

Econ 496x/Mkt 492x
Comparative Marketing Analysis of Agricultural Products
Spring 2000

CLASS PROJECTS

The basic purpose of the course is to understand the relative advantages and disadvantages of U.S. and Argentinean agribusinesses, especially in the context of distribution of major agricultural commodities and/or products. Students will be required to work in teams (with 2 or 3 students per team) to complete projects. These two projects account for 75% of the grade for the course, which is assigned as follows:

Project 1	25%
Project 2	50%
Individual Participation	25%

Peer Evaluation: At the end of the course, individuals will have an opportunity to evaluate each team member's contribution to the completion and success of the group project. Contribution is measured in terms of one's effort over the course of Projects 1 and 2. All evaluations are confidential. These peer evaluations will then factor into one's "individual participation" score for the course.

Each group must complete Projects 1 and 2 described below. The due dates are:

Project 1	Week of April 24, 2000
Project 2	Week of June 5, 2000

Successful completion of each project includes a class presentation of the major results on the respective due dates. The presentation of each group should last 15-20 minutes, and each and every one of the members in a team must participate equally in it.

Each team will choose a particular commodity/product not discussed in class lectures (e.g., corn, soybeans, wheat, sunflower, soyoil, soymeal, sunoil, and sunmeal are not allowed) and, given the approval of the instructors, will be expected to complete the two projects discussed below. Examples of agricultural commodities allowed are: barley, sorghum, rice, eggs, poultry, canola, specialty crops, milk, etc. A few examples of products obtained from agricultural commodities which are allowed for the projects are beer, cereals, corn syrup, wheat flour, pet foods, TV dinners, tofu, etc.

Note: Each team must obtain approval from the instructors to work on their selected commodity/product. Projects without instructors' approval will not be graded. Teams are encouraged to submit their commodity/product for approval as soon as possible, but no later than February 28.

Project 1: For the selected commodity/product, students should collect relevant trade data (including consumption, production, imports, exports and prices) in the U.S. Also, list all trade barriers, if any. For the selected commodity/product, students should study the total value chain from farm gate to market in the U.S. This includes:

- Production.
- Transportation
- Processing
- Marketing
- Pricing institutions
- Market information
- Standards and grading
- Market organization and market power
- Costs

- Government intervention

Also, from secondary sources assemble relevant information on competitive advantages and disadvantages that the U.S. producers and businesses have in producing, selling, and distributing the commodity/product globally. As guidance for Project 1, students may find it useful to follow the analyses performed in the textbook:

Kohls, R. L., and J. N. Uhl. *Marketing of Agricultural Products, 8th Edition*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1998.

The emphasis of the analysis performed in such projects should depend on whether the object of the study is a raw commodity or a commodity product. For example, if a team is working on barley, they should emphasize on production, transportation, pricing, grading, marketing, market organization, market power, etc. for barley. In contrast, if a team is working on beer (a barley product), they should center a similar analysis on beer (as opposed to barley).

Project 2:

Students must choose either "Option A" or "Option B," but not both:

- **Option A.**

For the same commodity/product as for Project 1, students should conduct a study analogous to Project 1, but for Argentina instead of the U.S. In addition, Project 2 will include an overall assessment of the relative competitiveness of each country for the commodity/product under analysis. Each group is responsible for collecting relevant data for this project while in Argentina.

- **Option B.**

This consists of a marketing plan for either an agricultural commodity or a product of an agricultural commodity that is to be imported to the U.S. from Argentina, or vice versa. The marketing plan should assess the current market situation for the commodity/product of interest. In addition, the marketing plan should identify opportunities and threats present in the market. The primary purpose and content of the marketing plan, however, is to set forth the proposed marketing strategy for the commodity/product. In particular, you would refer to the "Four P" framework common among marketing strategists to delineate the product, price, promotion, and place (distribution) strategies for the commodity/product. Action plans that set forth the course of actions and the timing of these actions would then be presented. Any basic textbook in Marketing can provide more insight regarding the purpose and content of marketing plans. The following are three references that you may consider in this regard:

Adcock, D., and R. Bradfield. *Marketing: Principles and Practice, Third Edition*. London: Pitman Publishing, 1997.

Kotler, P., and G. Armstrong. *Principles of Marketing, Eighth Edition*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1998.

Weitz, B. *Strategic Marketing : Planning, Implementation, and Control*.

You may also consult with Drs. Agarwal and Goldsby for more direction in preparing the plan. Finally, each group is responsible for collecting relevant data for this project while in Argentina.