Newsletter Editorial: Below is a slightly revised/corrected story that appeared in The Hartford Courant. Hajim Al Hassani, the Minister of Industry and Minerals in Iraq, was the first Ph.D. student to graduate from the Food Marketing Policy Center. His commitment to public policy and the economic reconstruction of Iraq combines great personal courage with professional training. We fear for his safety but take heart in knowing that he firmly believes that this is the way forward for his country.

UConn Grad In Iraqi Cabinet Received Doctorate In Agricultural Economics

By GRACE E. MERRITT
Courant Staff Writer

June 4, 2004

It's been 14 years since Hajim al-Hassani played soccer with friends at the University of Connecticut campus, led a Muslim student organization there and took turns leading prayers at services.

The contemplative life of a graduate student in Storrs must be a startling contrast to the danger and uncertainty of his new job as a cabinet member in the new Iraqi government.

On Tuesday, as bombs exploded outside, Hassani was appointed Iraq's new minister of industry and minerals in Baghdad, one of 31 ministers in the new government.

Only two weeks ago, Hassani, a member of Iraq's governing council, came face to face with the dangers of the job when Abdul Zahra Othman, the governing council's president, was killed in a suicide bombing.
According to news reports, minutes before the bombing Hassani had driven through the spot where the bombing occurred, at the entrance to the Green Zone, the secure compound that houses administrative offices in Baghdad.

Hassani earned a doctorate in agriculture and resource economics at UConn in 1990, and spent eight years on campus, said his faculty adviser, Ronald Cotterill, professor of agricultural and resource economics.

After leaving Storrs, Hassani went to Los Angeles, where he ran a successful investment management company, Cotterill said.

Cotterill said that even as a student, Hassani possessed the skills he will undoubtedly need as a new cabinet member in an evolving government and dangerous climate.

"He is a person with a great deal of persistence in the face of adversity," Cotterill said. "He is a hard worker and a very level-headed person."

Several friends and professors remembered Hassani as an imposing man with a reddish beard. They described him as open, friendly, energetic and not afraid to speak his mind.

"If he doesn't like something, he will pin it on your face," said Mehdi Anwar, a professor of electrical and computer engineering who was a good friend of Hassani's. "He would always express his own opinions. It doesn't matter if you like it or not. He always said it with a very smiling face so you will never be offended."

A moderate Sunni, Hassani is a deeply religious man, said Reda Ammar, professor and department head of computer science and engineering. While at UConn, Hassani served as president of the Muslim Student Association and occasionally led prayer services, he said.

Hassani went by the name Hachim Mehdi Salih while at UConn and trained in industrial organization analysis, an education that should prepare him well for his new job as commerce minister, Cotterill said.

Before coming to UConn, Hassani earned a master's degree at the University of Nebraska in 1982 and a bachelor's degree at the University of Mosul in 1977.

Ammar said that Hassani came to the United States because he refused to fight in the Iraq-Iran war and had to leave the country.
Cooperating Research Personnel at Other Universities

Adam David Rennhoff, Ph.D. candidate from the University of Virginia, (Dept. of Economics).

Tirtha Dhar, Assistant Professor (Marketing), Sauder School of Business, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada.

Avi Goldfarb, Assistant Professor (Marketing), University of Toronto School of Business, Canada.

Christian Rojas, Ph.D. student, Dept. of Economics/Agricultural Economics, Virginia Tech.

Bart Bronnenberg, Associate Professor of Marketing, The Anderson School at UCLA.

Personnel Changes

Donghun Kim is moving to the International Development Program at the International University of Japan in Niigata, Japan at the end of June.

Ville Aalto-Setälä is returning to his government post at the National Consumer Research Center in Helsinki, Finland at the end of June.

