

Actiongram

*Newsletter of the Livestock Publications Council,
an international organization serving the
dynamic livestock communications industry.*

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**"I maintained my edge by
always being a student;
you will always have
something new to learn."**

Jackie Joyner-Kersey



*Scarlett Hagins
2016-17 LPC President*

As agricultural communicators, we never stop learning. We must continually educate ourselves on issues affecting the agriculture industry, new technology in food production and the latest communication tools available to help share this information with farmers, ranchers and consumers. All the while, honing our own skills as writers, designers, photographers, salesmen and women, etc.

This is precisely why the number one core strategy from the LPC strategic plan completed last fall addresses the importance of continuing education. Professional development has always been one of the main priorities for this organization. Your LPC Board of Directors believes that expanding knowledge and excitement in one's job helps maintain commitment and dedication to the profession. Through regional workshops, the Ag Media Summit (AMS) and, most recently, Coffee and Collaboration, LPC strives to help members sharpen their writing and designing skills, learn new sales techniques, be abreast of the latest social media platforms, capture award-winning photos and more. The list could go on forever!

We also recognize, however, that these types of professional development opportunities come at a cost. With that in mind, LPC offers up to three stipends of up to \$1,000 each to members who are looking to continue their education. The money

can be put toward professional development classes, seminars or workshops, including, but certainly not limited to, AMS and the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists Congress.

The stipend application can be found on the LPC website under the "Awards" tab. It consists of a one-page application, a 250- to 300-word essay and an estimated budget. The essay is to highlight why you should receive this stipend, your professional goals and how you will use this award for professional development. If awarded a stipend, you will have the opportunity to write a short article for the LPC *Actiongram* that provides an overview of the workshop, thus benefiting other members by sharing what you learned.

All parts of the application must be postmarked or received electronically by December 15, 2016. Stipend recipients will be contacted by January 15, 2017. Funds must be used within a year of when it was awarded.

I hope you will take advantage of this member benefit. It will not only help you personally and professional, but also the agricultural communications profession as a whole. If we never stop learning, we never become complacent.

Scarlett

Ag Media Summit: The Best Yet

by Sarah Hill, winner of one of LPC's stipends for 2016

Wow! This year's Ag Media Summit exceeded my expectations in many ways—the workshops, high quality contest entries and most importantly—the connections with other ag communicators.

It was an honor to receive a stipend from the Livestock Publications Council to attend this year's Ag Media Summit. I did my best to maximize the opportunity and will continue giving back to the LPC in return.

What did I learn this year? Please allow me to share with you.

The AMS Farm to Fork tour was an excellent showcase of Missouri agriculture. Some highlights I learned on the tour:

- Purina Farms has a new unit focused on raising deer, and all deer horns are made from protein.
- Vegetable production is still alive and well in Missouri and consumers like the farmer's market and local foods/products approach to marketing.
- Baby pigs are super cute and very noisy! (As a cattle girl, I haven't been around baby pigs very much.)
- Robotic milkers are an effective solution for dairy producers to gain more time, flexibility and work-life balance. They also solve labor issues and provide opportunities for young people to come back to work on the family farm.
- Making excellent wine isn't just about the type of grapes used; it also matters how they're fermented, what ingredients are used in the fermentation process in addition to grapes and how long fermentation lasts.

Another great opportunity was introducing the Forrest Bassford Travel Award winners to other professionals. If you ever get the chance to meet these students, please take the time to get to know them. Who knows—you may end up hiring one of them someday! If nothing



else, it's always good to make more connections in our small niche of the ag industry with up and coming leaders. These students are outstanding and worth knowing—you'll continue seeing their names in our industry.

And of course, who could forget the workshops? From learning photo tips and shooting basic video to the relationship between advertising and editorial and editing your own work, there was truly something for everyone. I personally came away with a lot of things to think about and incorporate into work for my clients.

Last but not least, the people are what make the LPC and AMS so special. As always, it was a great time catching up with long-time friends and former colleagues while making new acquaintances as well.

Again, a huge thank you to the LPC for your investment in me as a professional. It was an extremely worthwhile experience, and I look forward to serving my colleagues in the LPC in the future.

Please join us for a
Reception and Luncheon
 at the
LPC Heritage Center Hall of Honor
Oct. 27, 2016 • 11 a.m.
American Royal Headquarters, Kansas City
 (located above the AR administrative offices)

A brief ceremony, including the hanging of their plaques, will be followed by a light lunch.

Honoring



2016 Hall of Fame inductee:

Joe Rogbal



2016 Headliner honoree:

Dr. Larry Corah

Strengthen Stories with the Right Statistics

By Barb Baylor Anderson

Presentation by Virginia Harris, Make Statistics Sizzle

Statistics can validate information presented in agricultural stories. Done well, they can also paint a picture for readers to provide an even deeper level of understanding.

“When it comes to storytelling, numbers need context. Do comparisons or create visualizations for readers,” says Virginia “Ginger” Harris, demographer with USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). “We have more than 33 million records you can search.”⁷²

For example, rather than just report Missouri crop progress from weekly reports, get the data available each Monday afternoon, and make a map of it from NASS’ Quick Stats function. Want to show how milk production has changed over time? Take the annual data from Quick Stats and make a graph, or highlight certain states to show where production growth has occurred.

