H PURPOSE OF THIS VOLUME IS TO CERTIFY and celebrate the contributions of Stanley R. Johnson to the world of agricultural economics and to the broader universe. The objective of this foreword is to highlight some of his many contributions and to share with you a sense of his humanity, warmth, and self-deprecating humor. It is therefore both a personal piece as well as a professional attempt to recognize his many contributions. Let us take them in that order.

I first met Stan Johnson in the fall of 1969 when he arrived in Davis as a visiting associate professor. He was advertised to us as an econometrician with some interest in production economics. I had dropped my only econometrics course in college and was very interested in international trade and policy, seemingly the other end of the spectrum from production economics. When he showed up, he was obviously a smart and brash young man, but this was hidden behind a boyish, innocent, fresh farm face. This made it difficult to divine his substantial intellectual depth and maturity.

At first it seemed we had little in common except that we were both newly minted, tenured associate professors, but quickly we hit it off socially. Both of us had young families, a budding interest in learning enough about wine to back up our outspoken claims of expertise, and an insatiable need to party. We explored the delights of the “City” (San Francisco) on more than one occasion—then as now wanting to be big-timers, but still shy farm boys to the core. When Stan left UC-Davis, we agreed that we were destined to be friends and colleagues but unlikely to be collaborators because our professional interests were so different.

But such was not to be true. We both developed interests independently in international agricultural and economic development and eventually we collaborated in 1991 in a very large, but generally non-productive World Bank mission to recommend agricultural sector reforms in the USSR. Instead we shared a scotch or three as we watched the collapse of the Soviet Union on CNN in the Aero Star Hotel in Moscow. Several years later we again collaborated, in a major project to reform agricultural higher education and research in some former Soviet republics.

We also became fellow travelers in Administration. About the time Stan was leaving Davis in 1970, I foolishly accepted the job as Dean of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. Stan was openly amused and a bit derisive about his youthful colleague (32 years old) taking a job as an administrator. The conventional wisdom of that time, which Stanley clearly shared, was that administration was something only those who could not cut it professionally did. I was twice stupid, taking the job of Founding Dean of the Graduate School of Management from 1979–

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1981, again to be teased mercilessly by Stan for being an “Administrator.” Yet he fell prey to the siren call of Administration, becoming Director of the Center for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD) at Iowa State in 1985. He did an outstanding job, leading by example as CARD was re-tooled and became a policy center increasingly focused on international issues. He turned out to be an inspired leader who also developed into a fundraiser *par excellence*.

But Stan’s true conversion to Administration came when he decided it was time to reform Agricultural Extension at Iowa State. Many before him had tried to change land grant extension services in many states—few with success. But Stan had a vision and decided he could remake Cooperative Extension. The vision was that extending the knowledge embodied in land grant universities should reach far beyond production agriculture. The true land grant mission had always been only partially fulfilled in most land grants. He challenged the conventional wisdom that every county had to have an extension office with its own cadre of county agents focusing only on the most important county commodities. He tried to integrate University Extension and Cooperative Extension. In so doing he demonstrated vision, guts, persistence, and possibly naïveté in trying to move Iowa State at least some distance in that direction. In the end, this mission impossible, and Stan’s preferences for good food and a spot of wine over strenuous exercise, may have contributed to Stan’s recent brush with his Maker. But in typical Stanley fashion he has recovered miraculously and will leave his “administrative experience” with the satisfaction of having given it his best shot and having made some progress.

These two stories of convergence of our interests are, in retrospect, not surprising. Stan Johnson is a complex, multifaceted, multidimensional man for all seasons. It has always been difficult to characterize him, but let me try with a few paragraphs about Stan the *man*.

*Stan the perpetual student.* Some say he never grew up because he never lost his thirst to explore, being always in a learning mode; he never tired of the trials and tribulations of being a student. He therefore had great empathy for, and understanding of, the difficulties of studenthood. This made him the great mentor he was (attested to by the impressive array of talent writing in his honor in this book). It also led to his steady improvement to become a great teacher and an effective writer of textbooks.