Food Marketing Policy Center Graduate Assistantships Available, Fall 2004

The Food Marketing Policy Center in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics has graduate assistantships available at the Ph.D. level. Students with interest in organization of food industries and one or more of the following: demand and price transmission analysis, comparative analysis of U.S. and European foods systems, cooperatives, industrial organization economics, or antitrust policy are encouraged to apply. Support will be for four years. For further information, please contact Ronald W. Cotterill, Director, Food Marketing Policy Center, Storrs, CT 06269-4021. Tel. (860) 486-2742, Fax (860) 486-2461, or Email: Ronald.Cotterill@uconn.edu.

AGRIBUSINESS: An International Journal update by R. W. Cotterill, Editor

Agribusiness, and more than a dozen other economic journals, are now available on line to subscribers at (www.interscience.wiley.com). The journal is also indexed in Econlit.

Instructions for manuscript submissions are available by email: (FMPC@UCONN.EDU). Manuscripts are submitted electronically to the same address. Articles appearing in Issues No. 1 and 2, 2004 are as follows:

Agribusiness 20(1) Winter 2004

"Do U.S. Marketing Orders Have Much Market Power? An Examination of the Almond board of California” by John M. Crespi and Adriana Chacón-Cascante.

“Reasons for High Food Prices in Small Market Areas: The Case of the Åland Islands” Ville Aalto-Setälä, Jouko Kinnunen, and Katri Koistinen.

“Profitability Adjustment Patterns in International Food and Consumer Products Industries” by Yvonne J. Acheampong, James E. Epperson, Timothy A. Park, and Lewell F. Gunter.

“Profitability Differences Between MNE Subsidiaries and Domestic Firms: The Case of the Food Industry in Greece” by George Anastassopoulos.

“Managing International Trade of Food Products: A Survey of German and Australian Companies” by Christian Fischer.

“Attitudes Towards the Use of GMOs in Food Production and Their Impact on Buying Intention: The Role of Positive Sensory Experience” by Klaus G. Grunert, Tino Bech-Larsen, Liisa Lähteenmäki, Øydis Ueland, and Annika Åström.


Book Review by Anwar Naseem
Travels in the Genetically Modified Zone, by Mark L. Winston.

Agribusiness 20(2) Spring 2004

“Primary Agricultural Product Demand in Post-Communist Russia” by Rimma Shiptsova, H.L. Goodwin, Jr., and Rodney Holcomb.

“The Economic Efficiency of Irish Dairy Marketing Co-Operatives” by G.E. Boyle.

“Consumer Response to Functional Foods Produced by Conventional, Organic, or Genetic Manipulation” by Bruno Larue, Gale E. West, Carole Gendron, and Remy Lambert.


“The Determinants of Direct Mail Coupon Usage Revisited: Evidence From Count Panel Data Models” by Song Zan Chiou-Wei.


Book Review by P. Lynn Kennedy

Activity Report

Ronald W. Cotterill
(Ag. Econ., University of Connecticut)


Ron presented a seminar titled, “Estimating a Brand-Level Demand System for American Cheese Products to Evaluate Unilateral and Coordinated Market Power Strategies” at the Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Reading, UK, June 7, 2004.


Ron contributed to a panel discussion with another leading international expert and the former Director General of the Office of Fair Trading (the UK FTC) at the Lancaster University Workshop on Retail Competition and Consumer Choice on June 8, 2004, London, UK.

Ron presented a seminar titled, “The Theory of Price Collars: The Linking of Prices in a Market Channel to Redress the Exercise of Market Power” at the Department of Marketing, Sauder School of Business, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada on March 11, 2004 and at the University of Connecticut Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics on March 24, 2004.

Ron accompanied Connecticut Representative George Wilber and presented a seminar on Northeast Milk Pricing at the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets in Albany, New York, March 5, 2004.

Ron attended and spoke at a meeting in Litchfield County on state level milk price regulation, March 4, 2004.

Ron presented a seminar titled, “Food Retail Margins, Facts, Trends, Regulations” at Laval University, Quebec City, Canada on January 15-17, 2004.

