

**Bio**

Marco Palma is Professor of Agricultural Economics, Presidential Impact Fellow, and Director of the Human Behavior Laboratory at Texas A&M University. He holds a PhD from the University of Florida.

Marco's work has been published in economics, agricultural and applied economics, behavioral science, neuroeconomics, and various multidisciplinary journals. The theme of Marco's program involves investigating the driving forces influencing human decisions integrating research, extension, teaching and mentoring young scholars.

Marco is a co-founder of the AAEA-Latin American Section (LAS) and he has also served the AAEA in numerous sections and committees, including the Galbraith Award, selected papers chair and reviewer for several topics, and quiz bowl judge.

Marco currently serves as SAEA President. He is Associate Editor of the Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization and has courtesy faculty appointments in Economics (Liberal Arts) and Public Service and Administration (Public Government). To learn more about Marco's program visit <http://hbl.tamu.edu>.

What is the biggest concern/problem facing AAEA?

We are competing with many emerging sub-disciplinary organizations that provide smaller forums to interact with peers and networking opportunities within specialized economic subfields. The biggest challenge the AAEA faces to remain as the leading global association for nurturing creative and impactful scholarly activities in applied economics is to ensure that all members find value in its membership and feel welcome, included, and recognized as being an integral part of its mission. We need to enhance the value of membership and networking among all members in terms of backgrounds, sub-disciplines, academic appointment, geographical location, and especially among graduate students and young scholars. A recent article in the Journal of Economic Literature brings to light alarming rates of mental health concerns among graduate students. This is likely a pervasive phenomenon in academia that affects many of our members. We need to empower all of our members to have the resources at their disposal for long-term successful professional careers.

What actions would you initiate to improve the situation described in your response to the previous question?

I would strive to expand opportunities for mentorship programs to engage with graduate students and junior faculty. We need to recognize the relevance and achievement of distinguished scholarship in all facets of our mission, including research, extension, teaching and service. I would try to create programs that elevate the opportunities for graduate students and early and mid-career members to engage and collaborate with other members and established scholars.

None of these activities are relevant unless our members find value in being part of the AAEA, but more importantly, take an active role in our sections, committees, and conferences to ensure everyone has a voice in the future direction of the organization.

At the end of your three-year term, what changes/new initiatives would you have helped create?

There is substantial overlap in the mission of other regional and international professional associations, and I would reach out to them to strengthen collaboration to ensure that our missions align to serve all agricultural and applied economists. I will promote member participation in regional hub conferences that provide opportunities to engage in atmospheres that would naturally lead to more collaboration and meaningful mentorship. I would attempt to create a forum for graduate students and early career professionals to freely exchange ideas. I would like to open a communication channel to ensure we hear from all our members about their needs, concerns, success stories, opportunities, and challenges. More importantly, we need to consider their feedback very seriously and use their input in the development of our future strategic initiatives.