



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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Morris Hansen Lecture keynote speaker will discuss model selection in surveys

WASHINGTON, Oct. 24, 2023 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will host the [31st Annual Morris Hansen Lecture](#) Tuesday, Nov. 14, from 3:30–5:30 p.m. EST at USDA’s Washington, DC, offices at 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Jefferson Auditorium, South Building. The lecture topic is model selection in surveys. A reception will follow from 5:30–6:30 p.m. EST at USDA’s Whitten Building, across Independence Avenue. The event is free and open to the public, but [registration](#) is required.

This year’s keynote speaker is Dr. Jiming Jiang, professor of statistics at University of California-Davis. The discussants will be Dr. Jane Meza, professor of biostatistics and associate vice chancellor in the Office of Global Engagement, University of Nebraska Medical Center, and Dr. Andreea Erciulescu, senior statistician, Westat.

To paraphrase Dr. Jiang’s abstract: The practice of statistics often engages challenges of conflicting interests. In modern data science, one often faces the dilemma between privacy protection and providing useful information. Such a challenge is set straight in the basic principle of model selection, that is, striking a good balance between model fitting and model complexity. Dr. Jiang’s lecture presentation, “Model Selection and Its Important Roles in Surveys,” will introduce a flexible class of model selection strategies, known as the fence methods.

Dr. Jiang has authored and coauthored over 100 research papers, many published in top statistics and data science journals, as well as five books. He has served on editorial boards of several major statistical journals, including *The Annals of Statistics* and *Journal of the American Statistical Association*.

Dr. Jiang is a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Statistical Association (ASA), and the Institute of Mathematical Statistics as well as an Elected Member of the International Statistical Institute. He is co-recipient of the Outstanding Statistical Application Award (ASA, 1998), the first co-recipient of Distinguished Alumni Award (National Institute of Statistical Sciences, 2015), a Yangtze River Scholar (Chaired Professor, 2017-2020) as well as recipient of numerous awards from the National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health of the United States.

The Washington Statistical Society established the Morris Hansen lecture series, funded by a grant from Westat, Inc., to honor Morris Hansen and his pioneering contributions to survey sampling and related statistical methods during his long and distinguished career at the U.S. Census Bureau. This series is one of many public education and outreach activities in which USDA NASS participates. The event is sponsored by the Washington Statistical Society, Westat, Inc., and USDA NASS. To register for this event and learn about past lectures, visit [www.nass.usda.gov/Education and Outreach/Morris Hansen/](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Education_and_Outreach/Morris_Hansen/).

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