

# OSTROM WORKSHOP RESEARCH SERIES

## Kurt Waldman

*Postdoctoral Research Fellow,  
Ostrom Workshop, IU Bloomington*

### “The Impact of Farmers’ Perceptions of Rainfall Uncertainty on Hybrid Maize Seed Choice”

**Wednesday, April 6, 2016**

12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Ostrom Workshop, 513 N. Park



Climate change and changing water availability are impacting food security, particularly in parts of Africa that rely on rainfall for agricultural production. Despite decades of research and interventions, crop yields for smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa are dramatically lower than yields in more developed countries. Attempts to address variable yields of staple crops in Africa through policies and investments in advanced seed cultivars have had mixed results. One of the possible reasons why these programs have not resulted in more significant yield improvements is the challenge faced by farmers to select cultivars that are suited to their local agro-ecological conditions. The question of what seeds farmers choose to plant is a deceptively complex topic as it is often affected by local availability, agricultural extension activities, and information on seed performance through social networks reconciled with personal experiences of individual farmers. At the foundation of this decision is how farmers perceive attributes of different seed varieties in the context of their perceptions of drought and rainfall variability.



**Kurt Waldman** is a postdoctoral research associate at the Ostrom Workshop at Indiana University. Kurt's research focuses on perceptions, environmental decision-making, risk and uncertainty in agricultural contexts, and all of his current research is in Africa. He has published research in a variety of interdisciplinary food and agriculture journals. Kurt earned an MS in Applied Economics from Cornell University and a PhD in Food and Agricultural Policy from Michigan State University ([website](#)).

Presentations are open to the public (see our website for papers). You are welcome to bring your lunch. For questions, contact Allison Sturgeon ([sturgeon@iu.edu](mailto:sturgeon@iu.edu); 812/855-3151).