

The County Agent



A publication of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents

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President's Corner

2024 AM/PIC a Tremendous Success

As we learned at the 2024 AMPIC in Dallas, Howdy! It was wonderful to see so many of you at this year's conference. I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to the members and volunteers of the Texas Association, especially to co-chairs Jo Smith and Jamie Sugg, for their hard work in hosting our national meeting. I'd also like to express my deep appreciation to Past President Keith Mickler, Scott Hawbaker, the NACAA board, Council and Committee Chairs & Vice-Chairs, and everyone who dedicated their time and energy to making this event a success.

I extend a special congratulations to our Achievement Award, Distinguished Service Award, and Hall of Fame winners! It's truly an honor to recognize your outstanding contributions as agents and educators. These accolades are particularly meaningful as they come from your peers in each of your respective states. Your dedication sets a high standard—keep up the excellent work!

I hope you took full advantage of the professional development opportunities available at the conference. This year, we offered six trade talks, two educational luncheons, five super seminars, and ninety-three committee presentations. Additionally, 130 posters were displayed, with the authors present to discuss their work. I personally found at least one idea that I plan to implement to enhance an

educational component of one of my programs. Thank you to everyone who invested the effort required to present at the 2024 AMPIC—you help make our association stronger.

At each board meeting, we start with an inspirational thought or quote. For our August meeting, Southern Region Vice-Director Jennifer Pelham turned to ChatGPT for a motivational message tailored for Extension workers. Here's what she received:

"Extension workers are the unsung heroes of progress, bridging the gap between knowledge and application, theory and practice. Every day, you plant seeds of change, fostering innovation, and nurturing growth in the communities you serve. Your dedication and hard work inspire others to reach their fullest potential. Remember, the impact of your efforts extends far beyond the fields and classrooms, creating ripples of positive change that touch countless lives. Stay motivated, stay passionate, and continue to be the catalyst for a brighter, more sustainable future. The world needs your unwavering commitment and visionary spirit."

I don't know about you, but I think ChatGPT captured our mission perfectly!

As I step into the role of NACAA President, I am both humbled and



2024-2025 NACAA President
Scott Jensen and wife Sbarla

excited by the opportunity to serve you. We are fortunate to have an outstanding board of directors who work tirelessly on your behalf, and I am grateful for their dedication to our association.

If there's anything I can do to assist you, if you have any concerns, or if you simply need a listening ear, please don't hesitate to reach out. Here's to a fantastic year ahead!

Warm regards,

Scott Jensen
NACAA President

Happy Faces from the 2024 AM/PIC



Professional Excellence 2024 Applied Research Poster Session National Winners



1st Place

DETECTION OF PHYTOPYTHIUM VEXANS IN NEW JERSEY CONIFER NURSERIES

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Oomycete diseases impact and limit production of virtually every plant on the planet, yet we are continually discovering new pathogens and species, lifecycle information, pesticide management patterns, and unravelling genetic relationships. Here one aspect of a recent USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant (USDA-SCBG) is evaluated, the very much unexpected detection of *Phytophthora vexans*, in multiple crops, locations, and production systems within New Jersey conifer nurseries, nursery stocks, and Christmas tree farms which challenged the research hypothesis that numerous oomycete species, primarily *Phytophthora* spp., are causing root diseases in NJ conifer nurseries. The main objective of the overall project was to map the oomycete species causing root diseases in NJ conifer nurseries. The isolation techniques utilized to detect oomycetes from roots via selective media and unique aerated off-site 'bating/trapping' detection techniques utilized for soil and waterway samples are discussed. The phylogeny (based on internal transcriber spacer gene loci (ITS4,6)) of collected isolates revealed a large

R
RUTGERS

Detection of *Phytophthora vexans* in New Jersey Conifer Nurseries

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Research Hypothesis: Numerous oomycete species, primarily *Phytophthora* spp., are causing root diseases in NJ conifer production at both ornamental nurseries and Christmas tree farms.

Introduction: The authors successfully obtained a USDA-SCBG grant focused on mapping the disease-causing oomycetes impacting conifer production in NJ. Oomycetes are some of the most globally important plant pathogens and regularly limit conifer and nursery stock production, sales, and management costs. Of particular importance was the regular isolation of *Phytophthora vexans*, which has not been previously reported to cause disease on these hosts.

Objective 1: Isolates oomycetes from root, soil, and water samples.
Objective 2: Perform genetic sequencing on isolated oomycetes.
Objective 3: Compile a map of oomycetes detected on host crops.

Phylogeny of NJ isolates collected from conifer nurseries and Christmas Tree Farms (ITS4,6)

Isolates also characterized via COXI, B-tubulin, and TgaI gene loci. Internal transcriber spacer (ITS) shown for simplicity.

Phytophthora vexans

Phytophthora humicola

Phytophthora cinnamomi

Phytophthora corymbosa / P. drechsleri complex

Phytophthora cinnamomi

As expected, numerous *Phytophthora* spp. were detected. *P. cinnamomi* is extremely destructive and has wide host range, whereas the other species are more host or environment specific. *Phytophthora vexans* was detected in a large proportion of samples, adding certainty to the occurrence of this pathogen in NJ. Many *Phytophthora* spp. were also isolated but will be discussed in other publications.

Occurrence of *Pp. vexans* and *Phytophthora* isolated from conifers and nursery stock

Host Crop	Species	Count
<i>Abies balsamea</i> var. <i>millerae</i>	<i>Phytophthora vexans</i>	1
<i>Picea canadensis</i>	<i>Pp. vexans</i>	1
<i>Fachysandra terminalis</i>	<i>Pp. vexans</i>	1
<i>Abies concolor</i>	<i>Pp. vexans</i>	1
Water_Natural waterways	<i>Pp. vexans</i>	2
<i>Rhodod. castalvianense</i>	<i>Phytophthora cinnamomi</i>	3
<i>Abies balsamea</i> var. <i>phanerolepis</i>	<i>P. cinnamomi</i>	2
<i>Abies concolor</i>	<i>P. cinnamomi</i>	2
<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	<i>P. cinnamomi</i>	1
<i>Pinus strobus</i>	<i>P. cinnamomi</i>	1
<i>Chamaecyparis lasiocarpa</i>	<i>P. cinnamomi</i>	1
<i>Metasequoia bruceata</i>	<i>P. cinnamomi</i>	1
<i>Picea abies</i>	<i>P. corymbosa</i>	3
<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	<i>P. corymbosa</i>	2
<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	<i>P. drechsleri</i>	1
<i>Picea canadensis</i>	<i>P. humicola</i>	2

* *Abies balsamea* var. *phanerolepis* (Canadian fir) is thought to be more resistant to *Phytophthora* and is often planted in NJ. *Pp. vexans* was isolated from natural waterways.

This is important: 1. *Phytophthora vexans* was an unexpected detection in NJ crops, let alone at this high frequency. *Pp. vexans* has an enormous host range and could be a severe pathogen that has been going undetected (Ghimire & Baysal-Gurel, 2023). 2. Many of the host detections may constitute First-Reports – pending completion of Koch's Postulates. 3. Preliminary data (not shown) supports that *Pp. vexans* is much less responsive to many *Phytophthora*-targeting oomycides, meaning proper ID is likely critical to management efforts. 4. This marks a huge leap forward in understanding the oomycete species impacting conifer nurseries in NJ.

Two isolation methods were utilized. To detect oomycetes infecting symptomatic crops, root samples were collected, surface sterilized in 70% Ethanol, then plated on PARPH selective media (selects for *Phytophthora*, 14 Hexamizol selects against most Pythiums).

Locate Dig Sample Selective media (PARPH) Isolations

Aerated growth tank **Oomycete 'Baits'** **Selective media**

Rhododendron maximum leaves
Lupinus perennis (Lupine) beans
Vigna radiata (Mung) beans
Carabid sative (Herb) seeds

To evaluate irrigation waterways, streams and soil, a novel off-site trapping/bait technique was utilized. Water samples were aerated and baits, in chemocentrals, were suspended in the tank for 96h. Baits were then surface sterilized and plated onto PARPH media prior to sequencing.

Moving forward: Oomycete and Root Exudate Bioassays

In-vitro disk-diffusion (direct toxicity of treatments) and 96-well Bioassays (root exudates + treatments) are being evaluated to better inform plant trials and recommendations.

Moving forward: Plant trials & Koch's Postulates

Trials focused on pre-treatment then inoculation are currently underway. Given that *Pp. vexans* has not been reported on most hosts sampled, Koch's Postulates will be attempted.

proportion of *Pp. vexans* in addition to expected *P. cinnamomi* and *P. corymbosa/drechsleri* complex, species known to cause disease in conifers as well as numerous *Pythium* species (worthy of future exploration). This is particularly important because *Pp. vexans* has an enormous host range and could be a severe pathogen that has been going undetected (Ghimire & Baysal-Gurel, 2023) for some time. Additionally, many of the host detections may constitute First-Reports – pending completion of Koch's Postulates and re-isolations from mapped sites. Although preliminary oomycide efficacy data is beyond the scope of this deliverable, it appears likely that *Pp. vexans* is considerably less responsive to many *Phytophthora*-centric oomycides, which may have profound impacts on current and future management strategies. This marks a huge leap forward in understanding the oomycete species impacting conifer nurseries in NJ and beyond.

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2nd Place

FOUNTAIN GRASS - FRIEND OR FOE?

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Johnsongrass, sericea lespedeza, multiflora rose, and perilla mint are examples of plants introduced to Missouri for forage, erosion control, or as ornamentals that have become troublesome weeds for producers. In fall of 2016, a pasture field in Cape Girardeau County, Missouri, had an unidentified grass that cattle would not graze. Working with University of Missouri (MU) State Weed Specialist and MU State Horticulture Specialist, the grass was identified as Chinese fountain grass, *Pennisetum alopecuroides*. This was the first reported site of this ornamental in a Missouri field. In the fall of 2016, I wrote an article for the Mid-America Farmer Grower magazine to raise awareness of this potentially invasive ornamental to farmers and ranchers. In collaboration with MU State Weed Specialist, an on-farm herbicide efficacy trial was conducted, in 2017, to help identify management options. Treatments included seven herbicides, mowing, and an untreated check. Fountain grass control data was collected at 4, 10 and 21 weeks after application. Results indicated that glyphosate was the only effective control. Mowing was not a viable management option due to the plant's ability to produce seed close to the ground. In 2018 and 2019, a greenhouse study was conducted on seed viability after glyphosate treatments 1-month and 1-week before frost.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

Fountain Grass – Friend or Foe?

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INTRODUCTION

Johnsongrass, sericea lespedeza, multiflora rose and perilla mint are examples of plants introduced to Missouri for forage, erosion control, or as ornamentals that have become troublesome weeds for producers. In fall of 2016, a pasture field in Cape Girardeau County, Missouri, had an unidentified grass that cattle would not graze. The grass was identified as Chinese fountain grass, *Pennisetum alopecuroides*. According to Dr. Tronken, ornamental cultivars, such as 'Hemlet', are considered non-invasive due to the high degree of sterility. This was the first report of an invasive cultivar of Chinese fountain grass in a Missouri pasture field. As of 2023, this invasive species of fountain grass has been confirmed in pasture or hay fields in 10 Missouri counties. It has also been identified along Missouri highways. Research and education efforts to raise awareness and help producers include:

- Characterization of Identifying Features
- Herbicide Efficacy On-Farm Trial
- Greenhouse Seed Viability Trials
- Dissemination of Information

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Dissemination of information about fountain grass provided through an IPM publication, news article, electronic newsletters, presentations at CO2 producer meetings, and social media.



IPM publication that has been posted on MU Extension's IPM website and distributed as a guide for producers. Scan QR code for article.

RESULTS

Since the key identifying feature of fountain grass is the seed head, the farmer-cooperator questioned if there was an application timing window of glyphosate in the fall where seed viability was still reduced. The greenhouse trials indicated that spot-applied glyphosate reduced seed germination regardless of 12 application timings compared to an untreated check (Table 2). The germination of the untreated seed averaged 65% both years.

