Rosson’s Roundup

It’s often interesting how similar ideas come together from very different perspectives. On Tuesday I, along with other department heads from Texas A&M AgriLife and Engineering, met at the Texas A&M Foundation to participate in a ½ day workshop. The focus of this event was to help us be more effective fund raisers. There are numerous concepts related to this, but the key thing that was apparent to me was the need to develop and deliver more effective communications materials to our potential donors. Our messages need to be clear, concise, simple, emotive and then, WOW! What do I mean by WOW? That’s the “hook” that compels prospective donors, constituents or other audiences to care enough about our message to keep reading and not glance over the key points, or worse yet, toss the message into the trash.

Thursday, Flynn Adcock and I attended a beef packing technology research group workshop at the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA) HQ in Washington, DC. Sonny Ramaswamy was our lead-off speaker. His message to us: Be more effective communicators! He stressed the importance of developing a clear, straightforward message, devoid of disciplinary jargon, and to the point. Agriculture and the land-grant system is well equipped to do this, but we often leave this last crucial step in our educational process undone. His challenge to us as researchers, extension specialists and administrators was to be better communicators so we can more effective get our message to the public and ultimately influence adoption of the great science we develop. We were also told to be looking for new NIFA projects focusing on antimicrobial reduction and research, education and extension programs targeting small farms and businesses trying to comply with the Food Safety Modernization Act. These are both under the overall Food Safety Program.

Have a great weekend! Aggie baseball is at Olsen Field hosting Alabama on Friday-Sunday, while the Aggie softball team is on the road for a Saturday-Monday series at Missouri.
Position Announcements

Assistant Professor of Agricultural and Resource Economics (12-month tenure-track, 75% Extension, 25% Research). Agricultural and Resource Economics, Institute of Agriculture, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN. Position available beginning July 1, 2016. Screening of applicant credentials will begin May 15, 2016. Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics, Economics, Business, or a closely related field is required. Attach the following electronic documents and e-mail them to dhughe17@utk.edu: • Curriculum vita; • Letter detailing your interest in the position; • Official transcript(s); • Arrange for three letters of reference to be e-mailed to dhughe17@utk.edu or mailed directly to: Dr. David W. Hughes, Search Committee Chair, Department of Agricultural & Resource Economics, 2621 Morgan Circle, 227B Morgan Hall, The University of Tennessee Knoxville, TN 37996-4518. Phone: (865) 974-7463, Fax: (865) 974-9492, TTY/TTY/TTD: (865) 974-7245. Website: http://economics.ag.utk.edu/