor of the AJAE (2008-2011). He has chaired the FAMPS and Applied Risk Analysis sections of the AAEA. Recently, he served as the Chair of the 'Big Ag Data' committee for C-FARE and serves on the AAEA Government Relations Committee. Coble has testified before Congressional Committees on three occasions and served as a Chief Economist for the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee. Coble has published over 85 scientific research journal articles. Coble also received the Bruce Gardner Award from the USDA Economists Group for policy analysis.

**What are the biggest challenges and opportunities for AAEA?**

The AAEA faces the challenge to remain relevant to our members and to potential new members. As a professional society, we must listen to our membership and build upon the strengths of the AAEA. Our professional meetings and scientific journals must be maintained and made to flourish. The leadership of the association needs to recognize the evolution of our profession and the work of our discipline. In particular, we need to address the needs of students and younger members so that we maintain relevance. We must also address the challenges to funding for our work and data used by our profession. Having mentioned several challenges, I can think of no time in my career where I was more excited about opportunities to address relevant and important issues than right now. We have an opportunity to educate the public, government, and other disciplines on the value of applied economics.

**What actions would you initiate to address the challenges and opportunities described in your response to the previous question?**

I served on the AAEA Board during the 2014 strategic planning exercise. Among the issues addressed were initiatives for mentoring, communicating out about the profession, and improved government relations. These efforts were established and need to continue. In particular, I want to focus on enhancing our communicating out efforts. We need to continue to evaluate adding new AAEA sections as the interests of members change. Sections empower our members and provide leadership growth opportunities within our membership.

Issues I encourage us to address include: (1) our journal publishing contract with Oxford University Press is up for renewal. Board due diligence is imperative for the reputation of our journals and the financial viability of AAEA. (2) Increase the involvement and activities of members and students at our meetings. (4) Follow through with work of AAEA harassment taskforce, and (5) Intensify efforts to attract and meet the needs of a diverse membership.

**At the end of your three-year term, what changes/new initiatives would you have helped create?**

By the end of my term, I would expect our profession will have reviewed the 2014 strategic plan and see if revisions or a new plan is needed. I will judge AAEA performance based on increasing attendance at our annual meetings and the impact factors of our journals. I would consider it a success if the AAEA would have added new applied economics sub-disciplines, if they fill a niche and complement our current membership. Ultimately, we must provide value for our members. I support the AAEA mentoring program and want to see this program grow and be inclusive. I believe our association needs to seek more recognition among the broader economics community and National Academies. Finally, I would expect to have created greater awareness and respect for our profession by government and industry leaders.