Concave Name (Frost Name)	Application Timing	Rate	% Germination
2018 Trial	Glyphosate	16 oz/a	0
	Untreated	-	65
	Trial	-	65
2019 Trial	Glyphosate	16 oz/a	<1
	Untreated	-	65
	Trial	-	65

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Characterization of Identifying Features:

- Chinese fountain grass samples in the reproductive stage of development were collected from the field and sent to MU State Extension Weed and Floriculture Specialists.

Herbicide Efficacy On-Farm Trial

- Cape Girardeau County field located with uniform stand of Chinese fountain grass.
- 18 treatments in a randomized complete block design with 4 replications (Table 1).
- Herbicide treatments applied at 20 gallons per acre (GPA) using a CO₂ pressurized backpack sprayer.
- Visual control rating data collected at 4-, 10-, and 21 weeks after application (WAA) (Table 1).

Greenhouse Seed Viability Trials

- 2018: 2-in-field treatments (Table 2).
- 2019: 2-in-field treatments (Table 2).
- Seed collected from field for greenhouse trials.
- 50 seeds planted in flats with three replications in a randomized design.

RESULTS

Chinese fountain grass is a C4 perennial bunch grass with a fibrous root system as well as short rhizomes. Stems are flat and leaf blades are glaucous except for silicles which are orange. The bottle brush seedheads consist of individual spikelets with long bristles that turn reddish purple during the early fall (Photo 1b). Plants spread through seed dispersal and rhizomes. The primary seeds attach to fur, clothing, and equipment.

Results from the treatments at the 4-, 10-, and 21-WAA ratings are in Table 1. The trial indicated that only glyphosate applied at the 1X OR 2X and 2X rates provided control at all evaluation timings. Although not labeled for forage grass, herbicide treatments of clofentim and flazasulfuron provided suppression at the 4 WAA only. All other treatments did not provide adequate suppression nor control. The mowing treatment did not provide vegetative control nor was it viable for seedhead suppression due to the plant's ability to produce seedheads close to the ground.

Chemical	Rate	Fountain Grass Control		
		4 Weeks after Application	10 Weeks after Application	21 Weeks after Application
Untreated	-	100	100	100
Chlorimouf	0.75 oz/a	24	10	0
Sulfentrazone	1.0 oz/a	48	22	0
Mousetrap/Flazasulfuron	1 oz/a	53	68	10
Flazasulfuron	1.0 oz/a	61	61	17
Imazapic (Preemergent)	0.8 oz/a	20	25	13
Imazapic	0.8 oz/a	20	25	13
Imazapic	1.6 oz/a	43	43	25
Imazapic (Preemergent)	0.8 oz/a	24	22	10
Imazapic	0.8 oz/a	46	61	19
Imazapic	1.6 oz/a	60	60	19
Glyphosate (Preemergent)	20 fl oz/a	95	95	85
Glyphosate	20 fl oz/a	96	96	92
Chlorimouf (Preemergent)	1.6 oz/a	18	15	27
Chlorimouf	2.0 oz/a	40	25	20
Flazasulfuron (Preemergent)	1.0 oz/a	62	62	17
Flazasulfuron	1.0 oz/a	62	62	17
Flazasulfuron	2.0 fl oz/a	67	67	26
Flazasulfuron	2.0 fl oz/a	67	67	26
Untreated	-	100	100	100
Untreated	-	100	100	100

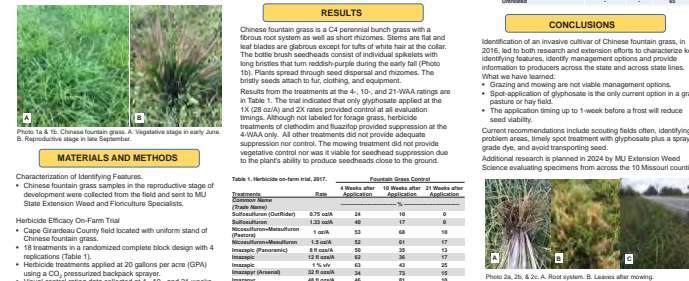
CONCLUSIONS

Identification of an invasive cultivar of Chinese fountain grass, in 2016, led to both research and extension efforts to characterize key identifying features, identify management options and provide information to producers across the state and across state lines. What we have learned:

- Grazing and mowing are not viable management options.
- Spot application of glyphosate is the only current option in a grass pasture or hay field.
- The application timing up to 12 weeks before a frost will reduce seed viability.

Current recommendations include scouting fields often, identifying problem areas, timely spot treatment with glyphosate plus a gray grade dye, and avoid transporting seed.

Additional research is planned in 2024 by MU Extension Weed Science evaluating specimens from across the 10 Missouri counties.



Results indicated that glyphosate reduced germination to less than 1%, regardless of application timing. Subsequent educational efforts led to identification in four additional counties across southern Missouri. Ongoing educational efforts have included articles and presentations across the state. As of 2023, 10 Missouri counties have confirmed fields of fountain grass. This invasive species has also been identified along roadsides. In 2023, I was contacted by a University of Arkansas Extension agent about management options of fountain grass in northeast Arkansas pastures. With the increasing number of locations, a more robust research project will be conducted by the MU State Weed Specialist in 2024.



3rd Place

OKLAHOMA BROOMEDGE BLUESTEM PASTURE RECLAMATION RESEARCH

information relevant to the audience and with a focus on advancing beekeeping abilities from introductory to mastering beekeeping. The Bee Team has incorporated a multi-pronged approach to providing education, resources, and outreach to audiences such as youth, educators, hobbyist beekeepers, pesticide applicators, and interested parties. Introductory short courses, hands-on field events and workshops, in-service learning instruction, innovative curriculum and tools, and the placement of a grant-funded 6-colony beekeeping learning laboratory were developed to enhance learning. Topics covered included introduction to beekeeping, identification and management of pests and diseases, honey and wax production, pollinator-friendly gardening, hive management, equipment, and pollinators and pesticides. Evaluative surveys show that the top learning points were beginning beekeeping, pest management, improved awareness of honeybees and pollinators, and successful overwintering of colonies. On average participants increased their confidence in beekeeping by 39%, and their confidence in managing hive pests by 56%. Armed with their new knowledge, participants feel more comfortable diving into beekeeping, pesticide applicators have a better understanding of laws and regulations surrounding bees, youth are more secure around bees, and pollinator programs with government agencies are on the rise.



3rd Place

PROMOTING HYDROPONIC EDUCATION IN SOUTHEAST MISSOURI

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Hydroponic growing methods can be a sustainable alternative over traditional growing methods of specialty horticultural crops. The purpose of this educational programming was to educate students, hobbyists, secondary education ag teachers, and growers about sustainable hydroponic farming through a combination of lecture, demonstration, printed guide sheets, recorded video interviews, and hands-on activities. From 2021 to 2023, there were 34 events that took place with various topics related to hydroponic production. These included introduction to hydroponic crop production focusing on different types of hydroponic systems, growing, and managing hydroponics crops, understanding pH and EC in nutrient solutions, monitoring and managing diseases, pests and environmental stresses, and career opportunities in hydroponics. In addition to the educational events, numerous PowerPoint presentations, resource guides, schematic drawings and a video was created aide participants with hydroponic growing. In schools, 54 students gained experience operating and growing in three different hydroponic units (nutrient film technique (NFT), deep water culture, Dutch Bucket, and aeroponics). They grew lettuce, kale, basil and tomatoes through a crop cycle. At one-day events, 396 students learned about hydroponics and watched

MONTANA BEEKEEPING AND POLLINATOR EDUCATION
Shelley Mills and Wendy Beckert
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Needs Identification
Honey bees and pollinators are of critical importance to global food production and play a major role in the success of Montana's primary industry, agriculture. Beyond the fascination and rewards from keeping bees, humans are deeply concerned about the wellbeing of bees and other pollinators.
Colony collapse disorder and declining populations has spurred an interest in education regarding beekeeping, habitat preservation, restoration of beneficial insects, and the sustainability of modern agriculture. This interest coupled with a lack of availability of resources and relevant information in rural Montana was identified during a needs assessment.

Program Activities
Twenty-three targeted educational events were held in twelve cities in eastern Montana with 734 direct contacts. Outreach was completed through in-person teaching, webinars, field days, outdoor classrooms, in-service training, newspaper articles, and radio and television appearances with an audience of nearly 14,000.
Hives were placed on Fort Peck tribal lands to facilitate learning. An instructional innovation grant coupled with a Western SARE grant funded a Ecology learning laboratory where students could gain better understanding of key concepts through experiential learning. In collaboration with the US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) and the Fort Peck Interpretive center an observation hive was placed in the museum and a 23-acre pollinator plot established on the grounds.

Impacts
Participants saw a 39% increase in confidence in keeping bees and 56% increase in confidence in managing varroa mites.
Top learning points were beginning beekeeping knowledge gained, improved understanding and confidence in pest management, greater understanding of honey bee biology and pollinator protection, and greater success in overwintering colonies. Youth gained greater understanding of the importance of honey bees and other pollinators while reducing their fear and insecurity around bees. Collaborative relationships have been formed with the Fort Peck tribes, USACE, local Conservation Districts, NRCS, and area schools.

Educational Objectives
➢ Raise awareness and preserve honey bees and pollinators.
➢ Improve success of novice beekeepers.
➢ Provide hands-on experiential learning opportunities.
➢ Improve pest management success for hobbyists.
➢ Introduce youth to bees, beekeeping, and reduce fears.
➢ Provide a clearinghouse of beekeeping and pollinator resources available to MSU Extension personnel.
➢ Improve pesticide applicator/beekeeper interactions.
➢ Reduce pesticide exposure to bees and loss of habitat.

Outcomes
➢ Beekeeping 101 classes
➢ Advanced beekeeping – IPM classes
➢ Winterizing colonies workshops
➢ Webinars
➢ Pollinator plots
➢ Pesticide training
➢ Field days
➢ Outdoor classroom
➢ Cloverbud day camp
➢ Teacher in-service
➢ Regional Agent Retreats
➢ Curriculum Development
➢ Beekeeping SharePoint site
➢ Articles, radio, & television spots
➢ Honey harvesting workshops
➢ Implementation of E-colony learning laboratory for experiential learning
➢ Conservation District Employee Training

Future Outreach
Enhancing colleague participation, advanced beekeeping topics, further curriculum development, and increased experiential learning opportunities are goals for future years.

demonstrations. During workshops, 229 adult learners experienced active hydroponic systems through lecture and hand-on experiences and learned how to operate the systems. In the evaluations, all participants indicated a knowledge increase. All participants reported an increase in knowledge of hydroponics. All three teachers in the schools continued to teach hydroponics after the program sessions ended. Four students pursued horticulture in college and are considering hydroponics. 37 students tried hydroponics at home after the programs. Four of the high school purchased hydroponic supplies online before the one of the educational events was over.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI EXTENSION

Promoting Hydroponic Education in Southeast Missouri

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INTRODUCTION

Hydroponic growing methods can be a sustainable alternative for growing specialty horticultural crops compared to traditional methods. Positive attributes include:

- Year-round production
- Can use less resources
- Higher yields per area
- Lower environmental risks
- Well-suited for urban as well as rural areas
- Can be more profitable per square foot

From 2021 to 2023, there were 34 events and workshops that took place on various topics related to hydroponic production. The purpose of these activities was to educate students, hobbyists, secondary education agriculture teachers, and growers about sustainable hydroponic farming.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Face-to-face and virtual hybrid events were planned and coordinated in Southeast Missouri.

