

JARED GARS

Universitat Pompeu Fabra
Department of Economics
Ramon Trias Fargas 25-27
08005, Barcelona, Spain

Phone: +34 671619904
Email: gars@wisc.edu
Site: <http://jaredgars.com>

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

PRIMARY

Development Economics
Applied Econometrics
Behavioral Economics

SECONDARY

Industrial Organization
Experimental Economics

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Candidate, Agricultural & Applied Economics Expected August 2017
University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI
Dissertation Title: Essays on Subjective Beliefs and Information

M.A., Purdue University, Agricultural Economics 2011
B.A., University of Florida, Economics, *summa cum laude* 2009

JOB MARKET PAPER

“Confidence and Information Usage: Evidence from Soil Testing in India” with Patrick Ward

Does confidence influence demand for and responsiveness to information interventions? We add to an emerging literature on behavioral responses to information provision by investigating the role of confidence on willingness to pay for and responsiveness to input recommendations and soil quality measures in the context of a soil testing intervention in Bihar, India. To motivate our empirical analysis, we interpret confidence within the target-input model as the variance of a farmer’s prior beliefs over optimal fertilizer application rates. We extend the model to consider how farmers make decisions about the purchase and responsiveness to a signal given heterogeneity in their ability, trust, and confidence. The model predictions are tested in the context of a soil testing intervention in the state of Bihar that provided farmers with plot level soil health cards prior to planting. We elicit farmers’ prior beliefs distributions over optimal fertilizer application rates using a visually aided method in the field and combine measures of dispersion with willingness to pay for soil tests and input behavior before and after receipt of soil health cards with plot level nutrient levels and recommendations. We find that farmers with less dispersed priors (more confident) have a lower willingness to pay for soil testing ex-ante and lower responsiveness of fertilizer usage to the recommended application rates.

WORK IN PROGRESS

“The Role of Learning in Technology Adoption” with Patrick Ward

“Impacts of Privatization on Market Performance in Dakar, Senegal” with Jean-François Houde, Molly Lipscomb, and Laura Schechter

“Subjective Beliefs and Hybrid Seed Adoption in Kenya” with Emilia Tjernström

“Media and Motivation: The Effect of Performance Pay on Writers and Content” with Emilia Tjernström

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

PODER Research Fellow (ER) at Universitat Pompeu Fabra	2016-2017
Consultant at International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)	2013-2015

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Center for South Asia pre-dissertation award, University of Wisconsin-Madison	2013
President's Scholars Award, University of Florida	2009
Phi Beta Kappa, University of Florida	2009

PRESENTATIONS

University of the Andes, Intitute for Fiscal Studies, University of Navarra, American Institutes for Research, Universitat Pompeu Fabra (LPD Breakfast), Banco de la República, Working Group on African Political Economy	2017
CEAR-CSAE Workshop on Beliefs and Preference Elicitation, PODER Summer School on Big Data in Development, Prato Summer School in Development Economics, Universitat Pompeu Fabra (LPD Breakfast)	2016
UW-Madison AAE Development Economics Seminar	2015
Agricultural & Applied Economics Association Annual Conference	2013

ASSISTANTSHIPS

Research Assistant at UW-Madison Jennifer Alix-Garcia	2016
Laura Schechter, Jean-François Houde (Cornell), Molly Lipscomb (Virginia)	2013-2015
Jeremy Foltz	2011-2013
Research Assistant at Purdue University Gerald Shively	2009-2011
Teaching Assistant at UW-Madison AAE 343: Environmental Economics (undergraduate) AAE 215: Introduction to Agricultural Economics (undergraduate)	Fall 2015

OTHER

Software: Stata, MATLAB, Python, LaTeX, ArcView GIS
Languages: English, Spanish (Level C-2)

REFERENCES

Laura Schechter (Advisor) Associate Professor UW-Madison AAE (608) 262-9482 lschechter@wisc.edu	Jennifer Alix-Garcia Associate Professor UW-Madison AAE (608) 262-4499 jennifer-alix.garcia@wisc.edu	Alessandro Tarozzi Associate Professor Universitat Pompeu Fabra Department of Economics +34 93 542 2565 alessandro.tarozzi@upf.edu
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