Public Abstract First Name:Brandon Kliethermes Middle Name:John Last Name:Kliethermes Adviser's First Name:Joseph Adviser's Last Name:Parcell Co-Adviser's First Name: Co-Adviser's Last Name: Graduation Term:FS 2009 Department:Agricultural Economics Degree:MS Title:COMMERCIAL GRAIN MERCHANDISERS: INTEREST IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Little information exists on grain merchandisers, their characteristics, and the skills needed to be successful. This research contributes toward filling this gap. A summary of survey responses from 230 experienced grain merchandisers quantifies personal characteristics, skills perceived as important, and desire for executive education. Parametric analyses identify factors contributing to merchandisersâ€<sup>™</sup> salaries and their interest in establishing a certification process. Interestingly, experience but not formal education significantly enhances salaries.