

# John Whims

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As associate director of strategic research, Whims is primarily responsible for three foci 1) the strengthening the Product Center's engagement with MSU internal stakeholders, that is, working to extend the Product Center's reach (providing economic services) to the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, principally with the departments of Animal Science, Biosystems & Agricultural Engineering, Horticulture, Food Science and Human Nutrition, School of Packaging, and Plant, Soil and Microbial Sciences; 2) spearhead the research group's production of a new series of systematic research reports, that will benefit both our internal and external stakeholder groups; and 3) strengthen the Product Center's engagement with external stakeholders, specifically target and improve the strategic research team's relationship with external stakeholder groups such as MDARD, MEDC, regional economic development groups, Green Stone Farm Credit, Farm Bureau and the State of Michigan's numerous publicly traded and private sector agri-food companies.

Growing up in the shadows of Michigan State University, Whims received his B.S. degree in business from Greenville College, Greenville, Ill., his M.B.A. from Central Michigan University and his Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Michigan State University. Prior to joining the Product Center, he was an Economist and External Relations Director, of MSU's Office of International Research Collaboration within the International Studies and Programs unit from 2009 to 2013. From 1999 to 2009, he was a Senior Consultant in the consulting division of the firm Informa Economics (formerly known as Sparks Companies). Whims started with Informa Economics as a Senior Commodity Analyst (dairy industry) in 1996.

Dr. Whims is an economist with over 25 years of experience in the area of strategic planning and business development consulting in both the private and public sectors. He has been a consultant to Fortune 500 food and agriculture businesses, investment firms, and numerous federal, state and local government agencies. His work has involved some of the following activities: domestic and international economic development consulting regarding the evaluation of food value chains (marketing practices and efficiencies) analyses of agricultural and bioenergy markets (factors of supply, demand, and price relationships/forecasts); financial feasibility studies; macroeconomic and demographic analyses; the design and implementation of survey instruments; and the development of risk management hedge programs.