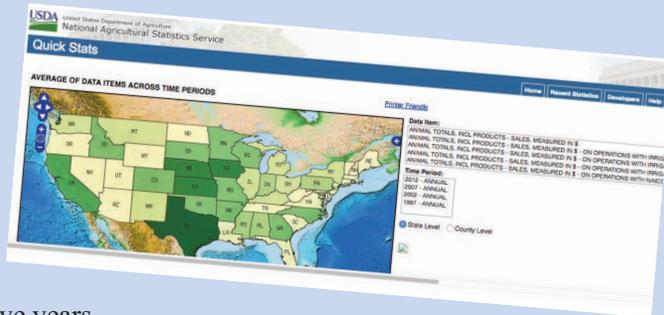
Harris says NASS releases 400-500 reports every year, and the ag census every five years.

Data is collected directly from farmers for the reports, and their identities are always protected. In fact, NASS may not report some data if it would give away the farmer who provided it.

“We contact every farmer in the country for the census. It is the basis for the whole program,” she says “Information includes farm counts, number of farmers, commodities, economic data and land use and demographics for farmers nationwide. Since the data are only collected every five years, information may not be as current as that coming from more frequent reports.”

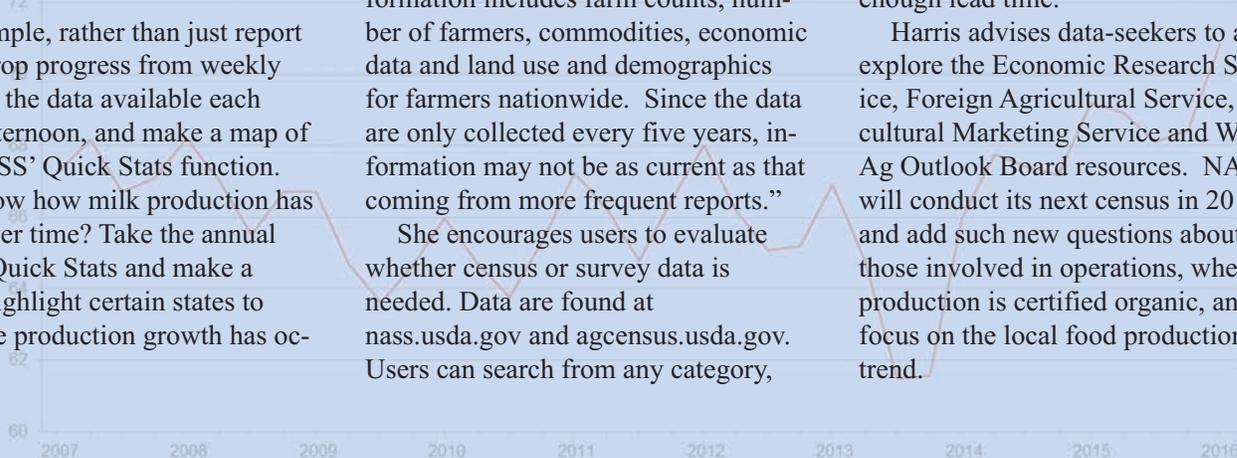
She encourages users to evaluate whether census or survey data is needed. Data are found at nass.usda.gov and agcensus.usda.gov. Users can search from any category,

CONTINUING SERIES: In the next few Actiongrams we will feature stories written from sessions held at the Ag Media Summit. They will highlight the speaker presentations and we hope you enjoy!



save queries and even send data to other people. The key to success is to filter down data in the search function as soon as possible. After data is identified, users can review highlights, make charts or maps, download and even request special tabulations with enough lead time.

Harris advises data-seekers to also explore the Economic Research Service, Foreign Agricultural Service, Agricultural Marketing Service and World Ag Outlook Board resources. NASS will conduct its next census in 2017, and add such new questions about those involved in operations, whether production is certified organic, and focus on the local food production trend.



“Billing. . . what do you do when clients don't pay?”

Wed., Oct. 19 from 10-10:45 a.m.



KENT JAECKE

Owner

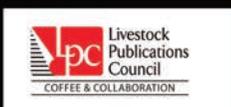
Focus Marketing Group



LEANNE PETERS

Director of Communications

Mississippi Cattlemen's Association



Join the chat at <https://meet.illinois.edu/jshike/9GBHB2PB>.
Or call 888-983-3631, Conference ID: 22052472.



Professional Development Stipend Program

LPC will offer up to 3 stipends of up to \$1,000 each to LPC members to help cover expenses to a professional development class, seminar or workshop, which includes Ag Media Summit or IFAJ congress.

The LPC board of directors believes that expanding knowledge and excitement in one's profession will keep dedication and commitment to that job.

Stipend criteria:

- Open to any LPC member.
- Fill out application.
- Submit the information on the conference you wish to attend.
- Provide an estimated budget for your expenses to the event.
- In 250-350 words describe why you should receive this stipend, your professional goals and how you will use this award for professional development.
- Write a short piece for the LPC Actiongram after you have attended the professional development event, telling how you used the stipend and how it will help you become a better ag communications professional.
- The stipend funds should be used within a year of when it is awarded. If it is not used because of an emergency, please contact the LPC executive director.

All parts of the application must be postmarked or received electronically by December 15, 2016. Stipend recipients will be contacted in January 2017.

The stipend recipients will be selected by a group of three judges.

Send application to:

Diane Johnson, Livestock Publications Council, 200 West Exchange Ave., Fort Worth, TX 76164
diane@livestockpublications.com 817-336-1130 for questions

LPC Personal Development Stipend Application Form

THE FOLLOWING IS THE INFORMATION REQUIRED. FEEL FREE TO CREATE YOUR OWN APPLICATION

Name:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

Current employer (Company name):

Your job title at work:

Number of years LPC member:

Conference you plan to attend:

LPC involvement (current and past committees, activities, elected office, etc.):

Have you ever received this stipend in prior years? ___yes ___no If yes, what year(s)? _____

Please furnish a 250- to 350-word essay on why you should receive this stipend, your professional goals and how you will use this award for professional development.