

As one of those 'there at the creation' individuals, it is difficult to express the effect FAPRI has had on my life. When we were sitting up on the top floor of Heady Hall going through some of the specific language creating the institute, I doubt that any of us would have thought we would be celebrating the 25th anniversary some day in the future.

Having witnessed the effects of the organization from the inside and outside, FAPRI has truly played a role in informing the debate. There are specific examples of how one can see the planet spinning just a little bit different because of work developed by the Institute. From the size of the initial CRP to decisions by the Irish Farmers Association to support decoupling, from reconciliation bills in the 90's to the ACRE program of the current farm bill, Congress knows who to turn to for solid, real world, timely analysis of policy options. And isn't that why the organization was created in the first place?

In many respects, starting an institute in an academic setting is a lot like opening a restaurant. The odds of long-term survival are very definitely against you. It is a real credit to the past and current leadership of the institute, to those who bought into the philosophy, who dedicated their time and effort that FAPRI has made the mark that it has. It is certainly a credit to Abner, to Pat, to Willie and their commitment to quality to whom we all owe a debt of gratitude. But it goes well beyond those three. When one thinks of the names and era's of the life of FAPRI, dozens of others come to mind. Jon Brandt, Eugenia Bair, Shamsul Alam (and the oh sheet award), Lori, Brian, the entire Irish team, Dan Cassidy, Russ Mills, Gary Adams are but a few.

But two who deserve special mention in my mind are Joe Trujillo and Scott. Joe was always there, ready to take on any task that needed to be done, from spinning a livestock model to taking slides in the vault, he would take on any task, drive to any location and make the organization look great. For nearly twenty years (at least by my count) Scott has been the backbone of FAPRI. That's not to say I agreed with him on everything, but it would not be FAPRI without Scott Brown.

I may not be there today, but I am with you folks in spirit every day. For so many of us, FAPRI made us who we are today. Thanks for being there and doing what you do.

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