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Saint Paul, Minn., October 8, 2021

David Ubilava
University of Sydney

Dear David,

I have now received three of the four reviews I had solicited on your submission titled “Commodity Price Shocks and the Seasonality of Conflict” (MS21380) and I am thus in a position to make a decision on your manuscript.

Unfortunately, although one reviewer recommends a revise and resubmit, the other two recommend that I reject this article. Given that the one positive reviewer is a political scientist and the two negative reviewers are economist, my hands are essentially tied here, and I must unfortunately reject this for publication in the AJAE.

For whatever it is worth, both negative reviewers question the extent of your contribution. One writes, in their comments to me: “My main problem is that I found the contribution too limited compared to previous studies such as Harari and La Ferrara (2018) and McGuirk and Burke (2020).” The other writes: “I think the paper’s contribution to the literature is quite limited ... Recent papers on the topic have tried hard to go beyond saying “conflict is seasonal” and toward testing deeper hypotheses about the mechanism through which shocks affect conflict ... Unfortunately, I don’t see that in this paper – it is not clear to me what hypothesis it tests other than “shocks have seasonal effects,” which is already pretty well established. I think that’s an okay contribution for a lower tier field journal, but in my opinion it doesn’t reach the bar for the AJAE.

Normally, I would encourage you to submit this to *Food Policy* next, because I think this is still of better quality than *Agricultural Economics*, but being a co-editor there, you may not want to do that. If that is the case, given the foregoing, I would like to encourage you to submit this maybe to the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* or the *Journal of Peace Research*, but I understand that not everyone wishes to go in an interdisciplinary direction.

Email:

Tel:

Fax:

I realize this is not the decision you were hoping for, having myself been on the receiving end of rejections often in the past. It is however my sincere wish that the comments you are receiving as part of this decision will ultimately help you strengthen your manuscript for publication at another journal.

I thank you for submitting your paper to the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*. Please do keep us in mind for your future work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Bellemare', with a stylized, cursive script.

Marc F. Bellemare
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