

# Laura A. Paul

University of California, Davis  
Agricultural and Resource Economics  
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## Education

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- 2019 **Ph.D.** (expected), Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of California, Davis  
*Research Fields:* development economics, econometrics  
*Dissertation committee:* Michael Carter and Travis Lybbert, co-chairs, Aaron Smith
- 2017 **M.S.**, Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of California, Davis
- 2013 **M.A.**, Economics, Duke University Graduate School, Durham, North Carolina  
*Thesis committee:* Marc Bellemare and Charles Becker
- 2011 **A.B.**, Economics, Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio

## Research

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**Job Market Paper:** “Out of the Pan and into the Fire: Drought-Tolerant Maize Performance from Controlled Environments to Farms in East Africa”

*Abstract:* Drought is a primary cause of crop failure, which has severe economic and welfare consequences for farmers in Eastern and Southern Africa. Improved crop varieties, such as drought-tolerant (DT) maize, can provide substantial improvements in yield level and variance. This paper identifies the advantage of the DT trait under different drought conditions. There exists significant heterogeneity in returns from the DT maize seed technology. This is important because variation in realized advantages might reduce the estimated large benefit from the technology. This analysis uses On-Farm Trial data from CIMMYT and high-resolution precipitation data to evaluate the DT trait. DT maize is less sensitive to drought than comparison varieties and has a significant 10% yield gain, on average. This paper further analyzes the heterogeneity in yield gain using a quantile regression approach. For low-performing farms, those with poor soils and agronomic practices, the protective effect is reduced in magnitude and statistical significance.

### Working Papers:

“Hurdles to Drought Tolerant Maize Adoption: Learning about Weather-Contingent Technology”

“Health Savings Behavior in Burkina Faso: Results from a Framed Field Experiment”

“Achieving Development Impact with Complementary Stress-resistant Seed and Financial Technologies: Evidence from Randomized Control Trials in Mozambique and Tanzania” with colleagues from University of California, Davis and the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT).

“The Role of Subjective Rice Price Expectations in Labor Input Decisions: Evidence from Madagascar.”

## Research Experience

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- 2015- 2018 **Project Coordinator**, University of California, Davis  
*Bundling Index Insurance and Drought-Tolerant Maize in Tanzania*  
Designed and implemented field surveys, trained enumerators, conducted stakeholder meetings.
- 2014 **Project Coordinator:** University of California, Davis  
*Health Savings Behavior in Burkina Faso: A Framed Field Experiment*
- 2013 **Field Assistant**, Nicholas School of the Environment Duke University  
*Water, Health and Climate Change in the Ethiopian Rift Valley*
- 2012 **Research Assistant** to Marc Bellemare, Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy
- 2012 **Research Assistant** to Charles Becker, Duke University Economics

## Outreach and Media

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- 2018 **Conference Coordinator**, “Partnerships to Scale Insured Drought-Tolerant Maize Seeds in Tanzania” Stakeholder Meeting, Arusha, Tanzania
- 2018 **Basis Innovation Lab for Assets and Market Access Spotlight**, “Partnerships to Scale Insured Drought-Tolerant Maize Seeds in Tanzania.” <https://basis.ucdavis.edu/people/laura-paul>.
- 2017 **Workshop Coordinator**, “Protecting Farmers Against Weather Risk: Satellite Based Index Insurance with Drought-Tolerant Maize” Stakeholder Meeting, Arusha, Tanzania
- 2016 **CGAP Working Paper**, “Resilience and Health Shocks: The potential of health savings accounts and health loans.” <http://www.cgap.org/publications/resilience-and-health-shocks>

## Teaching and Mentoring

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- 2017 **Instructor of Record**, Intermediate Microeconomics, Students: 62  
Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of California, Davis
- 2017 **Teaching Assistant**, Intermediate Microeconomics, Students: 57  
Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of California, Davis
- 2017 **UndocuAally Certificate**, AB-540 and Undocumented Center, University of California, Davis
- 2017 **Teaching Certificate**, Scholarly Teaching Strategies to Maximize Student Learning,  
Center for Educational Effectiveness, University of California, Davis
- 2012- 2013 **Undergraduate Advisor**, Benjamin N. Duke Merit Scholars, Duke University
- 2011- 2013 **Undergraduate Advisor**, Angier B. Duke Merit Scholars, Duke University
- 2009- 2011 **Assistant Teacher**, French Department, Kenyon College

## Conferences and Presentations

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- 2018 **Presentation**: “Less Rain, More Gain: DT Maize and Hurdles to its Adoption.” UC Davis
- 2018 **Selected Presentation**: “Rain on the Parade: Hurdles to Adoption of Maize with Weather-Contingent Advantages.” AAEA, Washington, D.C.
- 2018 **Discussant**: Impacts of Shocks on Behavior & Personality,  
Pacific Conference in Development Economics, Davis, CA.
- 2017 **Poster**: “Drought-Tolerant Maize Response to Precipitation.” AAEA, Chicago, IL.
- 2017 **Presentation**: “Drought-Tolerant Maize Response to Precipitation.” UC Davis Gifford Seminar
- 2013 **Selected Presentation**: “Subjective Price Expectations and Production Decisions: Rice Price Volatility in Madagascar.” AAEA, Washington, D.C.

## Grants and Awards

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- 2018 Gifford Foundation Research Award, University of California, Davis
- 2017 Henry A. Jastro Research Award, University of California Davis
- 2017 Gifford Foundation Research Award, University of California, Davis
- 2013 Provost’s First Year Fellowship, University of California, Davis

## Languages and Skills

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French (fluent), Swahili (intermediate), Stata, R, Matlab, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X

## Academic Service

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- 2017 Referee, 2018 Pacific Conference in Development Economics
- 2015- present Referee, American Journal of Agricultural Economics
- 2013- 2017 Coordinator, ARE Graduate Professional Development, University of California, Davis
- 2013- 2014 Representative, Graduate Student Council, University of California, Davis
- 2011- 2012 Representative, Duke University Graduate Student Council
- 2012- 2013 Representative, Duke University Annual Fund Executive Committee
- 2011- 2012 Representative, Kenyon College Alumni Council