



Rodolfo M. Nayga, Jr. is Distinguished Professor and Tyson Endowed Chair at the University of Arkansas. He has been a faculty member at Texas A&M, Rutgers, and Massey University, New Zealand, adjunct professor in Korea University & Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research, NBER research economist, Fulbright Senior Scholar at Wageningen University, Netherlands, and Research Fellow of the Waseda Institute of Advanced Studies, Tokyo. He has published several articles in economics, behavioral science, marketing, and public health journals (H-index 51). He has been an associate editor of *AJAE*, editor of *Choices*, and member of editorial board of several journals including *ARER*, *ERAE*, *JAAE*, *JARE*, *Agribusiness*. He has served on association committees including the AAEA Task Force for the development of AEPP, Chair of AAEA Awards Committee, and the Bruce Gardner Memorial Prize for Applied Policy Analysis. Dr. Nayga was awarded the AAEA *Presidential Recognition Award* in 2007.

What are the biggest challenges and opportunities for AAEA?

In addition to remaining relevant and beneficial to members, I think that the biggest challenge is how we can keep thinking out of the box for more ways to serve our members and always be open and welcoming to all types of people and ideas. We need to continually develop innovative ways to attract more “intellectual immigrants” to our profession. While these are exciting times to be an agricultural/applied economist, we also need to find new ways that would further enhance the ability of our members to interact with people and ideas not just within our field but also from other disciplines. A more current and pressing challenge is the proposed major federal budget cut for applied and agricultural economics research.

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

Our members produce excellent products, be it in research, teaching, or outreach activities. While we do some “marketing” of our products already, we should take initiatives that would further enhance the profile of the products that our members produce. This is even more important now with the proposed federal budget cuts in applied/agricultural economics research. In addition to highlighting the merits of what we do to policymakers, we also need to initiate ways that would further enhance the position of AAEA as a thought leader on a number of important market and policy issues and develop more mechanisms that would allow and encourage our members to share their ideas on matters related to the AAEA. To attract more “intellectual immigrants”, we should perhaps consider developing a Summer Training and Scholarship Program to further increase diversity in the field by preparing talented undergraduates for graduate programs in agricultural and applied economics.

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

In addition to what I’ve mentioned above, my perception is that the number of papers submitted to our journals has significantly increased in the last couple of decades but the supply of our journals has not. It might be the right time to explore the merits and feasibility of offering a new outlet for our profession’s scientific work. An example that comes to mind is a journal that would publish important insights that can be conveyed succinctly, similar perhaps to AEA’s *AER: Insights*. Initiatives that would allow us to share our research with other disciplines through their professional associations should also be considered.

It would also be good to find more ways to encourage the retired members of our profession - especially those who are eager to contribute - to be more involved in AAEA activities since I think they are still very much an untapped resource for our association.