

New Year's greetings and wishes!

With special pleasure, we launch the 21st year of *ACDC News* – and thank you for your interest and encouragement across two decades. We hope you enjoy and find value in the brief samples of research, news, and views you find in it as the collection grows from around the world. As always, we welcome your thoughts and suggestions for this unique resource and service.

“May the work you do be as rewarding as mine has been.”

With those words of encouragement, Fran Bach, publisher/editor of *Agri Digest Online*, announced retirement in a closing December issue. This Pan-Canadian journal of issues and events in agriculture has been published for open online access since 2007, dedicated to agricultural initiative and innovation. Content of it addressed issues in agriculture and other topics of particular interest to a farm readership.

In a closing editorial, Editor Bach emphasized, “Every one of us strengthens the agriculture industry we love.”

You can read the editorial and issue [here](#).

Optimism – and opportunities – for careers in rural community journalism

Research results by David Guth found rural editors and publishers in the High Plains region of the U. S. “a hardy and optimistic lot.” Surveys and interviews revealed strong sentiment that the Web cannot replace what these journalists provide for communities - whether the information is delivered in print or online. At the same time, many lacked confidence about being able to fill vacant positions. His article was published in *Grassroots Editor* (2015).

Colleges and universities may wish to consider new ways to identify and prepare young multi-media journalists who can create satisfying careers as entrepreneurs and leaders in rural community journalism.

You can read the research report [here](#).

“The agriculture beat is a crucial lens on a changing climate”

That title introduced a “survival story” by agricultural policy editor Chris Clayton of DTN/*The Progressive Farmer* in the *Columbia Journalism Review*. Here are a few of the points emphasized:

- “Beyond national disasters...fewer and fewer journalists use their beats to report on the national intersection between climate change, agriculture, and food,”
- “American journalism is just scratching the surface of potential climate hazards to national and global stability.”
- “Reporters dedicated to covering agriculture could provide another critical window to the impacts of climate change in their communities. But agricultural reporters are fewer and farther between.”
- “Reporting on climate change to a rural audience can also be a risk.”

You can read the story [here](#).

An egg may be an egg – unless it’s labeled organic, range-free, or cage-free

A 2017 conference paper we added recently to the ACDC collection examined the effect of food label terms on the price of shell eggs sold at retail. Using weekly IRI scanner data (2010-2016), the researchers found these price premiums for messaging on single labels:

- “Organic” – 48% price premium over conventional eggs
- “Free-range” – 33% price premium
- “Cage-free” – 26% price premium

Other findings featured the price effects when multiple terms were used on carton labels to describe production processes and nutritional benefits.

You can read the research report [here](#).

Challenges to rural journalism in Pakistan

That title introduces a 2015 article we added recently from the *Frontier Women University Journal of Social Sciences*. Researcher Saqib Riaz surveyed a sample of 500 rural journalists working nationwide. Respondents were associated as reporters

or correspondents with television channels, newspapers, magazines, and news agencies working in the big cities of Pakistan. Among the findings:

- 60% were paid no salaries or other financial benefits
- 46% held bachelor's or master's degrees
- 55% had no professional training as rural journalists
- 55% had no use of computer technology
- 57% said their media organizations place top priority on news about activities of political parties and local political leaders

Author Riaz concluded that “the media organizations, relevant governmental organizations and the civil society at large should play their role for strengthening rural journalism in Pakistan.”

You can read the article [here](#).

Communicator events approaching

February 4-5, 2018

Research reporting in the Agricultural Communications Section, Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists (SAAS) conference in Jacksonville, FL.
Information: <https://sites.google.com/a/extension.org/saasagcomm/>

April 8-10, 2018

Annual meeting of the North American Agricultural Journalists (NAAJ) in Washington, D.C. Information: <http://www.naaj.net/meetings>

April 10-13, 2018

“Power Up” Agri-Marketing Conference of the National Agri-Marketing Association (NAMA) in Kansas City, Missouri.
Information: <http://nama.org/amc/home-2018>

April 16-20, 2018

Conference of the Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education (AIAEE) in Merida, Yucatan, Mexico.
Information: <https://www.aiaee.org/>

June 2-5, 2018

“Earn your spurs: communicate in the Lone Star State.” Annual Institute of the Cooperative Communicators Association (CCA) in Fort Worth, Texas.

Information at: <https://www.communicators.coop/2018Institute/>

In the spirit expressed by retiring *Agri Digest* Publisher Fran Bach

We close this first 2018 issue of *ACDC News* with a thought expressed by Daniel Webster. It appeared in *Agricultural Journalism*, a 1926 book by N. A. Crawford and C. E. Rogers (A. D. Knopf, New York).

“Unstable is the future of a country which has lost its taste for agriculture. If there is one lesson of history that is unmistakable, it is that national strength lies very near the soil.”

Best wishes and good searching

Please pass along your reactions, suggestions and ideas. Feel free to invite our help as you search for information. Don't forget to follow us on Twitter [@ACDCUIUC](https://twitter.com/ACDCUIUC). And please suggest (or send) agricultural communications documents we might add to this unique and valuable collection. We welcome them in hard copy (sent to Ag Comm Documentation Center, Room 510, 1101 S. Goodwin Avenue, Urbana, IL 61801) or in electronic format sent to docctr@library.illinois.edu