- 12 individual lectures and workshops
- 5 FFA and 4-H workshops and demonstrations
- 13 hands-on presentations in three schools
- 1 Teacher workshop
- 3 Master Gardener workshops

Topics for Educational Events (varied by event):

- Introduction to hydroponic crop production
- Nutrient film technique (NFT), deep water, Dutch bucket and aeroponics systems
- Managing hydroponic crops: lettuce, tomatoes
- Managing the hydroponic environment
- Nutrient solution EC and pH management
- Pest management and common problems
- Careers in horticulture and hydroponics

Equipment:

- Hydroponic Units: NFT, Dutch bucket, deep water culture and aeroponics
- pH and EC combination testing meter
- Solutions to adjust pH of nutrient solutions
- Growing supplies: seeds, rock wool, oasis and peat pellets

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- In high school agriculture classes, students gained experience operating hydroponic units; NFT growing greens and herbs, aeroponics growing tomatoes and cucumbers; deep water culture growing greens and herbs.
- High school juniors and seniors gained knowledge of careers in horticulture and hydroponics
- Adult learners gained knowledge through lecture, demonstration and hands-on learning
- Youth at various events gained knowledge of hydroponics through demonstration and hands-on learning
- Deliverables for dissemination: printed guide sheets; schematic drawings; recorded videos
- Hydroponic grower interview produced for high school career development
- Total attendance at workshops and events: 703

PROGRAM IMPACTS

Adult Impacts	Youth Impacts	Future Implications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of participants indicated an increase in knowledge 3 teachers continued hydroponic education to students after multi-session program had ended and had plans to continue in following school year 4 teachers purchased horticulture equipment for their classroom before the teacher workshop was over 57 home gardeners are currently trying hydroponics at home 3 commercial growers are experimenting with hydroponics to expand their operation 74% plan to attend additional future hydroponic workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of participants indicated an increase in knowledge 60% of students can explain how hydroponics can be sustainable 4 senior students from multi-session hydroponic program are pursuing secondary horticulture education and considering hydroponics as a career option 6 Students at the high school took an exceptional interest (per teachers) and indicated interest in greenhouse production with hydroponics 24 students tried hydroponics at home after the workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students need basic understanding of plant anatomy and germination before learning hydroponics pH and EC is hard to understand for youth and adults. More time is needed to cover the materials adequately and to demonstrate Students need more guided hands-on time with instructors (twenty minutes allowed by schools is inadequate) Ready-made hydroponic units can be costly, therefore many adults are waiting "till you're over" 24 students tried hydroponics at home after the workshops A good suitable growing area can be hard to find in schools and homes

NACAA 2024 Communication Award Winners

AUDIO RECORDING



National Winner

ADVOCATING FOR AGRICULTURE

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“Advocating for Agriculture” was recorded at the Webster County Extension Office and published on March 5th, 2024. The podcast was hosted on Podbean and shared to Apple Podcast, Google Podcasts, Spotify, Amazon Music and iHeart Radio. In this episode, Vicki Shadrick, Webster County ANR agent, Jay Stone, Hopkins Lyon County ANR agent and David Fourqurean, McLean County ANR agent discussed the importance of advocating for agriculture and being a positive voice for agriculture. KY Ag Matters podcast educates and informs our listeners about all things related to agriculture. As of March 12, 2024, we have recorded 106 episodes with a variety of topics geared towards meeting the emerging needs of our clientele. With a weekly audience base that extends well beyond the state borders, Kentucky Ag Matters has developed a regular listening audience who receive weekly, research-based information on a variety of different online hosts. This allows everyone to access this information while commuting to work or while in the field. To date, the show has had over 6,400 downloads. Our guests range from Extension Specialists to commodity group leaders, as well as extension agents and law enforcement officers. Our goal is to offer timely, research-based information to the agriculture community in a consistent and reliable way. We now have over 600 monthly listeners across the United States and several foreign countries.

COMPUTER GENERATED PRESENTATION WITH SCRIPT



National Winner

UNDERSTANDING LABEL STATEMENTS

Tana Haugen-Brown
Extension Educator
University of MN Extension
Zimmerman

Haugen-Brown, T*¹, Stahl, L*²

¹ Extension Educator & Co-Coordinator, PSEE, , Zimmerman, Minnesota, 55398

² Extension Educator, Crops, , Worthington, Minnesota, 56187

Pesticide labels and labeling comprehension are an important part of the application process. Pesticide labels contain information related to the safe use of pesticides from an applicator or handler perspective, as well as a food safety and environmental perspective. Helping private pesticide applicators to fully understand label statements and their meaning is key to following legal requirements as well as their health and safety. The statements “Read and follow the label” and “The label is the law” are at the core of how the U.S. manages dangers posed by pesticides and are also the foundation of pesticide regulation. The University of Minnesota (UMN) Private Pesticide Applicator Training (PPAT) team determined that with ever complex and changing pesticide product labels increasing an applicator’s understanding of label statements was imperative. Lizabeth Stahl and I developed the “Understanding Label Statements” module for use during the 2022-2024 PPAT training cycle by researching label statements and utilizing available resources including the EPA’s Label Review Manual. The module was peer-reviewed by other UMN Extension educators and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

The module’s objective was to educate applicators about different types of statements found on pesticide labels. We worked through statements found on actual pesticide labels to gauge their understanding and comprehension of those statements. We utilized audience-response TP clickers to make the module more engaging for participants. Each question was followed with additional information about the statement. Information on where to go for help when label statements are unclear was included. PPAT Extension educators including myself and Lizabeth utilized the module at workshops during 2022-2024. Workshop attendance was 1,585 at 46 workshops, 1,399 at 45 workshops, and 1,722 at 44 workshops across Minnesota in 2024, 2023, and 2022, respectively. Using TP clickers, we were able to evaluate the module’s effectiveness by asking participants at the conclusion of each workshop, if “as a result of today’s workshop my knowledge about how to interpret pesticide label statements has increased.” Data collected from the workshops showed that 94% of respondents answered “Strongly agree” or “Agree” - a key message of the presentation.

PERSONAL COLUMN



National Winner

HOMEGROWN GARDENING ADVICE

Leslie Munroe
EA I-Environmental Horticulture
UF/IFAS Indian River County Extension
Vero Beach

The UF/IFAS Environmental Horticulture Agent for Indian River County provides a monthly gardening column for the Vero Beach Magazine. Monthly circulation is approximately 10,000 in hard copy and averaging 3,000 online views. This column offers an additional opportunity to promote Florida-Friendly Landscaping in the county. Staying within the word limit of 400-500 words, landscape and gardening tips are shared with a focus on practicality, accessibility, and seasonal relevance. The “chatty neighbor” style of the column encourages an expectation of easy reading. The advice is simple and spare. The introductory column was published in September 2023,

in it the agent was introduced and the issues with gardening in Florida for Floridians and transplants alike were briefly described. Then, an explanation of how Florida-Friendly Landscaping management techniques offer a science/ research-based solution to those problems. The column word limit was extended to include September specific tips for the audience. The November 2023 issue included an article about landscape enhancements and the entertainment season. There was significant encouragement to be realistic in the approach to adding curb appeal and enhancing very visible areas of the landscape. Readers appreciated the overt emphasis on socializing. Each article incorporates personal experiences to allow readers to know they are being served by a local expert who is addressing the same issues they face. Feedback from the editor has been very positive; readers are enjoying the segment. Readers submit questions to the editor about specific topics they want to learn more about. Those topics will be woven into the monthly columns as I continue to write.

FEATURE STORY



National Winner

ANNUALS MAXIMUM COLOR MINIMAL MAINTENANCE: TOP PERFORMERS FOR MIDWEST LANDSCAPES

Pam Bennett
State Master Gardener Volunteer Coordinator, ANR Educator
Ohio State University Extension
Springfield

Bennett, P*¹

¹ State Master Gardener Volunteer Coordinator, ANR Educator, Ohio State University Extension, Springfield, Ohio, 45505

The feature story was written for the Landsculptor® magazine, a publication distributed by the Michigan Green Industry Association (MGIA) to over 3,700 green industry professionals. It is published monthly and is the premier green industry publication for the State of Michigan. The publication is free to members and features articles on topics relevant to the green industry professional and business owner. Articles range

from the latest trends in landscaping, irrigation, horticulture, or other industry issues, seasonally relevant topics, business management, legislative concerns, and other items to keep Michigan's green industry professionals informed. The author spoke at the MGIA annual conference and was invited to write an article for the publication.

This issue of the Landsculptor® is also provided for all attendees at the 2024 MGIA Trade Show & Convention. Approximately 900 industry professionals were in attendance and around 500 additional copies were available for attendees to pick up at the trade show booth. It was published in late February 2024 and made available to the members and attendees on March 5, 2024.

The author selected the topic of annuals for the feature story and the content is based on the author's research for Ohio State University. The author took the four photos included in the feature story; these were plants in the trials in 2023. The author wrote the story and the MGIA staff edited and developed the graphics and included it in the Landsculptor®. Staff also published and printed the magazine.

NEWSLETTER



National Winner

OREGON SMALL FARM NEWS

Melissa Fery
Small Farms Extension Agent
Oregon State University
Eugene

Lucas, C*¹, Lucas, C*², Comerford, A*³, Stacey, N⁴, Gwin, L⁵, Anderson, T⁶, Powell, M⁷, Smith, E⁸, Stoven, H⁹, Bennett, L*¹⁰, Moran, T¹¹, Noordijk, H¹², White, H¹³

¹ Small Farms Extension Agent, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon, 97333

² Ag & Groundwater Quality Outreach Program Coordinator, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon, 97330

³ Outreach Program Coordinator, Oregon State University, Salem, Oregon, 97301

⁴ Statewide Small Farms Specialist, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon, 97333

⁵ Director, Center for Small Farms & Community Food Systems, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon, 97331

⁶ Assistant Professor of Practice, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon, 97333

⁷ Assistant Professor of Practice, Oregon State University, Medford, Oregon,

⁸ Outreach Program Coordinator, Oregon State University, Newport, Oregon,

⁹ Assistant Professor of Practice, Oregon State University, McMinnville, Oregon,

¹⁰ Outreach Program Coordinator, Oregon State University, Roseburg, Oregon,

¹¹ Outreach Program Coordinator, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon, 97333

¹² Outreach Program Coordinator, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon,

¹³ Outreach Program Coordinator, Oregon State University, Salem, Oregon, 97301

Oregon Small Farm News is a free online newsletter that concentrates on both commercial small farm entrepreneurs as well as non-commercial small acreage landowners. Our focus embraces organic/biological and conventional farming systems and emphasizes three areas:

- Small Acreage Stewardship - Addressing enterprises, land management and soil and water quality for non-commercial small acreage's.
- Commercial Small Farms - Entrepreneurial Agriculture Addressing high value horticulture, livestock and poultry, and alternative crop production emphasizing organic and pasture-based systems and specialty and niche production.
- Community Food Systems - Address alternative and specialty marketing through creation and enhancement of local and regional food systems and farm direct marketing channels.

The newsletter is distributed quarterly to our subscribed listserv that varied from 6897 to 7632 during this time period and on the statewide OSU Small Farms facebook and instagram account. The program also posts the newsletters online at <https://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/smallfarms/about/oregon-small-farm-news> for anyone who is browsing out website. regional program share in their local newsletters and on social media.

The Fall 2023 edition was published on September 21st, 2023 and the Winter 2024 edition was published on Dec 23rd, 2023.

EDUCATIONAL VIDEO RECORDINGS



National Winner

ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION - SEMEN HANDLING

Heather Schlessler
Dairy Agent
UW-Madison Division of Extension
Wausau

Schlessler, H¹

¹ Dairy Agent, Wausau, Wisconsin, 54403

The purpose of this educational video was to increase awareness of the proper method of semen handling to enhance conception rates. This video was created as an alternative method of teaching participants who registered for the artificial insemination course to reach the various learning styles of the participants. This video was initially intended for the thirty people who attended the artificial insemination course in the fall of 2023. However, having the video on YouTube allowed others (N = 91) who had not attended the course to watch the video. The video link was emailed to artificial insemination course participants before the course's educational sessions. Course participants watched this video and increased their knowledge of semen handling before attending the first in-person session. Having this prior knowledge allowed course participants to have a better understanding of how to remove semen from the semen tank properly, which allowed more time for practice and answering questions. The video was prepared by recording footage on a farm and in an office setting and editing the video segments together. This educator was responsible for capturing the video footage and editing it together.

