



# Congress and Publications

2020/03

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## Congress

### **ASSA Call for 2021 Submissions: AAEA Invited Paper Sessions May**

A subcommittee of the AAEA Board will review all proposals. Preference will be given to proposals that

- Cover issues of national and international importance,
- Expand capabilities and tools for economic research,
- Promise a high-quality collection of papers suitable for publication.

Papers in approved Invited Paper sessions are eligible to be peer reviewed for publication in the proceedings issue of the Applied Economic Perspectives and Policies. Authors will be contacted by the AEPP editors with manuscript submission details.

All speakers and discussants must be members of AAEA, although the proposal may request a membership waiver under special circumstances. Participants must register for the ASSA meeting.

Please send proposals by May 28, 2020, in Word or PDF format to Mary Annen at [mannen@aea.org](mailto:mannen@aea.org).

Links : <https://www.aea.org/meetings/aea-at-assa-annual-meeting/aea-at-2021-assa-annual-meeting>

## Publications

### **Evaluating the Relationship between Fruit and Vegetable Growers Use of Plastic Biodegradable Mulches, and Environmental Stewardship and Labor Savings: The Case of Tennessee Fruit and Vegetable Farmers**

The substitution of polyethylene (PE) mulch for plastic biodegradable mulches (BDMs) in fruit and vegetable production has the potential to reduce the negative environmental impacts associated with PE mulch use, and the overall sustainability of fruit and vegetable production. A better understanding of the factors associated with BDM use could inform efforts to promote the use of BDMs. The main goal of this study is to assess the correlation between the use of BDMs among fruit and vegetable farmers, and labor savings and environmental stewardship. Using data from a Tennessee fruit and vegetable farmer survey and probit regressions, this study evaluates the correlation between the use of BDMs, and the labor savings associated with the use of BDMs and farmer environmental stewardship, after controlling for farmer and farmer business characteristics. Results suggest that farm size, farmer environmental

stewardship, and labor savings from BDM use are strongly correlated with the use of BDMs among Tennessee fruit and vegetable growers, specifically among those farmers who are more likely to have previous experience using PE mulch.

Links : <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/12/5/2075>

## **Sustainable Empowerment Initiatives among Rural Women through Microcredit Borrowings in Bangladesh**

Microcredit is an effective instrument that has been recognized to alleviate poverty, especially in developing countries such as Bangladesh. This study seeks to use microcredit as an instrument to bridge the gap between the accessibility of microcredit among poor rural women and sustainable socio-economic development, providing novelty to the concept of “sustainability of empowerment”. In addition, this study employed poor rural women to estimate the empowerment performance of microcredit borrowers compared to non-borrowers in the same socio-economic environment as it relates to microcredit in rural Bangladesh. A regression analysis was used to accomplish these objectives. This study also used propensity score matching techniques to find an easy way to access microcredit. The empirical results not only involve participation in microcredit accessibility but also the particular qualitative attributes of women empowerment. The results also suggest that sustainability is accompanied by affluence among microcredit borrowers, as indicated by women empowerment. The outcome of the empirical analysis shows that there is a significant impact of microcredit on increasing participation in the overall decision-making process, in legal awareness, independent movements, and mobility, as well as enhancing living standards to encourage sustainable women empowerment. This study recommends future investigations for microcredit providers to explore how to build an integrated, holistic approach to women empowerment in Bangladesh.

Links : <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/12/6/2275>

Tags : Gender

## **Gender differences in respiratory health outcomes among farming cohorts around the globe: findings from the AGRICOH consortium**

**Purpose:** Respiratory hazards of farming have been identified for centuries, with little focus on gender differences. We used data from the AGRICOH consortium, a collective of prospective cohorts of agricultural workers, to assess respiratory disease prevalence among adults in 18 cohorts representing over 200,000 farmers, farm workers, and their spouses from six continents.

**Methods:** Cohorts collected data between 1992 and 2016 and ranged in size from 200 to >128,000 individuals; 44% of participants were female. Farming practices varied from subsistence farming to large-scale industrial agriculture. All cohorts provided respiratory outcome information for their cohort based on their study definitions. The majority of outcomes were based on self-report using standard respiratory questionnaires; the greatest variability in assessment methods was associated with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

**Results:** For all three respiratory symptoms (cough, phlegm, and wheeze), the median prevalence in men was higher than in women, with the greatest difference for phlegm (17% vs. 10%). For asthma, women had a higher prevalence (7.8% vs 6.5%), with the difference associated with allergic asthma. The relative

proportion of allergic asthma varied among cohorts. In two of eight cohorts for women and two of seven cohorts for men, allergic asthma was more common than non-allergic asthma.

Conclusions: These findings indicate that respiratory outcomes are common among farmers around the world despite differences in agricultural production. As women in the general population are at higher risk of asthma, exploring gender differences in occupational studies is critical for a deeper understanding of respiratory disease among agricultural workers.

