AGRONECON 496: TRAVEL COURSE
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, BUSINESS, AND TRADE IN SPAIN

GUIDELINES FOR FACTSHEETS

Objective:
The objective of the factsheets is to help students understand the country visited. The pre-trip factsheet discusses conditions in Spain and the post-trip factsheet makes comparisons between the visited country and the U.S. The factsheets should be well organized and include summary data and limited to one side of one page.

Topic:
The factsheets should focus on either:
1. A specific aspect (e.g., commercialization, production) of an agricultural commodity, good, or resource of relevance to both the U.S. and Spain, or
2. A policy, institution or program that affects agricultural business and trade in the U.S. and Spain.

Examples of topics include the following:
- A commodity market (e.g., corn, wheat, canola, beef, sheep, oranges, milk, sugar, etc.)
- Agricultural policies, agricultural credit, and/or agricultural research in the U.S and Spain.
- Impact of trade agreements on the U.S. and Spain.
- Comparison of the evolution of agriculture in the U.S. and Spain.
- Soils, climate, and/or production systems.

The list above is not exclusive; students are encouraged to investigate other topics relevant to the course objectives. Each student must e-mail instructors by no later than 1/22/13 his/her proposed topic. Topics will be assigned on a first-come basis. Instructors will maintain a webpage (http://www.agron.iastate.edu/~loynachan/PreStuPres13.htm) with tentatively approved topics (please consult this page before submitting your topic to ensure the topic has not already been taken). To be acceptable, the proposed topics should be sufficiently descriptive of the intended content of the factsheets (e.g., “Commercialization of Corn” is acceptable, but “Corn” is not). Topics will be finalized at the second class meeting (1/23/13).

Overview:
The factsheets should summarize the key information to understand the topic. For example, commodity market factsheets should include at a minimum the following basic information:
- Production (e.g., trends in production over the last 5-10 years) and consumption (e.g., animal feed, human consumption, exports, industrial use, etc.)
- Commercialization (e.g., main institutions and issues regarding the marketing channel for the commodity)
- Trade (e.g., destination of exports and origin of imports)
- Effects of free trade agreements, tariffs and quotas, subsidies, etc. on production and trade

In the case of policy, institution or program factsheets, at a minimum the following basic information should be reported:
- Background information (e.g., history and origins)
- Purpose and objectives (e.g., what problems was it created to address?)
- How is it supposed to function?
- What are the main positive and negative economic effects?
- What are the key issues or challenges in the future for it?
- How does it affect trade, production, and consumption?

Pre- and Post-Trip Factsheets:
The pre-trip factsheet will focus on the topic as it pertains to Spain, whereas the post-trip factsheet will look at the topic from a U.S.-Spain comparative perspective (compare and contrast). The post-trip factsheet may also include new findings on the topic learned from the trip.

Oral Presentations:
Each student will present brief oral summaries of both the pre- and post-factsheets. Presentations should last 6 to 7 minutes, with an additional 1 to 2 minutes allocated for questions and answers.