FACT SHEET



National Winner

CLEANING AND SANITIZING MULTI-DOSE SYRINGES AND TRANSFER NEEDLES

Sandra Stuttgen
Agriculture Educator
University of Wisconsin Madison Division of Extension
Medford

Stuttgen, S*¹

¹Agriculture Educator, Medford, Wisconsin, 54451

Biosecurity and cattle health management practices influence beef producers' economic viability and sustainability. Effective biosecurity practices include vaccination protocols, and vaccination protocols will fail when mishandling vaccination equipment. The fact sheet is part of a series of three; the other two fact sheets address vaccine product handling and proper injection technique. I created posters from the fact sheet series for the hands-on tabletop display and demonstration for beef producers and those learning about beef production who attended the July 2023 Wisconsin Farm Technology Days Beef Tent. Approximately 200 individuals participated, and industry partners remarked that our handling demonstration and display significantly increased traffic in the Beef Tent and helped them meet their educational missions. I used this factsheet when discussing chute-side herd health at a beef production meeting with 24 attendees in October 2023. The factsheet is available at the UW-Madison Division of Extension Livestock Program website and was viewed 3,070 times by 2,575 individuals. To determine effectiveness, 32 livestock producers and allied industry representatives read this and other biosecurity factsheets and provided feedback through a Qualtrics survey. Ninety-four percent of respondents increased their understanding of cleaning and disinfection techniques for multi-use syringe guns and transfer needles. Written comments included: "I learned you can use a microwave to heat sanitize needles and syringe parts; The importance of not using soap/disinfectants to clean multi-dose syringes! I still

hear of many people using soap to clean the syringes. I also learned I need to be boiling the syringes for 5 minutes, much longer than I currently am; Information is always welcome, and having reading material to understand what could be done on a ranch."

PUBLICATION



National Winner

TEXAS CRAWFISH PRODUCTION MANUAL

Corena Fitzgerald
CEA-CMR
Texas A&M Agrilife Extension
Anahuac

Fitzgerald, C¹

¹CEA-CMR, , Anahuac, Texas, 77514

Texas is second in crawfish production in the United States and an important industry that is in co production with the rice industry. With close to 20,000 acres of crawfish production in Southeast Texas and new farmers interest in joining the industry, Corena Fitzgerald worked with Texas A&M AgriLife fisheries specialist Dr Todd Sink on producing a production manual, "Texas Crawfish Production Manual." Corena worked with local area crawfish farmers on gathering information and techniques from the industry, revitalized the previous manual that was out of date, took and added pictures, designed the graphics that was included in the manual, added the history of the industry, and worked with LSU crawfish specialist on updating current techniques and practices throughout the entire process. Along with writing the manual, Corena worked with LSU on research of the current White Spot Virus that has been plaguing the industry in Louisiana and tracking it in the Texas Crawfish industry and made updates to the disease section with current research. This manual not only contains techniques and practices from Louisiana farmers, but has been adapted to fit the needs and practices currently used by Texas Crawfish Farmers.

WEB SITE / ONLINE CONTENT



National Winner

HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE - AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES WEBSITE

Haley Treadway
Agriculture & Natural Resource Agent
University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Chattanooga

Treadway, H¹

¹ Agriculture & Natural Resource Agent , , Chattanooga, Tennessee, 37416

<https://hamilton.tennessee.edu/agriculture-and-natural-resources/>

The Hamilton County website is a shared tool amongst all county agents in the local office to promote, engage, and educate the Hamilton County public on Extension Programs. As the only ANR staff member of Hamilton County, the agriculture & natural resources portion of the website is solely managed by me. From entomology, soil testing, livestock, horticulture, ag business, and more, this corner of our site is very dynamic. Wordpress is the host site for this resource and once I developed a working competence with this tool, it became quite a project to comprehensively revamp this section of our website for the first time in nearly a decade. Our website is a living resource that is constantly updated with various tools, publications, notifications, programs, and more. The pages are focused on simplicity and visual appeal with custom-sized and curated photos/graphics to fit WordPress' digital parameters. Much time and effort is taken to develop this website, but we have learned of its effectiveness due to the sheer volume of calls and emails that we receive indicating a client having visited one of our newly developed pages which then prompted whatever question they may have. Our Ag and Natural Resources pages link to external sources whenever possible for our

client's convenience as well as to maximize search engine optimization. The intention behind digital resources is to create an effective environment for beginner producers and the more experienced agriculturalists. For example, 'entomology' > 'beekeeping' > 'beekeeping resources' has caught the attention of youth clients to advanced apiculturists alike with basic publications linked and more sophisticated tools available. The website approach is very efficient and modern as newer generations emerge, people generally prefer to Google an answer vs. call an office. This means that with updated information regarding programs, we are maximizing opportunities to reach more audiences and delivering information directly and immediately.

LEARNING MODULE/ NOTEBOOK



National Winner

FARM AND RANCH LEARNING LAB KIT

Shelly Dee Jepsen
Professor and State Specialist, Ag Safety and Health
Ohio State University Extension
Columbus

Jepsen, S^{*1}, Murphy, D², Wright, J³, Bowman, T⁴

¹ Professor and State Specialist, Ag Safety and Health, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, 43210

² Nationwide Insurance Professor Emeritus, Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, 16803

³ Assistant Director, Communications & Publishing, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, 43210

⁴ Graphic Designer, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, 43210

The Farm and Ranch Safety Learning Lab Kit is our answer to experiential learning and making learning about agricultural safety tactile and fun for youth. Packaged in a canvas tote (26" long x 20" high x 7" wide) there are durable, reusable, hands-on resources, with content that is scalable for teaching

and evaluating youth of all ages and skill levels. Materials are printed on heavy stock with clear, easy-to-read lettering and are color-coded for easy organization. An inventory list on page 203 of the Educators Resource Materials Set identifies all components. Many activities include polystyrene tags for youth to identify parts and name images. This unique, hands-on approach allows youth to make a selection, change it, and if necessary change it again while working out the answer. The posters are double-sided, and ideal for educators to be effective at explaining answers so the participants learn and remember information. The topics include: risk factors, points of peril, PPE, hand signals, tractor operation, SMV placement, implement attachment and driving with an implement, skid steer and front-end loader controls, charging a battery, and more. Also included is the publication, National Farm and Ranch Safety Leader's Guide, with over 300 pages of content and activities, many of which complement the content of this Learning Lab. Perfect for 4-H clubs and tractor club activities, FFA chapters, Ag in the Classroom activities, skillathons, and agricultural association activities; the Learning Lab Kit is an excellent method of involving youth in challenging, learn-by-doing activities. It brings lessons to life! For NACAA judging purposes, a pdf of the Educator's Resource Materials Set is uploaded to show the kit's contents. To view a link to the visit: <https://extensionpubs.osu.edu/farm-and-ranch-safety-learning-lab-kit/> The lead author Dee Jepsen was responsible for creating and pilot testing the activities, while including student assistants in the Departments of Agricultural Systems Management and Agricultural Communications, Education, and Leadership. The OSU production team provided technical design, print layout, and graphic coordination. The publication was funded by a USDA-NIFA grant (award 2016-41521-25879/2017-41521-27067).

PUBLISHED PHOTO



National Winner

OSU EXTENSION AGRICULTURAL TOURISM

Audrey Comerford
Agritourism Coordinator
Oregon State University
Salem

The photograph depicts a group of adults learning how to make a dried flower wreath on a flower farm in the Willamette Valley. This is an educational activity that falls under the umbrella of agritourism and teaches the public how to use certain farm products. By doing this, the flower farm can extend their season by drying cut flowers to sell for wreath making. Classes such as this are fun and educational, connecting the public with working lands and Oregon agricultural products. The photograph was published in An Initial Economic Impact Estimate of Agritourism in Oregon's Willamette Valley as an example of on-farm education and agritourism. The publication is for industry, community leaders, and decision makers and is available online through the OSU Extension catalog as well as in printed PDF copies. The online version can be found at this link: <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/pub/em-9421-initial-economic-impact-estimate-agritourism-oregons-willamette-valley> The report has been published since February 8, 2024 and has had 244 individual views during that time.

EVENT PROMOTIONAL PACKAGE



National Winner

AGRICULTHER WOMEN IN AG CONFERENCE

Crystal Ashalintubbi-Shipman
Ext Ed Ag/4h
Wister

Ashalintubbi-Shipman, C*¹, Ellis, G²

¹ Ext Ed Ag/4h, Oklahoma State University, Wister, Oklahoma, 74966

² Editorial Communications Coordinator, Oklahoma State University, , Oklahoma,

In the 2022 Census of Agriculture, it was reported that 36% of US ag producers were female. That is an increase of 6% from just ten years prior. However, even though it isn't uncommon for women to be ag producers, the majority of the ag programming is geared towards male producers.

Many women, especially those new to the profession, are uncomfortable asking questions in a male dominated setting. To combat this, we wanted to host an event geared specifically towards female producers. While women in ag conferences aren't a new concept, many are held in the more urban areas. We saw a need to host a women in ag conference with hands-on learning opportunities geared specifically towards women in a location convenient for them to attend. To meet this need, we organized the AgricultHER Eastern Oklahoma Women in Ag Conference held in Wilburton, OK. The conference offered a variety of topics ranging from hay testing to cattle birthing simulations. The program marketing package was developed by Crystal Ashalintubbi-Shipman with the assistance of OSU Ag Communications Services and included a flyer, a news release, and a social media graphic. The flyer and social media graphic were created by Crystal and were shared across multiple counties and social media platforms with a total reach of 10,635. Crystal was interviewed for the news release, provided relevant information, and helped connect the author with a local producer. The news release was shared on Oklahoma State Extension's website, local newspapers, and social media platforms. We had 75 participants that ranged in age from 16-65 and had a day full of learning and fellowship!

BOUND BOOK / eBook



National Winner

OHIO FOREST PESTS: FIELD GUIDE

Amy Stone
Extension Educator
Ohio State University
Toledo

Stone, A*¹, Draper, E*², Smith, K³, Macy, T⁴

¹ Extension Educator, Ohio State University, Toledo, Ohio, 43615

² Extension Educator, Ohio State University, Geauga County, Burton, Ohio, 44021

³ Program Coordinator, Ohio State University, School of

Environment and Natural Resources, Columbus, Ohio, 43210
⁴ Forest Health Program Manager, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, Columbus, Ohio, 43229

Ohio's forests face numerous challenges to their health, the ecological benefits they provide and ultimately, their future existence. The Ohio Forest Pests: A Field Guide is a combination of a text and photographic resource, created to aid in the identification of forest pests and developed to be used in the field to aid in the correct diagnosis both in our urban and rural forests. Users can reference the field guide to confirm their suspicion, or key out common pests.

Authors incorporated growing degree day (GDD) information when available to increase awareness, utilization, and implementation of plant phenology and GDD.

Four thousand copies were printed using Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA) monies and distributed at Ohio Woodland, Water and Wildlife Conference; Ohio Parks Recreation Association Conference; Ohio Chapter of the ISA Conference; Northwest Ohio Woodland Owners Association; Ohio Green Industry Association's Conference; and OSU's Green Industry Short Course. Additional books were distributed at hands-on diagnostic programs for green industry professionals, Extension staff and volunteers, and municipal forestry and public service departments. Eighty-eight Extension offices were provided copies for use in the offices.

The book is divided by deciduous and coniferous hosts, then further broken down into diseases (foliage, root, stem and trunk, and vascular) and insects (foliage feeders, stem and trunk, and galls). Color-coded headers further provide organizational structure for easy reference.

