

To Interested parties
From Bruce McCarl
RE Journal rankings
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During the promotion process we often get some sort of inquiry either from other faculty, or the college administration regarding the quality of outlets currently being used by an individual. It is also common to field inquiries as to: Which journal should a piece be sent to? and What is the relative quality of some alternative journals?

To address this, several years ago, we began ranking journals in terms of their quality as an outlet for faculty working in TAMU AGECE. At long last that project bore fruit..

The web page <https://agecon2.tamu.edu/people/faculty/mccarl-bruce/Journalrank/Journalranking.html> has this document which is an [explanation of the rankings](#) and a [spreadsheet that has the journal ratings](#). Several things can be said about these ratings.

- First, the ratings are set up with the American Journal of Agricultural Economics as a 1 and other journals rated relative to AJAE. We do have a classification for journals that are "better than AJAE" which are given a zero in the spreadsheet. In that category that are a number of journals like the American Economic Review, Science and Nature that get a 0 (See column B in spreadsheet). In the data entry (column B) those get a 0 and AJAE gets a 1.
- Second, the database contains hundreds of journals and not all journals have been classified. The ones that have not been classified have a 10 in the rating scheme. As of today none of the unclassified variables at this point have been used by any paper in our departmental database.
- Third, philosophically we decided to not wholly base the journal rankings strictly on the "impact factors" as developed in a number of sources. Rather we believe the journal ranking should be established not for the general scientific community but rather for someone working in an Agricultural Economics Department. As such publishing in a well regarded soil science journal may be inferior to publishing in a lesser regarded economics journal. For a journal to be in the higher ranks generally it must be one that regularly publishes economically oriented pieces and has an economics or econometric editor as opposed to one that's run entirely in other disciplines with low economic/econometric content.
- Fourth, for now the rankings are by major class and rank from zero to 4 or 5. The 0 means superlative or wow, 1 means excellent, the 2 very good, the 3 good, 4 fair and 5 the rest.

- Fifth, In making a composite ranking for an agricultural economist, we optionally add a norming factor to the area ratings. By major class the norming factors are

Ag Econ	0
Econ	0
Resource Econ	0
Regional Econ	0
Agri Business	0
Health Econ	0
International Econ	1
Quantitative	0
Agriculture	2
Business	1
Health	1
International	2
Law	1
Marketing	1
Resources	1
Science	2
Other	2

- In making the composite for AGECEC faculty the ranking by subject (excepting the wow – 0 ratings) will optionally have the norming factor above added. Thus, an agricultural journal ranked 1 will get a 2 added to it so it compares to level 3 agricultural economics journals as an outlet for AGECEC faculty. In developing the journal ranking for a set of paper we make tables with and without the norming factor.
- Sixth, regarding the better than AJAE outlets these fall into one of two classes.
 - They can be really good journals in the economics or business economics field that regularly publish economics pieces such as the American Economic Review, and Econometrica.
 - They can simply be wow factor journals that are quite exclusive and have really high impact factors such as: a) Science, b) Nature; c) Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, and d) The New England Journal of Medicine or outlets of that nature. This pretty much means a journal has a very high impact factor quantitatively probably better than 10.
- Seventh, the way the AGECEC ratings are set up AJAE is a 1, JARE and JAAE are a 2 and most of the other regional journals a 3 and the ratings proceed down from there.
- Eighth, we assign 2 ratings for AJAE. One for the submitted paper issues and the other for the conference paper issue where the conference paper issue will be a 2.
- Ninth, because TAMU AGECEC encompasses many diverse fields the journals are also classified into major categories like resource econ, resources, marketing, general agriculture, management and other rankings as listed in the spreadsheet. The idea here is that we do not have to be completely quantitative and that we could say that the papers arising from a person are published in top rated journals in their segment of the field.
- Tenth, the rankings are currently specified but suggestions can be made for revisions. These

suggestions will be considered but in the case of frequently used, major journals the person suggesting the change has to present a justification.

- Eleventh, one person suggested that an appeal process was needed and here is one
 - Rankings, major or minor class can be appealed
 - An individual may make an appeal sending in a stated written reason and in doing so this needs the support of at least one other person in the professional arena
 - Appeals are taken to the Leader of Research
 - Upon receipt that person considers the appeal and then either grants it or sets up an ad hoc group to consider who decides whether to grant or not
 - Further appeals can be taken to the department head