New Faculty Expertise

College of Ag & Natural Resources fills positions in veterinary, sheep and meat marketing.

This winter, the college hired three people in areas that might be of interest to Wyoming Stock Growers Association members. Assistant Professor Berit Bangoura joined the Veterinary Sciences Department in May as the Section Head for Parasitology. Assistant Professor Whit Stewart assumes the responsibility of extension programming, teaching, and research focused on sheep. Ms. Sierra Jepsen, a recent graduate from The Ohio State University will be working with students on branding and marketing UW meat products and will also coach the UW Meats Judging Team. Jepsen and Stewart both join the Animal Sciences Department in July.

If you call the Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory regarding a parasitology related issue, you may end up speaking with our newest faculty member, Dr. Berit Bangoura. Bangoura comes to Wyoming from Leipzig University in Germany, where she was a member of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and a Diplomate of the European Veterinary Parasitology College. She assumes responsibility for the parasitology laboratory at the Wyoming Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, which includes the Trichomoniasis testing program, as well as identification of other internal and external animal parasites. A portion of her time will also be spent researching ways to diagnose and eliminate Coccidia – a single-celled parasite that can infect the intestinal tract of many animal species.

Students this fall will see meat marketing internship opportunities, a UW Branded Meats program on campus, and a revitalized meat judging program headed by Ms. Sierra Jepsen. Jepsen is a recent graduate from The Ohio State in Agribusiness and Applied Economics. Her background includes internships with AgriBeef’s Washington beef packing plant, the Certified Angus Beef (CAB) organization, and the Ohio State University Meat Lab.

A three-time winner of the Certified Angus Beef brand Colvin scholarship, Jepsen won top honors with her response to this year’s competition theme addressing the question, “In a future with even heavier beef carcasses, what can the CAB brand do to keep beef competitively priced while delivering a high-quality product?” Jepsen argued that increasing marbling in beef more quickly would allow producers to send cattle to market at a younger age; thus, with a more moderate-weight carcass. The college looks forward to introducing Jepsen to Wyoming producers at the winter meeting. This position, as well as the new meat lab student internships, was funded by income from the Y Cross Ranch endowment.

Assistant Professor Whit Stewart is looking forward to joining the animal sciences faculty this summer as the UW Extension sheep specialist. Stewart’s background includes an agricultural upbringing in western New York and research experience in Oregon, Texas, New Mexico and Montana. Early in his career, Stewart served as an extension educator in Gillette Wyoming and says he is looking forward to returning to Wyoming and the University of Wyoming.

The extension sheep specialist position will be developing a relevant and impactful extension program in sheep that is aimed at increasing the sustainability and profitability of this industry. In addition to his work with producers, Stewart will also develop a sheep production and management class for our students.

All three positions reinforce our continuing commitment to Wyoming’s livestock industry. As you look towards fall, I hope you will save September 23 on your calendars. This is the annual Ag Appreciation Weekend BBQ prior to the UW vs. Hawaii football game. See you this fall! 🏈