

YUFENG LAI

**PHD CANDIDATE,
DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED ECONOMICS,
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA**

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|--|-----------------|
| Placement Director: | Marc F. Bellemare | mbellema@umn.edu | +1-612-624-1692 |
| Director of Graduate Studies: | Terrance Hurley | tmh@umn.edu | +1-612-625-1238 |
| Advisor: | Chengyan Yue | yuechy@umn.edu | +1-612-626-3974 |

Contact Information

Department of Applied Economics
University of Minnesota
1994 Buford Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55108
Email: laixx214@umn.edu
Web: <https://www.laiyufeng.com/>

Employment

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Research Assistant, Department of Horticultural Science, University of Minnesota | 2019 - Present |
| Adjunct Faculty, Department of Economics, University of St. Thomas | Fall Semester, 2018 |
| Research Assistant, Roy Wilkins Center for Human Relations and Social Justice, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota | 2014 - 2018 |
| Research Assistant, Minnesota Population Center, University of Minnesota | 2014 - 2017 |
| Teaching Assistant, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota | 2012 - 2014 |

Education

- Ph.D. Department of Applied Economics, University of Minnesota, 2021
- M.Sc. Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota, 2014
- B.Sc. School of Public Affairs, Xiamen University, China, 2011

Publications

Yue, C., Lai, Y., Wang, J., & Mitchell, P. (2020). Consumer Preferences for Sustainable Product Attributes and Farm Program Features. *Sustainability*, 12(18), 7388.

- Lai, Y., & Yue, C. (2020). Consumer Willingness to Pay for Organic and Animal Welfare Product Attributes: Do Experimental Results Align with Market Data?. *Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*.
- Deng, S., Lai, Y., Myers, S. L., & Xu, M. (2020). Foundation Giving and Economics Research Productivity at HBCUs: Empirical Evidence from the Koch Foundation. *Journal of Economics, Race, and Policy*, 1-22.
- Gorsuch, M. M., Myers Jr, S. L., Lai, Y., Steward, D., & Motachwa, R. (2019). Vanishing racial disparities in drowning in Florida. *Injury prevention*, 25(6), 487-493.
- Myers, S. L., Cuesta, A., & Lai, Y. (2017). Competitive swimming and racial disparities in drowning. *The Review of Black political economy*, 44(1-2), 77-97.
- Fealing, K. H., Lai, Y., & Myers Jr, S. L. (2015). Pathways vs. pipelines to broadening participation in the STEM workforce. *Journal of Women and Minorities in Science and Engineering*, 21(4).

Teaching

ECON 252 Principles of Microeconomics,
University of St. Thomas

Fall Semester, 2018

Presentations (Including Scheduled)

“Investigating U.S. Consumer Willingness to Adopt Low-input Home Lawns Using Behavioral Economics Models”. Western Economic Association International Annual Conference (San Francisco, California).

References

Chengyan Yue
Professor
Department of Applied
Economics
yuechy@umn.edu
+1-612-626-3974

Metin Çakır
Associate Professor
Department of Applied
Economics
mcakir@umn.edu
+1-612-626-7769

Samuel L. Myers, Jr.
Professor
Humphrey School of
Public Affairs
myers006@umn.edu
+1-612-625-9821

Job-Market Paper

A List Choice Experiment Approach for Consumer Study

Abstract: Consumer studies eliciting preferences for products associated with social norms, such as eco-friendly, fair-trade, and animal welfare, potentially suffer from the Social Desirability Bias. Such bias is also a prevalent concern for studies that aim at valuing common resources and public goods. This study combines the List Experiment (also known as the Item Count Technique) and the Choice Experiment to propose an alternative approach, i.e., the List Choice Experiment, and alleviate Social Desirability Bias. The List Choice Experiment allows respondents to conceal their actual responses and avoid social norm judgments, while researchers can recover consumers' preference parameters via a maximum likelihood procedure. This study demonstrates the usefulness of the List Choice Experiment using onsite experiment data. We show that the estimations with List Choice Experiment fit market data better than the direct Choice Experiment and the Inferred Valuation Method.

Other Research Papers

A Behavioral Approach to Identify the Barriers to the Adoption of New Technology: A Case Study of Low-input Turfgrasses (with Chengyan Yue)

Abstract: Increasingly, consumers are seeking ways to reduce inputs of water, fertilizer, pesticides, and mowing on their lawns. An effective approach to achieve this goal is through the use of low-input turfgrass species. Adopting environmentally-friendly technologies, such as converting a lawn to an alternative low-input species, are often considered to reduce a household's expenditure and mitigate the negative environmental impact at the same time, but the adoption rate of these technologies is not as high as expected. This study develops a behavioral framework to identify the barriers to new technology adoption by incorporating both the prospect theory and present bias. We apply the framework to low-input turfgrass adoption. We found that, for low-input turfgrass adoption, households' loss aversion plays a significant role, and the discounted long-term benefit matters to consumers after taking present bias into account. The insights from the behavior model suggest that marketing or government programs that aim at promoting cost-benefit efficient technologies should focus on eliminating or reducing the potential loss caused by product failure.

Behind the Veil: Social Desirability Bias and Animal Welfare Ballot Initiatives

(with Albert Boaitay and Kota Minegishi)

Abstract: Farm animal issues are increasingly becoming political in many countries with the rise in the use of regulations, legislation, and ballot initiatives. On the other hand, market data suggest consumer enthusiasm for high animal welfare standard products is lower. Given the potential for high farm animal welfare (FAW) regulations to impact the food costs and result in welfare loss, this study examined the issue of effective public preference elicitation in animal welfare ballot initiatives. Specifically, we examined social desirability, the tendency to conform to the social norms, and its role in generating overenthusiasm in the support for FAW issues and policy instruments. Using data from an opt-in survey of respondents, evidence from List Experiments (LE) and the convention survey format show that public support for the FAW issues examined was consistently overestimated in the convention survey. We discuss the implications of these outcomes for animal welfare policy and offer suggestions to researchers and practitioners for eliciting preferences for other sensitive food policy issues.

A Unified Error Characterization for Random Coefficient Differentiated Product Demand Estimation

Abstract: We characterize the numerical errors in the differentiated product demand model by Berry (1994) and Berry, Levinsohn and Pakes (1995) in terms of the estimated market share error. Such characterization proposes a criterion to compare the exponentially transformed fixed-point iteration and the iteration in linear form. We numerically demonstrate that the exponential iteration introduces larger error and gain no convergence speed than the linear form. In addition, the error characterization suggests that the mathematical program with equality constraint (MPEC) approach by Dubé, Fox and Su (2012) is equivalent in precision compared to the nested fixed-point (NFP) approach, only if the equality constraint bound estimated market share error as tight as the fixed-point iteration. However, under the recommendation of a tight fixed-point tolerance, the precision level of the NFP can be unattainable by the MPEC.

Other Works in Progress

A Randomized Response Approach for Choice Experiments (with Chengyan Yue)

Effect of Geographic Distance on Domestic Businesses: An Example of the U.S. Green Industry (with Chengyan Yue)