Common and scientific names, major host(s), key features and control/management options is included for each pest. Over 200 photographs were included in the book, and 47 photos or line drawings were part of the pictorial glossary.

Text was written and edited by the authors, and photographs were credited to authors, colleagues, and images from bugwood. John Nagy who is an OSU Alumni worked on the layout and design.

Program evaluations were very positive and captured comments that included: "Very excited to use and apply the new Ohio Forest Pests Field Guide," and "The field guide was "the bomb!" We also received face-to-face feedback that was very positive. Many participants have also reached out via email after using the book in the field and expressing their appreciation for the book.

NACAA 2024 Search For Excellence Award Winners

Search for Excellence in Consumer or Commercial Horticulture



NATIONAL WINNER

ONLINE GREEN INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES

Ruth Benner
Extension Educator
Penn State University
ERIE

Team Members: Abbey, T¹, Barger, L², Benner, R*³, Berghage, R⁴, Butzler, T*⁵, Clitherow, M⁶, Delvalle, T*⁷, Feather, S⁸, Ford, T⁹, Fowler, J*¹⁰, Himes, D¹¹, Hoffman, M¹², Kopco, J¹³, Korman, A*¹⁴, Masiuk, M¹⁵, Diehl Mazzone, J¹⁶, Nagy, A¹⁷, Pickoff, M*¹⁸, Pittman, K¹⁹, Ruyak, D²⁰, Savage, J²¹, Seaman, J²², Sulpizio, J²³, Young, N²⁴

¹ Extension Educator, Penn State University, York, Pennsylvania, 17406

² Lead Instructional Designer, Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, 16802

³ Extension Educator, Penn State University, Erie, Pennsylvania, 16509

⁴ Associate Professor of Horticulture, Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, 16802

⁵ Extension Educator, Penn State Extension, Mill Hall, Pennsylvania, 17751

⁶ Marketing Strategy Specialist, Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, 16802

⁷ Extension Educator, Penn State University, Pottsville, Pennsylvania, 17901

⁸ Extension Educator, Penn State University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15219

⁹ Extension Educator, Penn State University, Ebensburg, Pennsylvania, 15931

¹⁰ Extension Educator, Penn State University, Franklin, Pennsylvania, 16323

¹¹ Sustainable Communities Manager, Penn State University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15219

¹² Assistant Professor and Program Coordinator Landscape Contracting, Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, 16802

¹³ Extension Educator, Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, 16802

¹⁴ Extension Educator, Penn State University, Nazareth, Pennsylvania, 18064

¹⁵ Assistant Director, Horticulture Programs, Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, 16802

¹⁶ Research Technologist, Diagnostician, Instructor, Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, 16802

¹⁷ Assistant Teaching Professor, Penn State University, Sharon, Pennsylvania, 16146

¹⁸ Extension Educator, Penn State University, Newtown, Pennsylvania, 18940

¹⁹ Extension Educator, Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, 16802

²⁰ Executive Director, Penn-Del Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture, Emmaus, Pennsylvania, 18049

²¹ Assistant Teaching Professor in Horticulture, Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, 16802

²² Program Manager, Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, 16802

²³ Extension Educator, Penn State University, York, Pennsylvania, 17406

²⁴ Educational Content Manager, Penn State University, Collegeville, Pennsylvania, 19426

The Penn State Extension Green Industry Team developed 35 online courses to address the need for training resources for the green industry. The project team included extension educators and Penn State University faculty who collaborated to develop the curriculum, content, visual elements, and assessment tools, as well as conduct peer reviews of the courses. The resulting self-paced, asynchronous courses are offered at several learning levels, with options for entry-level, intermediate, and advanced workers. The courses utilize videos, images, short readings, and knowledge check questions to teach each topic. From 2021 to 2023, 2,030 participants completed courses. Evaluation data indicates that 81% of participants reported an increase in knowledge, and 91% of participants reported the intention to implement the knowledge they gained from the courses in their work or daily life. The courses also allow participants to earn professional continuing education credits and pesticide applicator recertification credits. In the past three years, the courses generated \$132,747.00 in our efforts to support future green industry programming in Pennsylvania.

Search for Excellence in 4-H Programming



NATIONAL WINNER

REGIONAL CHICKEN PROJECT

Liz Joseph
Extension Agent
Fayetteville

Team Members: Joseph, L^{*1}, Spearman, B^{*2}, Chavis, T^{*3}, Blackmon, A^{*4}

¹ Extension Livestock Agent, NC Cooperative Extension, Fayetteville, North Carolina, 28306

² Extension Livestock Agent, NC Cooperative Extension, Elizabethtown, North Carolina, 28337

³ Extension Livestock Agent, NC Cooperative Extension, Lumberton, North Carolina, 28360

⁴ Extension Livestock Agent, NC Cooperative Extension, Whiteville, North Carolina, 28472

The Regional Chicken Project provides youth involved in 4-H and FFA in eight southeastern and south central North Carolina counties with the opportunity to learn how to raise and show chickens. Participants can choose to raise laying hens and/or broilers. Laying hens are kept by the participants at the end of the project while the broilers are given back and processed the day after the show for their meat to be donated to a local food bank. Youth must attend two mandatory training sessions, complete a project record book that includes an animal science section, and show their birds at the Regional Chicken Project Show. The project starts in February with the orientation training and culminates in April or May with the show. Over the past three years, 141 youth completed the project and over \$2,200 has been raised for awards and prizes. The main goals of this project are to provide a hands-on, educational opportunity to encourage and increase skills in showmanship, poultry production, record keeping, and to help build responsibility, confidence, and

communication skills in youth. Youth must attend a mandatory orientation Zoom and mandatory in-person showmanship and project book training. Youth submit a project record book that is designed for each age group and has the traditional 4-H components as well as a chicken supplemental learning section. Youth compete in a showmanship class based on their age and breed class based on the breed(s) of chicken(s) they choose to raise. The judges ask questions from the project books to test their knowledge of chicken production. 4-H projects teach life skills to our kids and how persistence is key to anything in life. Over the past three years, we have had several participants that have stood out as reasons why we continue this project and the importance of 4-H.

Search for Excellence in Crop Production



NATIONAL WINNER

NEW JERSEY HEMP PROGRAM

Stephen Komar
Agricultural Agent
newton

Team Members: Komar, S¹, Bamka, W^{*2}, Infante-Casella, M³, Brown, K⁴

¹ Agricultural Agent, Newton, New Jersey, 07860

² Agricultural agent, Rutgers, westampton, New Jersey, 08060

³ Agricultural Agent, Rutgers, Clarksboro, New Jersey, 08020

⁴ County Agent III/Assistant Professor, Rutgers, Bridgewater, New Jersey, 08807

Hemp is a new crop for many producers throughout the United States and much is unknown about modern production of hemp. Rutgers Cooperative Extension Agricultural Agents recognized the need for research, education, and outreach for farmers interested in and implementing hemp production. With the approval of the USDA Farm Bill of 2018 preceding the New Jersey Hemp Farming Act, these agents immediately

developed and delivered an extension program by answering stakeholder questions, planning, and conducting field research for hemp, and developing and publishing hemp resources for agricultural service providers, farmers in New Jersey and other clientele in the region. Two Agricultural Agents on the team have secured hemp permits from the New Jersey Department of Agriculture for the past 3 years in order to plant, harvest, and transport hemp for research trials and demonstrations. In addition, the team secured grant funds from the following sources: 1) the USDA Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education, Professional Development Program; 2) the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station Special Projects Funding; 3) the State of New Jersey Governors Special Projects Funding in cooperation with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture. Through their efforts in hemp crop production the team planned and implemented educational programs, planned and hosted a 2-day international symposium, published extension fact sheets, published a field production guide for commercial hemp, published a referred journal article, wrote and published professional conference proceeding articles, grower conference proceeding articles, conducted replicated field research projects, produced a podcast about hemp production, produced a video about the Rutgers hemp program, developed a Rutgers hemp website, created and managed a Rutgers hemp Facebook page, and provided multiple presentations to farmers, students, and agricultural service providers on hemp topics. Throughout these efforts the team has provided hemp information, education, and outreach to more than 8,569 persons.

Search for Excellence in Environmental Quality, Forestry and Natural Resources

NATIONAL WINNER

CONSERVATION FOR GENERATIONS

Kalyn Waters
CED/Agriculture Agent
University of Florida
Bonifay

Team Members: Waters, K¹

¹ CED/Agriculture Agent, , Bonifay, Florida, 32425

Hunting and fishing are critical to wildlife conservation in the U.S. In 2016 there were 11.5 million anglers/hunters, representing a decline of 2.2 million from 2011. (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). The aging trend of this population causes a need for youth to become involved. Objectives: To



address these issues the Conservation for Generations (C4G) was developed with the objectives to: 1) increase the knowledge of conservation, 2) increase the number of youth who participate in natural resource management (NRM) and conservation minded hunting/fishing, and 3) provide platforms for multigenerational interactions that will increase mentorship of youth in conservation, while encouraging the aging populations to continue to participate conservation activities. Method: Formal and informal learning events facilitate multigenerational knowledge dissemination, science based NRM training, and build a network of mentors for youth/new conservationists. This program model is based on volunteer led experiential learning activities that are hands-on in a field setting. Example events include: a Big Doe Contest, Fishing Tournaments, Live Wildlife Demonstrations, etc. were adults' team up with youth or inexperienced adults to hunt/fish following educational training. Results: Post-program survey data indicates that 84% of participants applied knowledge gained for actual practice change, 100% increased their understanding of the National Conservation Model, 94% increased their efforts to take youth hunting/fishing because of what they learned through C4G, and 100% of participants feel C4G reaches a critical audience and increased their quality of life. Additionally, 45% of all participants have never used Extension, or attended an Extension event, making it an effective model for reaching non-traditional clients. Not including social media reach, a total of 27,076 participants have been educated, 26 scholarships to purchase lifetime hunting licenses to youth and \$36,545 of funding has been generated. Conclusion: This program develops the next generation of conservationists, a critical component for population management and wildlife viability in an ecosystem. The program's growth indicates its critical need and ability to reach non-traditional audiences to foster change and knowledge gain. The impact of this program will last a lifetime for those involved. It's impossible to quantify positive experiences and memories this program facilitates.

Search for Excellence in Farm and Ranch Business Management



NATIONAL WINNER

IT'S AS EASY AS ABC - FIGURING COST OF PRODUCTION USING THE AGRICULTURAL BUDGET CALCULATOR PROGRAM

Glennis McClure
Extension Educator - Farm & Ranch Management Analyst
Nebraska Extension
Lincoln

Team Members: McClure, G*¹, Parsons, J², Van Tassell, L³, Eide, J⁴, Sand, S*⁵, Wilson, R⁶

¹ Extension Educator - Farm & Ranch Management Analyst, University of Nebraska - Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68583

² Professor - Agricultural Economics, University of Nebraska - Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68583

³ Professor Emeritus, University of Nebraska - Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68583

⁴ Programmer, University of Nebraska - Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68583

⁵ Extension Educator, University of Nebraska - Lincoln, North Platte, Nebraska, 69101

⁶ Project consultant, Independent, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68516

The Agricultural Budget Calculator (ABC) program is a unique enterprise budgeting program that offers a suite of risk management decision tools with educational and technical support provided by extension educators. The ABC program is available online for anyone interested in using it. Producers, bankers, students, farm managers, ag industry professionals all have free access to it. With continued development and expansion of features of the ABC program, user numbers have grown to over 1250 with 2800 enterprise budgets created thus far using the program. ABC serves as an excellent teaching resource, utilized in educational presentations and

workshops to help participants learn how to create enterprise budgets and then to use that information in management decision making. After one or more base budgets are prepared in the ABC program by individual users, further analysis and decision-making resources are available within the program. For example, users can analyze break-even scenarios, do crop comparisons, analyze annual crop insurance decisions for corn and soybeans, prepare proforma profit and loss statements with a cash flow needs report available that can be converted into a projected monthly cash flow report. Overall impact information received from program evaluations has indicated a high (90%) rating of the ABC program with at least 75-80% of training participants indicating that they gained knowledge on the topic of enterprise budgeting for crop production and in their understanding of what the ABC program is and what it can be used for. Feedback received from producers and agribusiness professionals that have utilized the ABC program in general say it is intuitive, dynamic, and important for them to be able to utilize in their planning. In 2023, an ABC program user from Boone County, Nebraska noted the following which would indicate a high level of usage and its significance as a decision-making resource. "I found the tool to be very useful. I developed crop budgets on it and used the budgets as my baseline to make future income projections from. I used that (information) to buy 450 acres of farmland last week!"

