

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Anyone who introduces a new annual series in the year 2000 owes the world an explanation. There is no shortage of research annuals or journals. Likewise, there is no shortage of other outlets for the output of one's research. So, what is the need for *Advances in Agricultural Economic History (AAEH)*?

While it is clear there are a number of journals in the academic world, it is not clear that every niche is filled. The standard disciplinary lines are becoming increasingly blurred as researchers in "traditional" disciplines delve further and further into neighboring ones. Take economics as an example. Increasingly, economists borrow, amend, and refine the tools of political scientists, sociologists, historians, and statisticians to name just few. Economics is better for it, but invariably it becomes more and more of a hybrid.

The field of economic history has always been a blend of economics and history. Yet, even under the overarching tent of economic history, a multitude of subdisciplines vie for attention at center ring. These subdisciplines include monetary and financial history, labor history, international trade history, agricultural history, among many others. The main goal of *AAEH* is to provide the center stage for one of these hybrid fields: agricultural economic history.

This is not to say that good and important agricultural economic history is not (or could not be) published in the standard economics, economic history, agricultural, or agricultural history journals. Much of it is. However, what *AAEH* will provide is a consistent venue for the growing research output of this dynamic field.

AAEH seeks to publish on a wide range of topics broadly categorized as agricultural economic history. I welcome manuscripts covering any period or geographic location. Research involving new and innovative data sets, methodology, and/or analysis will be particularly welcome. I also have the luxury of not having page limits on manuscripts so *AAEH* is a good outlet for long papers or those with long or detailed data appendices.

All submissions will be peer reviewed as with any standard academic journal. The series will publish one volume per year, for now, with the possibility of expanding in the future. Periodically we will publish special volumes of *AAEH*. These special volumes may focus on particular themes of agricultural economic history, particular geographic locations, or may be the proceedings of important conferences focusing on topics of interest to agricultural economic history broadly defined.

The papers in this first volume exemplify the diversity and the excellence of the state of the field. Included in this volume are scholars who have long been leaders in the field and also a group of newer, younger scholars who are making an important mark.

The long-term success of *Advances in Agricultural Economic History* will depend on the wider community of economists and historians of agriculture and on the continued vitality of the subject itself. I would like to take this opportunity to invite those interested in the advancement of agricultural economic history to take part in this venture by submitting your work and by encouraging your libraries to subscribe. I hope you enjoy this volume and those to come.

Kyle D. Kauffman
Wellesley, Massachusetts