

KENT MESSER RECEIVES THE BRUCE GARDNER VISITING ECONOMIST AWARD

April 24, 2025

Newark, DE. – The Center for Behavioral and Experimental Agri-Environmental Research (CBEAR) is delighted to share that Kent Messer, S. Hallock du Pont Professor of Applied Economics at the University of Delaware and Director of CBEAR, has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) with the Bruce Gardner Visiting Economist Award.

The USDA Bruce Gardner Award celebrates academic and industry economists who have significantly contributed to enriching USDA programs and policies. Dr. Messer is honored for his outstanding leadership in partnering with the USDA to apply behavioral and experimental economics to agriculture, food, and environmental policymaking. "Kent Messer has a long history of contributing to the field of behavioral economics related to agriculture and natural resources," said Julie Suhr Pierce, National Economist at the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. "Behavioral economics was the core subject of my dissertation research; Kent was particularly instrumental in keeping me connected with that area of research when I stepped into the role of National Economist at NRCS. The workshops presented in the CBEAR seminar series have contributed to a better understanding, collaboration, and expansion of the collective knowledge base of myself and other USDA economists over the years, helping agencies to better serve the needs and interests of our clients in agriculture. I appreciate Kent's work very much and consider it an honor to have been included in his efforts."

At CBEAR, Dr. Messer has led a range of impactful projects that integrate behavioral and experimental insights into agri-environmental programs, helping federal agencies boost program participation, reduce costs, and improve environmental outcomes. His efforts exemplify the spirit of collaboration and innovation that the Bruce Gardner Award seeks to honor.

We congratulate Kent on this well-deserved recognition and thank him for his ongoing contributions to USDA and the broader agricultural economics community.

CBEAR is a collaborative group of researchers that incorporates behavioral insights into program designs, primarily within USDA and its partners, to achieve greater levels of participation and satisfaction, improved environmental outcomes, and reduced program costs. Directed jointly by research leaders at the University of Delaware and Albany State University, CBEAR is a USDA Center of Excellence whose efforts are supported by a diverse group of research professionals within academia, non-profits, and government from across the United States.

For more information about CBEAR and its ongoing projects:

Please visit www.centerbear.org.

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