Search for Excellence in Livestock Production



NATIONAL WINNER

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO ACCIDENTS INVOLVING LIVESTOCK

Mike Metzger
MSU EXTENSION
JACKSON

Team Members: Metzger, M*¹, Ferry, B*², T*³, Zangaro, C*⁴, Okkema, C*⁵, Bacigalupo-Sanguesa, P*⁶, Jaborek, J*⁷, Fronczak, S*⁸, Heck, A*⁹, Benjamin, M*¹⁰, Honke-Seidel, M*¹¹, Ockert, K*¹²

¹ Extension Educator, Michigan State University Extension, Jackson, Michigan, 49202-2135

² Extension Educator, Michigan State University Extension, Benton Harbor, Michigan, 49022

³ Extension Educator, Michigan State University Extension, Jackson, Michigan, 49202-2135

⁴ Extension Educator, Michigan State University Extension, Alma, Michigan, 48801

⁵ Extension Educator, Michigan State University Extension, Big Rapids, Michigan, 49307

⁶ Extension Educator, Michigan State University Extension, Mason, Michigan, 48854

⁷ Extension Educator, Michigan State University Extension, Sandusky, Michigan, 44870

⁸ Extension Educator, Michigan State University Extension, Coldwater, Michigan, 49036

⁹ Extension Educator, Michigan State University Extension, East Lansing, Michigan, 48823

¹⁰ Extension Swine Veterinarian, Michigan State University Extension, East Lansing, Michigan, 48823

¹¹ ANR Publication Events Manager, Michigan State University Extension, East Lansing, Michigan, 48823

¹² Extension Educator, Michigan State University Extension, East Lansing, Michigan, 48824

In the United States, total red meat production is around 52.1 billion pounds with large numbers of animals transported over the nation's highways daily. According to the 2020 Ag Census, there are 3.26M head of livestock in Michigan. The MSU Extension animal agriculture team identified the need to prepare first responders for livestock transportation accidents as our state began to experience an influx of livestock haulers. This need is addressed through the Emergency Response to Accidents Involving Livestock (ERAIL) program which is a comprehensive training and response program. This program serves Michigan's animal agriculture industry by providing resources to help respond to accidents involving livestock.

The ERAIL program is made up of four different components: In-person training for response and transportation professionals, virtual training modules dedicated to expanding the reach of the ERAIL training program, individual consultations for organizations, locations, and units that are looking to be prepared for these types of situations, and developing a fleet of emergency response trailers in Michigan dedicated to providing the equipment and tools needed by responders to address emergency situations involving livestock. These efforts make up a robust, effective and proven program supported by evaluation data, funding support, stakeholder comments and effective response events. To date, over 700 people have been trained through the ERAIL program with 96% of participants indicating an increase in their skill set. Consistently, over 90% of the training participants indicated that they felt more comfortable around livestock after this experience and are more confident in their skills to address needs for accidents involving livestock. 100% of participants are aware of response resources that

are available to them to help prepare for and respond to accidents involving livestock.

The ERAIL team remains steadfast in their goal to increase the preparedness for accidents involving livestock by continuing to focus on training for first responders and providing accessibility to specialized equipment needed for these events. These efforts will continue to protect the safety of first responders at accident scenes, the public traveling on the roadways, promoting welfare of animals involved, and protecting the image of the animal agriculture industry.

Search for Excellence in Sustainable Agriculture



NATIONAL WINNER

IMPROVING SOIL HEALTH AND FARM PROFITABILITY WITH COVER CROPS

Heidi Reed
Field & Forage Crops Educator
Penn State University
York

Team Members: Reed, H*¹

¹ Field & Forage Crops Educator, York, Pennsylvania, 17402

Although there are many benefits to using cover crops, there are also many challenges including timing of cover crop planting after agronomic crops, cover crop termination, and the overwhelming number of cover crop options. A 2019 survey was distributed at pesticide education and a soil health events across the state. Producers indicated soil health topics of greatest interest on which they needed more information: cover crop species and mixtures (42%), cover crop management (31%), interseeding cover crops (28%), and planting green (25%) as soil health topics of greatest interest to producers (multiple answers allowed, n=64). To address these issues, the program objectives were: 1. increase cover crop adoption, 2. have a positive cash impact on farms, and 3.

reduce synthetic inputs by farmers due to ecosystem services provided by cover crops. To meet these objectives, webinars, in-person workshops, on-farm research, and guest lectures were conducted. Over 1,000 participants were reached by these cover crop programs. Evaluations were conducted shortly after programming. For webinars, long term (8 months to 2 years) follow-up surveys were also conducted. After attending any evaluated 2021-2023 webinar, cover crop walk, or workshop, 33% of farmer and ag service provider respondents indicated they would implement or would recommend implementing cover crops for the first time within the next year on a total of 8,048 acres (n=172, objective 1). 76% of respondents indicated that attending a program would have a positive cash impact on their business (n=156), with an average value of \$20.46 per acre (n=61, objective 2). In a follow-up survey of participants in the “Making Cover Crops Pay” 2021 and 2022 webinar series and workshops (n=161), of 46 farmer respondents, 27 had adopted cover crops on 4,096 acres for the first time (objective 1). Of 8 farmer respondents who attended the “Managing Cover Crops for Nitrogen” webinar session, 3 reduced the use of their synthetic fertilizer by 25-49 lb/A (objective 3). 6 of 12 farmer respondents said they saved money because of attending at least one of the webinar sessions, averaging \$6 per acre (objective 2).

Search for Excellence in Young, Beginning or Small Farmers/Ranchers



NATIONAL WINNER

DEVELOPING AND EDUCATING MANAGERS AND NEW DECISION-MAKERS (DEMAND) SERIES

Jonathan LaPorte
Farm Business Management Educator
Michigan State University Extension
Cassopolis

Team Members: LaPorte, J*¹, Whittington, S*², Wardynski, F*³

¹Farm Business Management Educator, Michigan State University Extension, Cassopolis, Michigan, 49031

²Field Crops Educator, Michigan State University Extension, Stanton, Michigan, 48888

³Ruminant Educator, Michigan State University Extension, Ontonagon, Michigan, 49953

Every year, inspired individuals enter the world of farming with passion, creativity and drive. These beginning farmers face a number of challenges as they start their new careers as farm managers. Those challenges can become roadblocks that reduce profitability. They may even restrict their farm’s ability to grow. To navigate these roadblocks requires an understanding of the financial and business aspects of farming.

To meet the farm business needs of beginning and small farmers, MSUE created the Developing and Educating Managers and New Decision-makers (DEMaND) series. Since 2019, the series has offered guidance to the next generation of farm operators and helps individuals learn about financial and business strategies. Led by MSUE educators and specialists, the series is a cross-team collaboration that features industry involvement from key partnering agriculture organizations.

The series features an assortment of free educational publications authored by MSU Extension educators and reviewed by agricultural professionals. This combination of university and industry expertise provides up-to-date information on a variety of important topics from insurance to marketing, land access to loans and credit, cost of production to budgeting and more. Between 2021 and 2023, these resources have been read 9,217 times and downloaded an additional 1,472 times.

Webinar programs featuring guest speakers also offer added insight into essential topics. From 2022 to 2024, live attendance has averaged 27.77 participants per session. In 2022, 94% of respondents indicated knowledge improvement and 86% intended to use information learned. In 2023, 65% of respondents indicated both knowledge gain and intention to use information learned. Educational videos are also available on financial statements and grain marketing with 3,149 plays between 2022 and 2023.

Whether participants represent the transition of generations, from an employee to owner, or are new to farming, the DEMaND series continues to offer a fresh look at farm management. Helping individuals from all levels of farm business knowledge grow in their capacity to meet the complex needs and challenges of managing a successful farm business. With resources to aid them in preparing for their future and give them the freedom to enjoy the fruits of their labor.

NACAA 2024

Agriculture Awareness and Appreciation Award



NATIONAL WINNER

PROMOTION OF AGRICULTURE: AN IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE

Jacci Smith
Extension Educator ANR/4-H
Ohio State University
Delaware

Team Members: Smith, J*¹, Leeds, R*², Leggett, R³, Hornyak, K*⁴

¹Extension Educator ANR/4-H, Delaware, Ohio, 43015-1707

²Extension Educator ANR, Ohio State University, Delaware, Ohio, 43015

³Extension Program Assistant, Ohio State University, Delaware, Ohio, 43015

⁴Program Coordinator, Ohio State University, Delaware, Ohio, 43015

According to the 2020 US census, Delaware County experienced a remarkable 22.9% population increase, once again the fastest-growing county in Ohio. However, as Central Ohio's population increases, the importance of agriculture and its value may not always be apparent. With 292,000 total acres in Delaware County, 132,875 acres dedicated to farming, agriculture plays a vital role within the county.

The agricultural landscape of Delaware County is notably diverse, with the northern half characterized by rural areas with a strong focus on the livestock industry and traditional row crops such as corn, soybeans, and wheat. The southern half of the county, while more densely populated, still boasts a variety of agricultural enterprises including farm markets, greenhouses, wineries, and agritourism operations. In 2022,

Delaware County's agriculture sector generated \$86.9 million in agricultural sales.

Recognizing the increasing urbanization and disconnect from agriculture within central Ohio, Ohio State University Extension Delaware County embarked on a mission to share agricultural knowledge with the community. Leveraging the innovative iFarm Immersive Theater, Extension created 360° videos showcasing the breadth of Ohio's agriculture and the various elements at work on its farms.

In 2023, the iFarm Immersive Theater successfully reached an audience of 10,800 individuals, including 6,514 children and 4,286 adults. Online evaluations revealed a positive impact, with 96.92% of respondents reporting learning something new and 92.96% feeling fully immersed in the videos. Impressively, 62.32% of participants had no prior involvement in OSU Extension programming, highlighting the effectiveness of this immersive approach in engaging new audiences and conveying the significance of agriculture.

Observations during the videos demonstrated that participants truly felt immersed in the experience, with some even experiencing motion sickness due to the lifelike depiction. Each video concluded with a connection to OSU's College of Food, Agriculture, and Environmental Sciences, reinforcing the university's commitment to supporting farmers, production agriculture, and the broader food industry across the state.

Post-video conversations revealed that participants gained newfound awareness of the interconnectedness of agriculture with food manufacturing and daily life. The iFarm Immersive Theater successfully provided an enriching experience for over 10,000 individuals, significantly increasing exposure to Ohio's vibrant agricultural sector.

2024 SERVICE TO AMERICAN/WORLD AGRICULTURE AWARD RECIPIENT

Dr. Derrell S. Peel

Extension Livestock Marketing Specialist in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Oklahoma State University

The Oklahoma Association of Extension Agriculture Agents is pleased to nominate Dr. Derrell S. Peel for the NACAA Service to American/World Agriculture Award. Dr. Peel holds the Breedlove Professorship of Agribusiness and serves as an Extension Livestock Marketing Specialist in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Oklahoma State University. With over 35 years of experience at OSU, Dr. Peel has cultivated a distinguished Extension program, integrated with applied research and teaching initiatives, showcasing a deep-rooted dedication to advancing knowledge and fostering global perspectives in agricultural economics.