Links : <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1059924X.2020.1713274?af=R>

Tags : Gender

## Contemporary Features of Rural Workers in India with a Focus on Gender and Caste

This paper explores the features of rural labour markets in the contemporary period with a focus on women workers, based on secondary data as well as the PARI archive of village data. The first argument is that the low female work participation ratio, as reported by labour force surveys, may be misleading. The picture is very different with time-use data: the majority of women are found to be engaged in economic activity, with clear seasonal variations. Secondly, women workers are more dependent on agriculture than male workers. The relative absence of non-agricultural employment among women workers is consistent with the argument that women face constraints to physical mobility and prefer employment near their homes. The third notable feature of recent times is that large numbers of women, from different social groups and economic classes, participated in the employment generated under National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. This evidence put together suggests that if appropriate employment opportunities are provided, the number and proportion of women workers will rise. The fourth striking feature of rural labour markets is the persistence of a large gender gap in wages. Lastly, Scheduled Castes typically comprised the major share of the rural female labour force.

Links : <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s41027-020-00210-z>

Tags : Gender

## Childhood Agricultural Injury Prevention Among Organic Farmer Mothers

Purpose: Rates of organic farms and women organic farmers are increasing. Yet, this recent surge brings new and uncertain challenges for injury epidemiology. Since many in the population are of child-bearing age, and child agricultural injury is a significant threat, of particular relevance are the knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs towards risk of child injury.

Methods: A paper, self-administered 11-question questionnaire was distributed at four events geared towards early career women organic farmers. The questionnaire generated data around select demographics, attitudes towards farm safety, and sources of safety knowledge.

Findings & Discussion: The questionnaire had a 45% response rate. As expected, most respondents were new to farming (1-3 years' experience as a primary owner/operator), and 47% reported having a child under the age of 18 years work on the farm. While respondents recognized farms were generally unsafe for children, they reported their own farm as safe for children. Preferred sources of safety knowledge were those with user-generated content from other farmers.

Conclusion: Interventions with new women organic farmers in the Midwest are likely to be most effective by incorporating social media, networking with area farmers' groups, and addressing the optimism bias. Information not explicitly marketed as safety information may gain traction. A more complete analysis of risk, incidence, and prevalence of this niche population is important.

Links : <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1059924X.2020.1744495?af=R>

Tags : Child labour, Health and decent work

## **Conversion to organic farming increases dairy farmers' satisfaction independently of the strategies implemented**

Farmers in Europe are increasingly converting to organic farming. For farmers, the conversion is an uncertain period that requires multiple changes to comply with organic regulations while not obtaining the organic price for products. Previous research findings highlight the multiple risks of converting to organic farming, but they tend to neglect farmers' satisfaction during the conversion. Our objective was to investigate whether and how farmers could improve their satisfaction during the conversion to organic. We surveyed a sample of 19 dairy farms in Aveyron, France, from 2016 (their last year as conventional) to 2018. We (i) characterised the evolution of dairy farmers' satisfaction and the conversion strategies implemented from the last year of conventional farming up to the end of the conversion to organic, and (ii) identified which conversion strategies improved farmers' satisfaction the most. Satisfaction was assessed by farmers regarding economic, agronomic, livestock-related, and social aspects as well as work conditions. We ran principal component analysis (PCA), hierarchical clustering on principal components (HCPC), and partial least squares (PLS) regression to analyse the data. Our results revealed that all farmers were satisfied after conversion to organic. All observed conversion strategies were oriented towards pasture-based grazing systems and a reduction in land use and herd management intensities. It was not possible to relate specific conversion strategies to specific changes in patterns of satisfaction. This study was the first trying to relate the evolution of farmers' satisfaction to changes in farming practices during the conversion to organic. In showing the strong increase in farmers' satisfaction during the conversion to organic, our results strongly contrast with previous studies that highlighted the multiple risks of converting to organic farming. When supporting farmers considering a conversion, local advisers may consider farmers' objectives and their potential satisfaction regarding their achievements beyond the risks of not obtaining the organic price for products immediately.

Links : <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13593-020-00616-5>

Tags : Health and decent work

## **Contribution to a renewed framework to analyse the interactions between family and capitalist agriculture**

We examine whether current assumptions concerning the declining resilience of family farming and the growing influence of capitalist forms of agricultural production are being confirmed in the cocoa sector of Cameroon and the coffee sector of Kenya. This study is based on surveys of 181 family and capitalist farmers. Our results indicate that the capitalist approach is being consolidated on former colonial coffee estates in Kenya and on the cocoa pioneer front in Cameroon. This study also shows that in areas with a long history of family farming, family forms are showing good resilience due to a diversification of activities and sources of income, especially non-agricultural ones, and the patrimonialization of the land. Finally, this study proposes a framework for analysing the interactions between family and capitalist

agriculture and their respective multisectorial strategies. For family farming, these strategies are based on work force mobility, whereas for capitalist agriculture, they are based on financial capital mobility.

Links : <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/joac.12358>

Tags : Family work

## Upgrading products, upgrading work? Interorganizational learning

Upgrading is the latest buzzword in global value chain research, especially with regard to producers in countries of the Global South: participation in global food value chains has the potential of raising smallholder incomes and achieving decent work, very much in the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals. However, we argue that the conceptual foundation of upgrading, which is at the heart of many value chain development initiatives, deserves scrutiny and a stronger focus on interorganizational learning among value chain actors to serve its purpose.

