

# Mario A. Ortez

Virginia Tech

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## EDUCATION

Ph.D. Agricultural Economics, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN	2022
MSc. Agricultural Economics, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS	2015
BSc. Agribusiness Administration, Panamerican Agricultural School Zamorano, Honduras	2011

## FIELDS OF CONCENTRATION

Agribusiness, Finance, Price Analysis, Consumer Demand, Farm Management

## ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Collegiate Assistant Professor of Agribusiness & Entrepreneurship 2024 – Present  
*Virginia Tech, Department of Agricultural Economics*

James A. and Renae C. Pearson Collegiate Faculty Fellow (Endowed Fellowship) 2024 – Present  
*The Kohl Centre at Virginia Tech, Department of Agricultural Economics*

## PRIVATE SECTOR EXPERIENCE

Co-investor and Farm Owner. <i>Specialty Coffee</i> . Nicaragua	2015 – 2023
Investment Associate. <i>Teays River Investments</i> . Zionsville, IN	2022 – 2024
Beef Pricing Manager. <i>JBS USA</i> . Greeley, CO	2017 – 2019
Beef Pricing Analyst. <i>JBS USA</i> . Greeley, CO	2016 – 2017
Corporate Trainee. <i>JBS USA</i> . Greeley, CO	2015 – 2016

## INTERNSHIPS

<i>Teays River Investments</i> . Zionsville, IN	2021
<i>The Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) Group</i> Chicago, IL	2014
<i>INVESA</i> . Nicaragua	2012
<i>Nahuel Foundation</i> . Ecuador.	2011
<i>Group of Agro-Exporters Non-Traditional of Panama</i> . Panama	2011

## GRANT ACTIVITIES

### **Competitive:**

Financial Tools for Today's Agribusinesses: Empowering Opportunities 2025 – 2026  
USDA-NIFA

PIs: **M. Ortez**, J. Bovay & L. Wang  
\$75,000

Assessment of domestic and export market opportunities for Virginia soybeans 2024 – 2025  
Virginia Soybean Board  
PIs: **M. Ortez**, O. Isengildina Massa & J. Grant  
\$50,000

Flourishing Main Street Buena Vista: Thriving community through thriving businesses 2025  
Main Street Buena Vista  
PIs: **M. Ortez**, M. Cary & L. Wang  
\$8,800

Data-Science for grain marketing: Planting Progress and Crop Condition Interactive Dashboard 2025 – 2026  
Virginia Corn Board  
PIs: **M. Ortez**, M. Cary & L. Wang  
\$9,000

## RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

### *Journal Articles:*

**Ortez, M.**, Taylor Thompson, Valerie Kilders, and Nicole Olynk Widmar (2024). Quantifying Demand and Willingness to Pay for Local Food Production. *Q Open*, Volume 4, Issue 1. ([LINK](#))

**Ortez, M.**, Tor N. Tolhurst, Nathan M. Thompson, Nicole Olynk Widmar (2023). Not all Beef-Cut Price Shocks are Alike: Disentangling Supply and Demand Shocks in the US Beef Market. *Journal of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association*. 1–16 ([LINK](#))

**Ortez, M.**, Nicole Olynk Widmar, Mindy Lyn Mallory, Christopher Allen Wolf, Courtney Bir (2022). Online media in dairy markets: a US dairy futures market study. *Agricultural Finance Review*. Vol. 83 No. 1, pp. 168-185. ([LINK](#))

**Ortez, M.**, Nicole Olynk Widmar, Nathan M. Thompson, Yuan H. Brad Kim (2022). Valuation of dry and wet aged beef by U.S. consumers. *QOpen*. Volume 2, Issue 1. ([LINK](#))

**Ortez, M.**, Nicole Olynk Widmar, Nathan M. Thompson, Yuan H. Brad Kim (2022). What do U.S. consumers care about regarding beef and its supply chain?. *Meat Science*. Volume 187. ([LINK](#))

**Ortez, M.**, Nathan M. Thompson, Nicole Olynk Widmar (2021). Filet Mignon: It's What's for Dinner? COVID-19 Impacts on the Relative Wholesale Prices of beef cuts. *Choices*. 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2021. ([LINK](#))

