

Letter from the Editor**Dear ASFMRA Members and Friends of Agriculture:**

Are you ready for something new? Keep reading – there are many new things for you to consider in the following papers.

The 2008 *Journal of the ASFMRA* is full of articles that contain new theories and methods, modifications of existing theories and methods, and the results of a variety of research studies. This new Journal contains the most up-to-date collection of agricultural consulting, farm management and rural appraisal topics available in the world. In the following pages you will find cutting-edge manuscripts documenting research, field studies, practices and methodologies proposed by the leading academic, appraisal, consulting and management leaders of agriculture. This edition of the Journal continues to provide our membership and the agri-business community with topics on newly evolved issues and concepts for your review and consideration.

The Editorial Committee task this year was to review over a dozen manuscripts, from which we have selected these 13 papers as the best assortment of topics. We worked with the authors to ensure that each article was informative, clear and precise in the presentation of data and conclusions, and consistent with ASFMRA goals.

The Journal is laid out with all of the article abstracts up-front so that you can quickly scan through the topics and link to the ones that peak your interest and curiosity. You will find papers in the general categories of Case Studies, Professional Forum, and Research categories. The first category provides some real-life examples that might prove useful in your own professional assignments, while the latter two include a variety of observations, research and opinions.

We have topics on land price factors, impacts of farm income, biomass, milk futures, record keeping practices, recreational leases, pasture values from been and hunting activities, calving practices, pecan orchard operations, red chile production, Canadian farmland prices and how to start a rural appraisal business.

Our authors include university professors and students, practicing appraisers and farm managers, and experienced agricultural consultants. Several of these papers were submitted by ASFMRA members.

The Editorial Committee continues its challenge to all readers to join our highly acclaimed group of published authors. Share some of your experiences and wisdom! Most of us have encountered at least one unusual problem or situation that required original and innovative thinking to develop workable solutions. If it was new for you, chances are it will be interesting and usable by others. Ask the 2007 Gold Quill Award winners, Ruby Stroschein, April Beasley, and Joel Hamilton (who co-authored with the late Professor James Nelson) about their paper on farmland values around a metropolitan area – something many of us have investigated in one form or another. It is worth the time to follow their lead and get published!!!

The Editorial Committee thanks you for your continued interest in the ASFMRA, agriculture, and the entire agricultural community.

Donald A. Fisher, ARA
Editorial Committee Chair