Global value chains have the potential of contributing to the achievement of multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In agriculture, the integration of producers into food value chains has created new employment in farming and processing, although it may also lead to precarious jobs, forced labor, and riskier environments for farmers and workers. The “upgrading” concept put forward by value chain researchers claims to address these concerns as it describes how producers can improve their position within a value chain, and hence, their livelihoods. The paper critically evaluates the conceptual foundation of “upgrading” and its applicability in food value chain governance for the realization of SDGs related to responsible production and decent work. An overlooked element contributing to upgrading and the achievement of these SDGs is learning among value chain actors. The paper argues how the shortcomings in the concept can be addressed in practice through interorganizational learning in multi-stakeholder platforms.

Links : <https://www.ingentaconnect.com/contentone/oekom/gaia/2019/00000028/00000002/art00012#>

Tags : Value chains

## Rural youth employment and agri-food systems in Rwanda

The ICA programme supports countries in adopting and implementing youth-inclusive and employment-centred agri-food system development policies, strategies and programmes.

Aligning with country and regional priorities, the ICA programme proposes an integrated approach structured in five main outputs:

1. inception phase, mappings and priority setting;
2. knowledge generation for evidence-based policy development;
3. awareness raising and capacity development for youth-inclusive and employment-centred planning;
4. policy and programme development, with focus on agroterritorial processes of job creation;
5. boosting FAO tools and internal capacity to promote youth

employment in agri-food systems in a gender-sensitive manner.

Links : <http://www.fao.org/3/ca7717en/CA7717EN.pdf>

Tags : Rural Employment, Youth

## **“If We Don’t Produce, Bring Another:” Work Organization and Tomato Worker Health**

**Objectives:** Specific work processes and management structures that contribute to high rates of occupational illness and injury in agricultural industries are not well described in academic literature. This qualitative study of work organization in the U.S. fresh tomato industry investigates how work processes and management structures impact tomato workers’ occupational health.

**Methods:** After conducting literature review and key informant interviews, semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted with 36 individuals with experience working in the U.S. fresh tomato industry. Interviews and focus groups were audio-recorded, transcribed, coded, and analyzed using a modified grounded theory approach.

**Results:** These data indicate that participants endured income insecurity and hazardous supervisory practices, including wage theft, retaliation, intimidation, and humiliation, that put them at risk of preventable illness and injury. Support from workers’ organizations and health-conscious supervisory practices helped mitigate some of these occupational hazards.

**Conclusion:** Participants’ adverse work experiences may be considered sequelae of workers’ lack of job control and positions of socioeconomic structural vulnerability. Other aspects of tomato work organization, including health-conscious supervisory practices and the involvement of workers’ organizations, indicate that modifying work organization to better safeguard health is possible. Such modifications present compelling opportunities for employers, employees, organizations, community and government leaders, and health care professionals to help create healthier occupational environments for tomato workers.

Links : <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1059924X.2020.1725698?af=R>

Tags : Health and decent work

## **Labour, nature, and exploitation: Social metabolism and inequality in a farming community in mid-19th century Catalonia**

Exploiting the labour of other people has historically been one of the main strategies to tackle the biophysical tension that always exists between the satisfaction of human needs and the labour required to fulfil them. Based on the insights of ecological, feminist, and Marxist economics, we disentangle the exploitation of the labour of women and labouring poor through a novel methodology that integrates energy, material, time, and cash balances. We apply it to the sociometabolic flows between household units endowed with different land and livestock resources in a traditional rural community in Catalonia (Spain) in the mid-19th century. The results show that land and livestock hoarding led to a process of accumulation through dispossession that increased the exploitative relationships through the labour

market, which in turn relied on the patriarchal division of labour between men and women at home. Our estimates of energy labour surplus reveal that male wages represented 88% of the equivalent consumption basket that would have been obtained by carrying out the same amount of labour on land of one's own. However, in the case of female wages, the percentage was 54%. This shows that wage labour incorporated a significant amount of unpaid domestic family labour.

Links : <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/joac.12359>

Tags : Gender, Family work

## **Wage Rate: Is this Return to Education or Return to Physical Capability? Evidence from Rural India**

This paper estimates the wage function for daily labor market participants in Semi-Arid Tropics of rural India within a traditional agrarian framework. Village level data on 18 villages for 2009-2010 and 2012-2013 have been used for this study. Three-years balanced panel estimation has also been conducted to test the time invariance of the findings from the cross-sectional study. A modified Mincerian earning equation is estimated for different types of workers—regressing upon a set of human capital measures, socioeconomic factors and, demand influences after correcting for potential sample selection bias. The study finds differential impacts of education and physical ability to determine wages for male and female workers. It reveals the greater importance of education in explaining wages of male laborers while for females, nutritional status playing a significant role than education in wage determination process. Among the other factors, drought works as a major exogenous shock and hence impacts wages badly. Working in the non-farm sector has a significant impact on wages. Also, the wage-participation relationship has found more operative in the lower section of the society.

Links : <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s41027-020-00205-w>

Tags : Rural Employment