

Economic Research for Policy Advice

Dave Hope

October 2008

Examples of Success

- Trade Research
- Nutrient Management Regs, impact analysis
- Plum Pox compensation - programming design
- Food safety regulation development
- Causes of food price changes explained

What has been missing?

- Funds, Incentives
- Relationships
- Perceptions of bias
- Practical knowledge
- Data
- Comfort with economics, policy process
- Timeframe disconnect

Outcomes needed

- Questions addressed intersect with the policy decisions to be made
 - Luck
 - Planning, strategic thinking
 - Relationships
- Practical, knowledge demonstrated
- No apparent bias
- Communications of findings in form that is understood

How to get there

- Start early
 - Relationships
 - Practical understanding of issues
 - Anticipate policy questions
- Keep in touch
 - With policy professionals and other stakeholders
- Communicate

Policy Process simplified

- Problem identification
 - Development of options
 - Assessment, pros and cons, winners and losers
 - Recommendation leading to decision
 - Evaluation
-
- Economic analysis can play a role in each

Target

- Government policy professionals
- Decision makers
- Industry groups
- Public or broad stakeholder groups
- Other researchers

Opportunity

- Agriculture and economic environment
- Growing recognition of need to change
- Large number of exciting topics for research that are likely to intersect with policy decisions over the next 2 to 5 years
- Growing recognition amongst policy professionals of the need for more robust analysis
- Government capacity constraints

Conclusions

I don't have the answers but I am convinced that building stronger relationships between researchers and policy professionals is a fundamental component of any solution.