**Ortez, M.**, Courtney Bir, Nicole Olynk Widmar, Jonathan Townsend (2021). Dairy Product Purchasing in Households with and Without Children. *JDS Communications*. 2(1), 7-12. ([LINK](#))

*Highlight:* this publication was deemed of broad relevance by the American Dairy Science Association and on January 15, 2021 a press release ([LINK](#)) was dispatched from their desk about our findings, which generated a variety of media attention both in the U.S. and overseas including on Hoard's Dairyman ([LINK](#)), Oklahoma State University News ([LINK](#)), News Medical Life Sciences, ([LINK](#)), Food Technology & Manufacturing ([LINK](#)), Dairy Industries International ([LINK](#)), and Med India ([LINK](#)) amongst others.

**Ortez, M.**, C. Bir, N.O. Widmar, C.A. Wolf (2020). Perceptions of Prominent Animal Welfare and Veterinary Care Organizations in the United States. *Animals*. 10(3), 472. ([LINK](#))

Bir, C., **M. Ortez**, N.O Widmar, C.A. Wolf, C. Hansen and F.B. Ouedraogo. Familiarity and Use of Veterinary Services by US Resident Dog and Cat Owners. *Animals* .10 (3), 483. ([LINK](#))

**Ortez, M.** and G.T. Tonsor (2016). Structural Change and Forecasting of Agricultural Commodity Realized Volatilities. *International Journal of Business and Applied Social Science*. 2:1-18. ([LINK](#))

### *Academic Articles in Progress:*

**Ortez, M.**, M. Smith & N. Widmar. Public Perceptions of “Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG)” Investments. *Journal of Sustainable Finance & Investment (Under Review)*.

Smith. M., **M. Ortez** and N. Widmar. Quantifying popular discussion of ESG in online media, comparing the USA to the

UK. *The Journal of Impact and ESG Investing* (Under Review).

Neuhofer, Z., J. Lusk and **M. Ortez**. Demand for Plant-Based Meat Alternatives and the Role of Habit Formation and Variety Seeking. *Journal of Agricultural and Applied Economics* (Revise and Resubmit).

Jung, J., Laura Barrett, N. Widmar and **M. Ortez**. Public Perceptions of Universities as Public Entities during the COVID-19 Pandemic Era. (Submitted to *Higher Education Quarterly*).

**Ortez, M.**, S. Stuart and G. Mashange. Returns and volatility of stocks in the Agrifood sector: The case of the S&P Food & Beverage Select Industry Index. (Working Paper).

**Ortez, M.**, M. Smith & N. Widmar. Retirement in the United States: Knowledge, Perceptions and Trust. (Working Paper).

#### **Other Publications:**

**Ortez, M. (2024)**. The economics of technological adoption: Thoughts from the 2024 GAP Report™ Launch. *Kohl Insights*. ([LINK](#))

**Ortez, M. (2024)**. Q & A with Allison Crittenden '16. *Kohl Insights*. ([LINK](#))

**Ortez, M. (2022)**. Consumers' Knowledge and Willingness-to-Pay for Wet-Aged and Dry-Aged Beef. *Letter 15*. Purdue's Consumer Corner. ([LINK](#))

Ortez, M. (2022). Food Production and Population Growth: A Cautionary Tale. *PAER-2022-17*. Purdue Agricultural Economics Report ([LINK](#))

**Ortez, M. (2021)**. Divergent Market Movements on Varying Beef Cuts. *Letter 38*. Purdue's Consumer Corner. ([LINK](#))

**Ortez, M. (2021)**. A Gentle Critique of Agricultural Supply Theory. *PAER-2021-5*. Purdue Agricultural Economics Report ([LINK](#))

**Ortez, M.**, Nguyen C., & Neuhofer, Z. (2021). Sustainability, productivity, and market access of smallholder sugarcane farmers: The Case of Central America. *PAER-2021-7*. Purdue Agricultural Economics Report ([LINK](#))

**Ortez, M. (2020)**. In Favor of Differentiation. *Letter 14*. Purdue's Consumer Corner. ([LINK](#))

**Ortez, M. (2020)**. Thoughts on Value, Cost and Price. *Letter 26*. Purdue's Consumer Corner. ([LINK](#))

#### **EDITORSHIP ROLES**

*Lead Editor*. Purdue Agricultural Economics Report-Graduate Student Research Issue (2022). ([LINK](#))

