

Report for the AES Travel Bursary to attend the 2026 AES Conference

I want to thank the Agricultural Economics Society for offering me the travel bursary that allows me to attend the 2026, 100th AES conference at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom. The travel bursary enabled me to gain three key benefits.

First, I had the opportunity to connect with young researchers exploring new methods in economic theory, and I was impressed by the diverse applications of machine learning (ML). ML is applied in various contexts, such as categorizing farmers' performance, comparing it with econometric methods, and combining it with econometric methods. Josef Baumert's best PhD paper presentation demonstrated that ML models can be jointly estimated with econometric models, showing that the combination can complement both methods and improve overall accuracy. However, I observe a challenge for researchers to clarify the interpretability and ML's role in agricultural economics beyond using agriculture as a context. Meanwhile, I observed strong theoretical papers by young researchers, such as Jan-Philip Uhlemann's best paper award session and Pietro Sala's presentation on efficiency analysis assumptions.

Second, I used the travel bursary to present our paper, "Assessing Risk-Adjusted Performance Using Mean-Variance-Skewness Efficiency: An Application to Dutch Greenhouse Producers," co-authored with Frederic Ang and Alfons Oude Lansink, at the conference. This experience was meaningful for me, as I was in the same session with my MSc thesis supervisor, Yann de Mey, and former colleague, Guy Low (see Figure 1). I appreciated the audience's feedback at the conference, which provided me with an objective perspective on how our paper can be improved to better motivate our research question. I also valued the entire preparation process, as I aimed to condense the key information into fewer, more targeted highlights.

Finally, I gained from expanding my network with senior researchers in agricultural economics. Challenges such as climate change, trade barriers, food security, and nutrition will continue to confront agricultural economists in the dynamic future. In the Food System session, Yumei Zhang notes that productivity improvements in China may still be associated with emissions in the future emissions. Similar issues were also discussed during the Plenary session, not only in China but worldwide. At the food system approaches symposium, I understand that the food system is important to account for externalities that are unexplained when researchers focus solely on one actor, such as farmers. Overall, these sessions made me reflect on whether my research is addressing the societal challenges.

I appreciate the travel bursary that enabled me to attend the 100th AES conference at the University of Oxford. The experience expanded my experiences, encouraged me to explore novel methods, and inspired reflection on the motivation and societal relevance of my work.

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Figure 1. Guy, Yann, and I (from left to right) at the *Risk Analysis* session.



Figure 2. Sanda, Zhen, Emilia, and I (from left to right) at the conference.



Figure 3. Me at the AES conference.



Figure 4. My presentation.