In his role as an Extension Livestock Marketing Specialist, Dr. Peel's primary responsibilities revolve around developing and implementing comprehensive extension education programs tailored to the livestock industry. His duties encompass a wide range of activities, including the creation of educational materials, providing market analysis and outlook information, and supporting Area and County Extension personnel in delivering impactful educational programs. Moreover, Dr. Peel engages in applied research to enhance the effectiveness of educational materials and ensure the relevance of information provided to stakeholders. His expertise spans various areas, including Livestock Market Analysis and Outlook, Livestock Marketing Education and Risk Management, and the Economics of Stocker Cattle Production and Marketing, among others.

A pivotal aspect of Dr. Peel's career trajectory is his profound understanding of international cattle and beef trade dynamics. In the early 1990s, Dr. Peel recognized that the advent of NAFTA, along with emerging trends in global cattle and meat trade would change livestock marketing in the U.S. dramatically. Dr. Peel traveled extensively in Mexico with universities, producer groups, and government agencies. Through numerous international presentations, workshops, and publications, Dr. Peel has become a respected authority on the Mexican cattle and beef industry, fostering collaborative relationships and knowledge exchange on a global scale. His reach extends to other countries as well. Dr. Peel has made more than 25 international presentations as an invited speaker and workshop presenter at academic and industry conferences in Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Vietnam, Scotland and Canada. You would be hard pressed to find a room of cattlemen anywhere, including Mexico and Canada, where the name Derrell Peel is not recognized and respected.

Dr. Peel is a fluent Spanish speaker and one of his notable achievements is the development of the Spanish version of Oklahoma's Beef Cattle Manual, a testament to his inclusive approach to education and outreach. By spearheading the translation process and ensuring linguistic accuracy, he has facilitated access to vital resources for Spanish-speaking cattlemen, furthering the dissemination of knowledge and best practices in diverse domestic audiences and across borders.

Beyond extension, Dr. Peel has been active in both research and teaching. Derrell has not had a formal research appointment for most of his career, yet his scholarly output in applied research includes more than 60 refereed publications and more than 55 selected papers and published abstracts at professional meetings. Dr. Peel exemplifies the full research/extension circle of identifying relevant questions through Extension, applying solid science, and then creating science based Extension programming. Approximately 10% of that output addresses questions with an international focus or international implications, often with graduate students as he mentors them, continuing to plant the seed that the world is larger than what is right in front of us and that we must be open to see the whole picture.

Dr. Peel brings Extension into the classroom and also brings the classroom out into the field. He has played a pivotal role in facilitating international experiences for college students, including organizing Study Abroad courses to Mexico and more recently Scotland and Ireland. He is also leading educational tours for students domestically, specifically recruiting students that are international or from other states. His class on Oklahoma Agriculture Experiences is a series of tours that take students out of the classroom and across the state to see and touch every part of the food supply chain.

He organizes tours for Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association groups and visiting producer groups from other states, with a specific emphasis on beef cattle production. Additionally, his involvement in the China Agricultural University program underscores his dedication to fostering cross-cultural understanding and collaboration in agricultural education. Dr. Peel pivots quickly, adopting new ways of reaching audiences. He has a weekly RFD radio spot on cattle markets with an extensive following, and created the Farm to Market podcast series that reaches new and non-traditional audiences by telling the stories of agricultural history and current issues in his characteristic humor.

In summary, Dr. Derrell S. Peel embodies the essence of the Service to American/World Agriculture Award through his unwavering commitment to integrating global perspectives into Extension, research, and teaching. His multifaceted contributions have not only enriched the agricultural community in Oklahoma but have also fostered meaningful connections and collaborations worldwide. Dr. Peel's career stands as a shining example of excellence in global education, deserving of the highest recognition and appreciation.

DAN KLUCHINSKI MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD



NATIONAL WINNER

Peyton Ginakes
Research Associate
University of Maine
Monmouth

Training Event
2024 National Association of County Agricultural Agents
Annual Meeting/Professional Improvement Conference
July 14-18, 2024
Dallas, TX

I am applying for this scholarship with the hope of attending this year's NACAA AM/PIC conference. I began my career in Extension in the fall of 2020, when I began working at the University of Maine Cooperative Extension as a Fruit and Vegetable Research Associate. I work alongside UMaine's state Vegetable, Small Fruit, Tree Fruit, and IPM Specialists to conduct a broad range of applied fruit and vegetable crop research trials and provide growers with science-based production resources.

The most challenging, and rewarding, part of acclimating to my role in Extension has been delivering outreach. With a background in academic research where producers were consulted less frequently, I have worked earnestly to strengthen this skill and engage producers. I now survey producers' research priorities, co-organize state and regional farmer meetings, speak frequently at grower meetings and farm tours about my work, and create a multitude of crop production resources resulting from my research. I am eager to meet and learn from colleagues in my new professional society. By learning how they deliver their programming, I expect to creatively and effectively broaden my own program outreach methods. These improvements will be applied across my programs – from assessing needs, to designing programs, to creating resources.

Attending this conference until now has not been financially feasible because, being in a soft-money position, I am not eligible for the professional development funds made available to base-funded Extension professionals at my institution. However, I recently assumed the role of SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education) State Coordinator with the primary task of providing professional development training for Maine's agricultural service providers. As part of this program, I have a limited amount of discretionary funding for my own professional development with which I plan to offset the cost of attending this conference. Attending this training will therefore enable me to develop improved programming for producers, as well as for fellow agricultural service providers who in turn will be better equipped in their roles.

NATIONAL WINNER

Courtney Mitchell
Agriculture Agent
New Mexico State University
Mosquero

I am applying for the Dan Kluchinski Memorial Scholarship Award to aid in attending the 2024 National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA) Annual Meeting/



Professional Improvement Conference (AM/PIC) in Dallas, Texas from July 14-18, 2024.

In the fall of the 2018 I was hired by New Mexico State University as the Agricultural Extension Agent for Harding County, NM, an incredibly rural county dependent on the beef cattle and agricultural industry. Since 2019, I have been a member of NACAA and the New Mexico Association of County Agricultural Agents (NMACAA). I served as the Northeast District Director for the state association, and during a period of growth and reorganization, served as the secretary, president-elect, and now currently president. While membership in the NMACAA has grown agent turnover has caused active participation within the association to stall.

As an agricultural agent in a county of less than 700 people, it is my goal to provide producers with the most advanced, beneficial, and relevant information to keep their operations sustainable and profitable. The job of county agent is unique, and as the sole agent in the county, it can be difficult to generate ideas and maintain enthusiasm for programming. By attending the NACAA AM/PIC I can take advantage of educational information presented by expanding my knowledge and learning about emerging trends, innovative techniques, research findings, and best

practices in agriculture. The conference will provide a valuable opportunity for me to learn new skills, and stay updated on the latest technologies, tools, and resources which will enhance my work as an agricultural extension agent.

The NMACAA executive committee and general membership have expressed a strong desire to re-energize the state association, and as president it is my duty to use that motivation to create a stronger state association. Early 2024, I called for the executive committee to meet and set goals for the association and objectives for the coming year. We now hold regular webinars to highlight the benefits of being a NACAA member, generate interest in attending the AM/PIC and encourage applying for awards. We are also exploring ways to mentor new agents and foster a supportive environment among extension professionals to increase job retention.

Attending the AM/PIC will allow me to network with extension professionals from other states and discover ways to build a more robust state association. By being able connect and build relationships with like-minded individuals I will develop valuable collaborations, partnerships, and friendships that support my effort in helping the NMACAA continue strong growth and participation.

Collaboration and idea sharing among extension professionals is imperative to successful programs. By attending the NACAA AM/PIC I'll be able to engage with fellow agricultural agents, gain fresh perspectives, find inspiration, and discover new approaches to strengthen my work in Harding County and the NMACAA. It would be an honor to receive this scholarship, and funds would help with costs associated with attending the NACAA AM/PIC in Dallas this year.

SAVE THE DATE

JUNE 29 - JULY 2, 2025

BILLINGS, MONTANA



2024 NACAA

Distinguished Service Award Winners

NORTH CENTRAL REGION



Illinois
Doug Gucker



Ohio
Gary Gao



West Virginia
Greg Hamons



Florida
Matthew Lollar



Iowa
Terry Torneten



Ohio
Amanda Douridas

SOUTHERN REGION



Florida
Jonael Bosques-Mendez



Kansas
Stacie Edgett-Minson



South Dakota
Bob Thaler



Alabama
Ronni Brasher



Florida
Alicia Lamborn



Michigan
Mike Metzger



Wisconsin
Sandra Stuttgen



Alabama
Jeremy Pickens



Georgia
Brian Hayes



Minnesota
Angie Peltier

NORTHEAST REGION



Alabama
Lucy Edwards



Georgia
Jason Edenfield



Missouri
Joni Harper



Maryland
Paul Goeringer



Arkansas
Kenny Simon



Georgia
Jessica Warren



Nebraska
Wayne Ohnesorg



New Jersey
Salvatore
Mangiafico



Arkansas
Chris Elkins



Kentucky
Vicki Shadrick



North Dakota
Chris Augustin



Pennsylvania
Leon Ressler



Arkansas
Kevin Van Pelt



Kentucky
Chelsey Anderson



Kentucky
Brandon Sears



South Carolina
Zachary Snipes



Virginia
Stephanie
Romelczyk



Louisiana
Trey Price



South Carolina
Jaime Pohlman

WESTERN REGION



Mississippi
Doug Carter



Tennessee
Anthony Carver



California
Oli Bachie



Mississippi
Rocky Lemus



Texas
Justin Dudley



Colorado
Todd Hagenbuch



Mississippi
Ross Overstreet



Texas
Michael Berry



Idaho
Jennifer Jensen



North Carolina
Andy Burlingham



Texas
Brad Roeder



Montana
Megan Van Emon



North Carolina
Tom Dyson



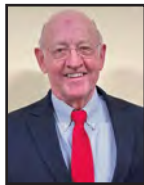
Texas
Michael Potter



New Mexico
Bonnie Hopkins



North Carolina
Tim Britton



Texas
Neal Alexander



Utah
Andree
Walker Bravo



Oklahoma
Dana Bay



Virginia
Amy Byington



Wyoming
Chance Marshall

D

S

A

2024 NACAA Achievement Award Winners

NORTH CENTRAL REGION



Illinois
Sarah Farley



Ohio
Haley Shoemaker



New York
Margaret
Quaassdorff



Arkansas
Tyler Caston



Indiana
Abigail Heidenreich



Ohio
Aaron Wilson



Pennsylvania
Samantha Gehrett



Florida
Mayerling Tatiana
Sanchez-Jones



Iowa
Sarah DeBour



South Dakota
Madalyn Shires



West Virginia
Lisa Jones



Florida
Ethan Carter



Michigan
Jeremy Jubenville



Wisconsin
Natasha Paris



Florida
Alicia Halbritter



Minnesota
Colleen Carlson



Alabama
Elizabeth (Beth)
Yates



Georgia
Savannah Tanner

NORTHEAST REGION



Missouri
Rusty Lee



Maine
Bee Khim Chim



Alabama
David Russell



Georgia
Greg Huber



Nebraska
Katja Koehler-Cole



Maryland
Sarah Hirsh



Alabama
Dylan L. Gilbert



Georgia
Holly Anderson



North Dakota
Breana Kiser



New Jersey
Timothy Waller



Arkansas
Bob Powell



Kentucky
Kendal Bowman

SOUTHERN REGION



Kentucky
April Wilhoit



North Carolina
Marshall Warren



Texas
Andrew Lewis



Kentucky
Adam Huber



Oklahoma
Bradley Secraw



Virginia
Sarah Sharpe

A



Louisiana
Ashley Edwards



South Carolina
Sarah Scott

WESTERN REGION



Mississippi
Keri Jones



South Carolina
Mallory Maher



Arizona
Ethan Orr

A



Mississippi
Kelby King



Texas
Matthew March



California
Zheng Wang



Mississippi
Austin Brown



Texas
Michael Bowman



Colorado
Kim Peters



Oregon
Jenifer Cruickshank



North Carolina
Leslie Rose



Texas
Megan Carter



Idaho
Meranda Small



Utah
Jake Hadfield



North Carolina
Joe Deal



Texas
Megan Eikner



Montana
Mat Walter



Wyoming
Jaycie Arndt



North Carolina
Liz Joseph



Texas
Michelle Moss



New Mexico
Talisha Valdez

NACAA Hall of Fame Award

The NACAA Recognition and Awards Committee is proud to present these three recipients with the NACAA Hall of Fame Award. The Hall of Fame Award recognizes one member or life member from each NACAA region. Each state can nominate one individual. Based on a 500 word summary and three letters of support, the state nominees are evaluated on their Extension programming, state and national association activities and humanitarian efforts beyond the normal call of duty.