Ville Aalto-Setälä
(Visiting Scholar, National Consumer Research Centre, Helsinki, Finland)

Ville continues to work with Emilio Pagoulatos on a project titled, “The Sources of Price Dispersion in the European Food Market.” They submitted the manuscript for the review process at the Journal of Industry, Competition and Trade.

Another of Ville’s submitted papers considers consumer’s price knowledge of food products. The project utilizes a unique data set of consumer price estimates and actual market prices during the Euro changeover. This is joint work with Anu Raijas (University of Helsinki).

Ville’s paper, “How Do Markets Behave–Adjustment of Attractive Prices in the Euro Changeover” was accepted to the Seminar of EIRASS Conference to be held in Prague at this summer.

Julie Caswell
(Ag. Econ. University of Massachusetts)

Julie Caswell was an instructor in a 1-week seminar on Multinational Case Studies at the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM), Zaragoza, Spain, in March 2004.


Donghun Kim
(Assistant Professor in Residence, FMPC)


Donghun Kim is working on the paper, “Market Structure, Price Pass-Through and Welfare in a Differentiated Product Market.” The paper is under revision for the Journal of Industrial Economics.

Bruce Larson
(Ag. Econ., University of Connecticut)

Bruce continues revising two articles with Sara Scatsata on the trade impacts of product standards.

Nathalie Lavoie
(Ag. Econ. University of Massachusetts)

Nathalie Lavoie gave a seminar entitled, “Pricing-to-Market and Product Differentiation” in the
Département d’Économie Agroalimentaire et des Sciences de la Consommation, at Université Laval, Québec City, PQ, Canada, on March 26, 2004. The paper is joint with Qihong Liu.

**Qihong Liu**  
*(Ag. Econ., University of Massachusetts)*


Qihong Liu is working with Julie Caswell on “Entry and Exit in the Food Market.”

Qihong Liu is also working with Nathalie Lavoie on “The Impact of Reforming Wheat Importing State- Trading Enterprises on the Quality of Wheat Imported.”

Qihong Liu and Nathalie Lavoie completed a paper titled, “Findings of Pricing-to-Market: Market Segmentation or Product Differentiation?”

**Under Review:**

Dan Bernhadt, Qihong Liu and Konstantinos Serfes, “Product Customization.”


Qihong Liu and Konstantinos Serfes, “Customer Information Sharing Among Rival Firms.”

**Rigoberto Lopez**  
*(Ag. Econ., University of Connecticut)*

Rigoberto Lopez returned from sabbatical leave in the Fall of 2003. In the Spring of 2004 he continued his industrial organization work on milk pricing and breakfast cereals collaborating with Ron Cotterill, Benaissa Chidmi (Ph.D. candidate) and Alessandro Bonanno (Ph.D. student). He will also collaborate with Maria Gonzalez in the Summer 2004 to assess efficiency of milk processing in various regions of the United States. Moreover, he continues to work with the Hartford Food System and Sylvie Tchomtchoua (grad student) to assess community food security in Connecticut towns.

Rigoberto presented a seminar entitled, “Retail Configuration and Fluid Milk Prices” at the University of Nebraska, December 12, 2004.


**Richard Rogers**  
*(Res. Econ., University of Massachusetts)*

Rich has been appointed special assistant to the UMass Chancellor for undergraduate teaching and is on leave from the department and Policy Center.

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**Data Corner**

**Recent acquisitions include:**


Trade Dimensions *Directory of Convenience Stores 2004*. 
The Food Marketing Policy Center has extensive holdings of Competitive Media Reporting, Leading National Advertisers, national advertising data, 1987-1997. Contact the Policy Center for details on specific holdings.

The Food Marketing Policy Center subscribes to the following trade journals; the current holdings are listed for each publication:

Promo, Promotion Marketing Worldwide, November 1997-current.


Cooperative Grocer, For Retailers and Cooperators. 1994-current.


Contact Adam N. Rabinowitz (860) 486-2826 for a complete listing of data and reference works available.

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Recent Publications and Papers


