

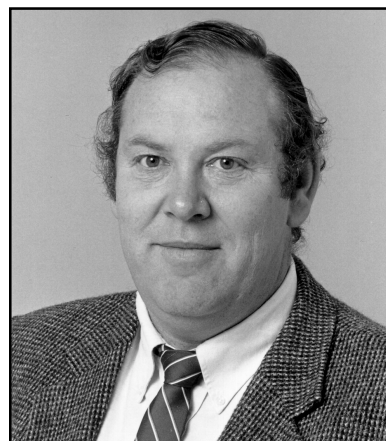
ARE Faculty Profile

Julian Alston was raised on the family farm at Katunga (near Numurkah) close to the Murray River in the Northern part of Victoria, Australia. Numurkah can be found in the Goulburn Valley, which is one of the primary irrigated agriculture regions in Australia, emphasizing horticulture and dairying, but surrounded by the more-traditional dry-land sheep and wheat farms. The Goulburn Valley has a similar climate and topography, and similar economic history, and its current economic problems and issues are also similar to those found in parts of the Sacramento Valley. Julian's family grew deciduous canning fruits and beef cattle, but later switched to dairying when the bulk of the farm labor force, Julian, his younger brother and two older sisters, left for the city to seek gainful and less arduous employment.

Keenly aware of the nature of manual labor and his suitability for it, Julian boldly sought higher education. He studied Agricultural Science at the University of Melbourne. When he had completed his bachelor's degree, Julian began working as an economic policy analyst in the Department of Agriculture, which provided leave and financial support so that he was able to earn his Master's degree in agricultural economics from La Trobe University (also in Melbourne) and, later, his Ph.D. in economics from North Carolina State University.

After he completed his Ph.D. Julian returned to Victoria and became the chief economist in the (re-named) Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, which employed more than 2,000 agricultural research and extension staff. As chief economist, he was responsible for the supervision and management of the other departmental economists and their work, as well as participating in public policy processes and the management of the department as a whole. Ultimately, Julian concluded that doing and teaching economics would be more satisfying than being an administrator and a bureaucrat. He thus took his position at UC Davis in 1988.

Alston's scholarly research interests grew out of his early government service. His work on agricultural commodity markets, demand analysis, and the economics of R&D, can all be traced to underlying policy questions. He continues to have a primary research interest in the economic analysis of farm commodity programs and other domestic and international policies affecting agriculture. In the area of consumer demand analysis, he has worked closely with other ARE faculty members on econometric models of demand response to advertising, and studies



Julian M. Alston
Professor
Agricultural and Resource Economics

of economic impacts of mandated generic commodity promotion campaigns for California agricultural commodities.

Much of Alston's work on agricultural research and development (R&D) is concerned with research policy for agriculture. One project led to the book *Making Science Pay: The Economics of Agricultural R&D Policy*, with Philip Pardey. This year, Alston and Pardey (with Vincent Smith) published a book on agricultural R&D institutions and investments in rich countries called *Paying for Agricultural Productivity*, and they have commenced a corresponding volume for less-developed countries.

In addition to his research activities, Dr. Alston enjoys teaching both undergraduate and graduate-level classes. He has recently taught microeconomic theory at the undergraduate, M.S., and Ph.D. levels, as well as more applied courses. His current teaching assignments include Supply and Demand for Agricultural Products, and the popular Agricultural Policy. He also provides support for graduate students and supervises their dissertation research.

When Julian is not in the lecture hall or his office, he enjoys reading, playing his guitar, taking advantage of the superb fishing resources in Northern California, and spending time with family and friends, many of whom are still in Australia.

Julian Alston can be contacted by telephone at (530)752-3283, or by e-mail at julian@primal.ucdavis.edu. You can visit his Web page at www.agecon.ucdavis.edu/Faculty/Julian_A./Alston.html.