*Stan the methodologist.* Stan is an empiricist to the core who is continually searching for more effective ways to torture data so that it will yield its full potential of information. Therefore he not only kept up with the rapid evolution of econometrics, he contributed to that evolution. But he always wanted to use empirical analysis to change things for the better. This led to his interest in economic development in the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China, where he saw opportunities to use his skills in quantitative analysis to help his Russian, Chinese, and Eastern European
colleagues with similar skills to address pressing issues of policy reform and rural development. It was his shared interest in their quantitative skills that gave him the entry that many other policy types did not have.

Stan the development economist. As noted above, Stan became very involved in economic analysis of issues in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. To an extent this involvement followed naturally from his predecessor at CARD, Earl Heady, and Earl’s long interaction with colleagues in the region, but Stan built on that and expanded it through his teaching, through his students, and through substantial collaboration with new colleagues. How many U.S. agricultural economists are members of the Hungarian, Russian, Ukrainian, Kazakhstan, and Chinese Academies of Agricultural Science, or are foreign members of the V.I. Lenin Academy of Agricultural Sciences, or are Honorary Professors in the Ukraine National Agricultural University?

Stan the institutional reformer. From being a young faculty member with typical disdain for “administration,” Stan became an institutional reform radical. How else could you describe a guy who tried to reform the Iowa State Agricultural Extension Service? His vision was, and is, that the land grant university should extend knowledge to its citizens in all areas, not just in how to fatten pigs faster or grow corn taller. This required integrating the “two” extension services that most universities have. One is a free agricultural or Cooperative Extension Service focused on medium to large scale farmers, organized and influenced at the county level. The other is University Extension, a self-sustaining, usually impoverished, typically adult education oriented operation. To integrate, conceptually and operationally, these two disparate operations is a daunting task that few have had the guts to try. Stan took it on and has made real progress, slowed in his mission only by his health. Bless him for trying. He will go down in history as a pioneer who tried new models and approaches in rejuvenating the very core of the county-based agricultural establishment.

Stan the modest farm boy who made it big-time. Stan Johnson succeeded in being able to play in the sandbox with the greats of our profession and yet remains at heart one of us ordinary folk. He never puts people down, unlike some of the more notorious members of our tribe. He is a committed, hardworking, and persistent fighter. He still believes that economists ought to be useful and that the only way they can be is by providing objective and relevant analysis and facts on major public policy issues.

But he has also had time to play—he loved to party and to hold court. He can tell stories with such sincerity and conviction that it is often extremely hard to separate reality from elaborate fabrication. This is dangerous because if you fail to recognize his tall tales for what they are, you run the real risk of being humiliated when Stan announces publicly that you are gullible and naïve.
But he also is a bit sensitive about himself. He had real trouble with aging, particularly his fiftieth birthday, which occurred when we were both attending the International Association of Agricultural Economists meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He didn’t want to go to the reception because he was afraid some of his friends from Berkeley would publicly toast him, broadcasting the fact that he was now proceeding down the other side of the hill. But he did not want to be alone, so his solution was to come to my room and join me in killing most of my bottle of whisky.

Stan the bon vivant. Stan’s love for food and drink and his distaste for serious exercise meant that he, as have many of us, battled and did not win the war of the waistline. His recent brush with the Almighty was close and should be a warning to all of us. Yet Stan’s resilience shone through because rather than withdrawing, becoming tentative, and feeling sorry for himself, he has battled back to full health and his old self.

Stanley R. Johnson is a remarkable, incredibly bright, but disarmingly humble person. I feel lucky that we received our awards as Fellows of the American Agricultural Economics Association the same year, his clearly more deserved than mine. More importantly, I count him as one of my closest colleagues and friends who did me the honor of being the best man at my second wedding. This book and the event that spawned these papers are a fitting, but incomplete, tribute to “Missouri Stan” Johnson, the friend, colleague, and shining role model we all respect and look up to. Respectfully and with great affection,

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Davis, California
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