Our thanks to Pipeline Ag Safety Alliance for sponsorship of the NACAA Hall of Fame Awards



2024
Southern Region
Hall of Fame Award
Kenneth White
Texas
33 Years - Retired



Being from a farming family in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, Kenneth White knew he wanted to be involved in Agriculture. After graduation from Edcouch-Elsa High School he attended Southwest Texas Junior College in Uvalde, Texas achieving an associate degree. He had always wanted to go to Texas A&M and become a County Extension Agent.

In 1974 after graduation from Texas A&M with a degree in Agricultural Education he was offered several positions as Assistant County Agricultural Agent. Being from the Rio Grande Valley of Texas he accepted the position in Liberty, a county with rice and soybeans of which he said he knew nothing about but was willing to learn. His parents, trainer agents and professors had always told him to work hard and do a good job and you'll never have to look for work. They were all correct. He had the privilege of working in Liberty, Goliad, Collin, and Uvalde Counties during his thirty-three-year career. Dr. Seaman Knapp's famous quote, "What a man hears he may doubt, what he sees he may possibly doubt but what he himself does he cannot doubt." That quote stuck with

him throughout his career and has been his focus in educating producers with the use of result demonstrations.

In 1994 he accepted the County Extension Agent job in Uvalde, Texas. Uvalde is in what is known as the Winter Garden Region of Texas due to the mild winters where several winter vegetables are grown. As with many minor commodities there is a lack of funding at the national or university level to address the problems of insects, diseases or weed control. In 1995 working with the growers in the area they were able to pass the first vegetable commodity check off program in the state. The Wintergarden Spinach Producers Board was organized in October 1995 and to date has funded over \$760,000.00 in research projects to address issues facing the industry.

Kenneth retired in 2007 and many people said you will be bored, you're too young or you'll go crazy sitting at the house doing nothing. He continues to serve as the Executive Director of the Wintergarden Spinach Producers Board and has served fifteen years as a Director on Medina Electric Cooperative Board which serves seventeen counties in South Texas serving as President the past five years. Medina Electric elected White as a Director on San Miguel Electric Cooperative an area Generation and Transmission Cooperative serving nine distribution cooperatives and has served twelve years and Board President the past four years. White also serves as the Fire Chief of Reagan Wells Volunteer Fire Department and a Deacon at Reagan Wells Baptist Church.

White has been actively involved in both the state and national associations, holding various positions throughout his career and attending twenty-five consecutive AM/PIC's. One of Kenneth's most enjoyable activities is getting together with fellow NACAA members he has met throughout the nation for the Annual NACAA Hunt at the Flying H Ranch in Llano.

Years of CES Service: 33

2024
Western Region
Hall of Fame Award
Charles Cheyney
Idaho
31 Years - Retired



Chad Cheyney was truly an outstanding county Extension educator. His commitment and dedication to his county, stakeholders, community, and colleagues serves as a stellar example for Extension professionals as a model for a successful, impactful Extension career. His use of participatory and experiential teaching methods helped increase the adoption of best management practices in agricultural practices among farmers and livestock producers. This stakeholder group continues to practice the methods Chad demonstrated and taught to improve their operations. During his 31-year Extension career, Chad conducted numerous demonstration and applied research trials in biocontrol of leafy spurge, alfalfa fertilization, effective herbicide use in alfalfa, cereal grain and cereal forage varieties, livestock grazing methods, nitrogen fertilizer materials in pasture, nitrogen application and loss-inhibiting factors in soft white wheat, and others. Chad was a prolific writer and authored and/or co-authored two book chapters, several journal articles, and numerous Extension publications over the course of his career. He presented the results of his work at local, state, regional, and national meetings. He led the development of the Lost Rivers Grazing Academy which is an applied science grazing course focused on management-intensive grazing of irrigated pastures. This program has continued after 23 successful years, reaching attendees from over twelve different states and three countries. The program was recognized in 2006 as the national winner of the NACAA SFE award in livestock production. Chad continues to co-organize and teach this program seven full years after his retirement.

Association involvement

Chad has been active in NACAA and IACAA since 1986. He served as IACAA Junior Director (1998-99); IACAA Senior Director (2000-2001) and IACAA President (1992-93). He chaired the national Program Development Committee (1997-1999). He was a member of the awards committee (1992-1995) and co-chaired the awards committee (1997-99). In 2011-12, Chad was a planning committee member for the Western Region NACAA PIC. During his Extension career, Chad attended the majority of IACAA annual meetings and summer tours, and conferences. He helped organize and host several of the IACAA summer meetings and tours. He attended several NACAA AM/PICs throughout his career. Chad received the NACAA Distinguished Service Award for Idaho (2003).

Humanitarian/leadership

Chad had has a remarkable community service record. He is a member of the Arco Lions Club (1988-current). He volunteered on the Lost River Ambulance as an emergency medical technician for 7 years. He has volunteered on the ski patrol at both Grand Targhee and Blizzard Mountain ski resorts since 1993. Chad has served in various capacities at the Epiphany Episcopal Church. He and his wife Terri have managed the community food bank since 2010. Chad continues to volunteer at numerous events in his community and Idaho. Additionally, Chad mentored numerous faculty members and graduate students. He was dedicated to teaching all new faculty and was always available to assist them in any manner with their career and their achievement of success. He continues to serve his community, colleagues, friends, family, and country as a true role model and public servant.

Years of CES Service: 31



**2024
North Central Region
Hall of Fame Award
Gregory Endres
North Dakota
40 Years**



Greg has served NDSU Extension for 40 years, including the past 33 years as Cropping Systems Specialist, based at the Carrington Research Extension Center (CREC). In his current position, the priority audience is crop advisers, and specifically Extension county ag agents. He serves North Dakota agents with a focused in-service program including annual spring agronomy updates, in-season crop Zoom calls, individual and group field days, individual consultation, presentations during winter meetings and summer tours, and including their involvement in field research and surveys.

Examples of Greg's programming for crop advisers and farmers include the CREC Crop Management Field School, Advanced Crop Advisers Workshop (ACAW), and Getting-it-Right (GIR) in Crop Production. He is co-chair of the ACAW (since 1993) conducted by NDSU and University of Minnesota Extension serving 150 to 175 persons per workshop (over 5000 during past 30 years) through in-depth training of selected crop production issues. Greg serves as co-chair of the GIR program initiated for soybean over a decade ago to provide NDSU production research updates and recommendations. Since 2020, the program expanded to dry bean, canola, flax, sunflower and corn, primarily delivered virtually (Zoom). The GIR program directly reaching over 2000 persons is another example of successful Extension programming through Greg's work in program planning, moderating, presenting and evaluation.

Greg's agronomy focus for educational programs and research during the past two decades has been row crops, primarily soybean and dry bean. His research and educational efforts

corresponded with the growth of soybean acres in North Dakota starting in the mid-1990's (less than 500,000 acres) and reaching the status of highest acreage crop (greater than 5 million acres) in the state in 2016. Greg has annually devoted about 20% of his time to research. Taking a research idea from a stakeholder; planning and implementing field research; analyzing data; presenting to clientele during educational events; and publishing in research and Extension documents has been routinely achieved.

Greg has had a high and consistent productivity throughout his career. For example, between 2014 and 2022, he has delivered over 400 presentations to nearly 25,000 agricultural clients, delivered over 200 media outreach programs, published 28 Extension publications (14 as main author) and over 130 research reports, and directly consulted with an estimated 23,000 individuals. His work has been widely recognized with awards and honors that recognize excellence from NDSU and including NACAA.

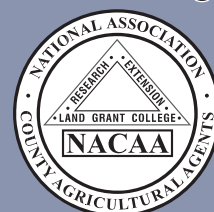
Greg has been a member of the North Dakota Association of Agricultural Extension Agents (NDAAEA) since 1983. Has served NDAAEA in numerous leadership positions including as president, secretary and committee chairs. He has participated in numerous NACAA AM/PICs including poster and oral presentations, and received numerous communication awards. In addition to his Extension career, Greg has been an active community volunteer, primarily in youth (e.g. 4-H and FFA) and faith programs.

Years of CES Service: 40

INTERESTED IN NACAA HISTORY?

Two History books are available for viewing on the NACAA website

<https://www.nacaa.com/nacaa-history-books>



**2024
Northeast Region
Hall of Fame Award
Richard Brzozowski
Maine
35 Years - Retired**



Dr. Brzozowski's exceptional commitment to the mission of Extension is evident in the substantial impact he has made through his extensive volume of educational programs, contributions to statewide leadership, and his remarkable success in securing over \$1.9 million in grant funds for diverse research and educational initiatives. His influence spans from county-based educational programs supporting sustainable agriculture and home horticulture to statewide responsibilities as a small ruminant & poultry specialist, illustrating his dedication to collaborative efforts with a variety of agricultural producers. Dr. Brzozowski's leadership in farm safety, particularly through the Maine AgrAbility program, highlights his commitment to addressing the unique and underserved needs of his audience. Highlighted achievements in his educational programs since 2011 underscore his effectiveness. Notable examples include the Farm Tractor Safety course, resulting in job placements and increased safety consciousness among participants. His outreach to Maine Goat and Sheep producers has positively impacted income through the adoption of new guidelines and practices. Additionally, his leadership in applied poultry science projects and the Maine AgrAbility program emphasizes his commitment to enhancing the well-being of farmers, forest workers, and fishermen with disabilities. Brzozowski was instrumental in bringing the Maine Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) program out of dormancy in 1988. The MGV program is now one of the most popular educational programs of UMaine Extension with over 1,200 MGV across the state.

Dr. Brzozowski's multifaceted approach is further showcased through his involvement in applied research, national conference presentations, and the integration of research findings into educational programs. Serving as the Nat. Chair for the Program Recognition Council and the Nat. Chair for the Search for Excellence at the NACAA attests to his leadership on a national level.

Transitioning into a Program Administrator (PA) role in 2015 until his retirement in 2022, Dr. Brzozowski served as the State Program Leader for the Maine Food System. In this capacity, he provided administrative support for three counties, supervised 32 faculty and staff, and served as the Director for the Maine Food and Agriculture Center. His engagement in professional development, participation in the Supervisory Development Institute, and enrollment in relevant courses reflected his commitment to enhancing his skills as a PA.

Demonstrating a forward-thinking approach, Dr. Brzozowski identified challenges and opportunities facing UMaine Extension, setting strategic goals and implementing creative strategies to address them. His proactive engagement within the Maine Food System community solidified his reputation as an excellent ambassador for UMaine Extension.

Dr. Brzozowski has demonstrated a lifelong commitment to service starting in his days as a US Navy Seabee in the Construction Battalion from 1973 to 1977. He later became a Vocational Agriculture Instructor teaching learning disabled high school students on a school farm in the early 1980s. From there, he became a staff member of Christian Campus House in Columbia, MO where he directed outreach to the international population (students and refugees) as part of a Christian friendship program where he helped meet spiritual, physical and social needs of people from other cultures and taught others to do the same.

Years of CES Service: 35

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(1)	Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	1949	2073
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2026
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2027
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2028
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December, 2024

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Deadline for articles: November 15, 2024

Mail Date: December 28, 2024

April, 2025

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