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Subcontract Final Report
Submitted to
Arizona State University

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ABSTRACT
Introduction

The work performed by Utah State University under this subcontract resulted in student exchanges between the U. S. and the E. U. and in scholarly research being completed. It has also resulted in an ongoing exchange program for graduate students between Utah State University and the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester, England. Dr. Eric Thor at Arizona State University provided leadership to this effort in developing the initial proposal, supervising the activities of the project, and in setting up exchange agreements between the American universities and the European universities involved in the project. Dr. DeeVon Bailey acted as the liaison for the project in the Department of Economics at Utah State University. Dr. Jonathan Turner, Dean of Business at the Royal Agricultural College acted as the lead European representative for the project.

The initial phases of the project included meetings between representatives from the European and American universities participating in the project. These meetings resulted in the development of a coordinated curriculum leading to an MBA in International Food and Agribusiness Management to be awarded by the Royal Agricultural College. The curriculum is a "lock-step" program requiring both American and European students pursuing the degree to begin the program with classes fall semester in the U.S. at either Arizona State University or Utah State University and then at the Royal Agricultural College during spring semester.

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Students are then required to complete a team project for a real world agribusiness firm (usually in Europe) that takes 4-6 weeks to complete. Finally, students are required to complete a thesis project on an agribusiness issue. The universities collaborating on the project and the requirements and curriculum for the degree may be viewed at http://royagcol.ac.uk/postgrad_courses/course_sheets/MbaInternational.htm.

The project must be considered a success in several respects. First, it has resulted in a program that has survived and continued to grow after initial funding was completed. Second, students completing the program have been employed in well-paid jobs in agribusiness firms. Third, the project has resulted in scholarly research that has been published in refereed journals. Finally, the research conducted by students in the project has also led to additional avenues of research that is extending the boundaries of knowledge, especially in the area of food quality and traceability.

Academic Success

Students that have participated, or will be participating, in the project at USU together with the semester they began the program are the following:

Fall 1999

David Cornualt  France
Sterling Liddell  USA
Joerg Wilfert  Germany

Fall 2000

William Houstoun  UK
Peter Koegler  Austria
Luigi Mercuriali  Italy/Peru
Giso Eben von Racknitz  Germany
The program has become a viable and ongoing program at USU. We have a growing number of American students wishing to get into the program. This has allowed us to become very selective regarding student credentials and the incoming class of 2003 will have the best academic records yet of those students that have been involved in the program. This does not mean that past students from USU have not been well qualified. Both Sterling Liddell and Bryan J. Christensen were selected by the RAC as the top students in their respective classes.

Success of USU Students Completing the Degree

Two American students from USU have fully completed the program and have received their degrees from the RAC. These students are Sterling Liddell and Bryan J. Christensen. Sterling Liddell is working as an analyst at Pioneer Hybrid, the world’s largest corn seed company, in Des Moines, Iowa. Mr. Liddell’s starting salary was $70,000. Bryan Christensen is
also working as an analyst for Murray Investment Company in Zaneville, Ohio. His starting salary was $72,000. Four other USU students are in the process of completing their degrees at this time.

**Scholarly Research Completed at USU Under the Program**

Research completed at USU related to the project includes theses, manuscripts, presentations, and journal articles. The citations for the research are the following:


Bailey, Dee Von, and Dermot Hayes. The Evolution of Identity Preservation in Red Meat Markets. In Managing for Today’s Cattle Market and Beyond, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY. Also available electronically at ag.arizona.edu/arec/wemc/TodaysCattlePub.html, March 2002.


Additional Avenues Opened by the Program

Research activities completed by students in the program have resulted in new opportunities for both students and faculty researchers. The primary examples of this are research related to food traceability and quality assurance. To date, over $400,000 in research monies have been obtained by faculty in the Department of Economics at USU to conduct research and extension activities in these areas. The Center for Food Quality, Certification, Transparency, and Traceability has also been established in the Department of Economics. It is
unlikely these activities would have occurred without the involvement of the Department in this program.

Conclusions

By almost any measure, the project at USU should be considered a success. It has resulted in increased educational and professional opportunities for students and faculty and has also developed new and important research and extension activities in the area of food traceability and quality assurance. The program continues to grow, especially at USU, and students completing the program have become employed in good jobs in important agribusiness firms. We hope to be able to continue to expand the program and also to offer expanding opportunities to students. One potential area for expansion might be in the area of food safety and bio-security. We appreciate the opportunity to work with Arizona State University on this project and hope that we can develop new projects that will continue to expand our efforts.