

The purpose of sentinel project, “Illinois Agricultural Policy Center”, was to provide analyses and information that can be used by stakeholders, policy makers, and peers to evaluate the economic impacts – particularly those impacts in Illinois – of current or proposed state or federal legislation/regulations. To this end, the project focused on modeling and studying farm-bill and trade issues, as well as developing communication channels for policy research. The communication efforts stemmed mostly from the development of the *Illinois Rural Policy Digest*, serving as a forum for policy research in the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics.

The modeling efforts addressed two areas of inquiry. First, techniques were developed to measure: (a) the value of crop insurance programs relative to farm bill provisions and (b) the value of the current farm bill in terms of expected payments over long-term, equilibrium conditions relative to past programs. Second, production and trade patterns of U.S. and South America soybeans can now be estimated under different comparative-advantage conditions to assess and predict the effects of policy changes.