*Guest Editor*. Purdue Agricultural Economics Report-Graduate Student Research Issue (2021). ([LINK](#))

#### **TEACHING ACTIVITIES**

##### **Virginia Tech**

Applied Economic Forecasting (Grad)

Spring 2025

Applied Economic Analytics (Grad)

Fall 2024

Applied Problem Solving (Undergrad)

Spring 2025

*For this Capstone "Experiential-Learning class" I developed a network of professional partners, including investment professionals, entrepreneurs, investors, city administrators, and policymakers, to provide real-world, high-impact projects for agribusiness students, fostering collaboration with industry leaders.*

*Additionally, I pioneered the integration of investment and financial planning into the agribusiness curriculum, equipping students with skills in market analysis, strategic decision-making, and financial analysis.*

##### **The Kohl Centre at Virginia Tech**

[Agri-Food Finance \(AFF\) Fellowship](#)

*Drawing on my private sector background and the Kohl Centre's advanced analytics focus, I co-created this unique, year-long fellowship at Virginia Tech. This initiative offers highly competitive CALS students' practical exposure in agribusiness through industry projects, field visits, and customized seminars.*

##### **Graduate Teaching Assistant**

Farm Management (Undergrad)

Spring 2020, 2021 & 2022

Joint with Indiana University's Kelly School of Business  
Agribusiness Strategy (Grad)  
Quantitative Managerial Decision Making (Grad)

Spring 2021  
Fall 2020 & 2021

### ***Guest Lectures Delivered:***

Marketing Agricultural Products. <i>Virginia Tech</i>	Fall 2024
Introduction to Data Analytics. <i>Purdue University</i>	Spring 2024
Agribusiness Management. <i>Western Illinois University</i>	Spring 2023
Agricultural Finance. <i>West Virginia University</i>	Spring 2023
Dairy Markets and Economics. <i>Purdue University</i>	Spring 2022
Careers in Agribusiness and Ag Econ. <i>Purdue University</i>	Fall 2021

## **STUDENT ADVISING**

### ***Graduate Advising***

Bwema Ombati (Ph.D.). MOU Between VT and Egerton University, Kenya  
Sara Cox (MSc./MBA) Joint between Purdue and Indiana University's Kelly School of Business

### ***Undergraduate Advising- Kohl Centre Fellowship. Research Study Supervisor*** 2024-2025

Kealyn Greenwell, Billy Stoneman, McKenzie Marker, Alex Brandon, Miru Yim, Colby Crutchfield, Michele Mickelwait, Diego Cuadra

## **EXTENSION AND OUTREACH**

### ***Speaker. Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) Southside Producer Meeting*** 2025

A Solid Agribusiness Model & Financial Statements

### ***Speaker. Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) Winter Conference.*** 2025

AI in Food and Agricultural Industries: Taking the Pulse

### ***Panelist. Southern Regional Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge*** 2024

### ***Panelist. Global Agricultural Productivity (GAP) Report at Virginia Tech.*** 2024

### ***Podcast Guest. Farming the Future Podcast. Coffee Production & AgriMarketing.*** 2024

[Available online](#)

### ***Panelist. Ag Council's Spring Leadership Retreat. Purdue Agricultural Council.*** 2022

### ***Podcast Guest. The Grower and the Economist Podcast.*** 2020

Why Small Producers Should Pick Specialty Production [Available Online](#).

## **PROFESSIONAL AND DEPARTMENT SERVICE**

### ***Virginia Tech***

Member, Undergraduate Committee (AAEC) 2025-Present

Member, External Partnerships and Experiential Learning (AAEC) 2024-Present

Member, MS Online Committee (AAEC) 2024-Present

Member, Committee on Academic Program Policy (CALS) 2025-Present

### ***Referee***

*Agricultural & Applied Economics Association (AAEA)*. Teaching, Learning, and Extension section of the 2025

Abstract Submission

*Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics (JARE)*. Reviewed one paper.

## **LANGUAGES**

Spanish: Native proficiency

English: Bilingual proficiency