

Extension Connection

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It takes a team

A seed is planted in Wyoming.

Start with a long-term CES Strategic Plan. Layer it into five program initiatives. Form a citizen task force to evaluate how to carry out the CES mission.

Create teams of CES specialists, educators, faculty members, and administrative advisers to begin the work. Emphasize words like “diversity.” Ask people to ask the right questions. Help them to pinpoint the needs. Show them how to rally, how to act.

Connect them through issue groups. Encourage them to overlap, to join other teams. Allow them to move around, to talk to the state, to eliminate any degrees of separation.

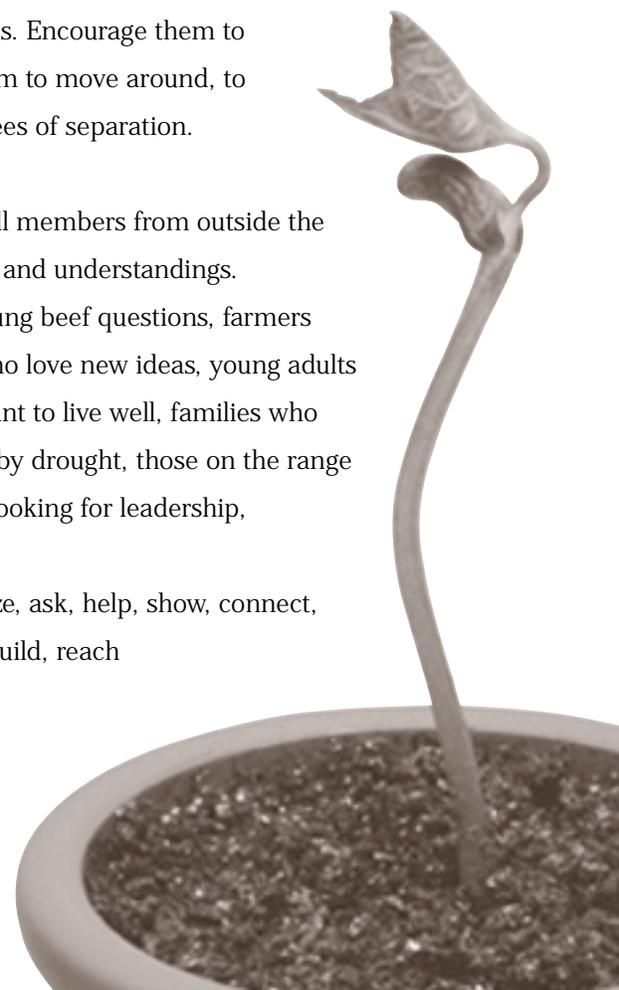
Cultivate.

Add area advisory committees. Pull members from outside the CES family. Build on new relationships and understandings.

Reach out to . . . ranchers with young beef questions, farmers challenged by commodities, youths who love new ideas, young adults carrying portfolios, consumers who want to live well, families who want to be safe, producers devastated by drought, those on the range who need help to grow, communities looking for leadership, households balancing businesses.

Start, layer, form, create, emphasize, ask, help, show, connect, encourage, allow, cultivate, add, pull, build, reach out . . .

A seed grows.



UW CES takes change by the hand in strategic planning process

By Glen Whipple, UW CES Director

For nearly a century, the University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service (UW CES) has been the conduit for scholarship and education between the university, the College of Agriculture, and the people of Wyoming, drawing on campus-based resources to address the needs of individuals, agricultural producers, organizations, and communities. We have developed a reputation for dedication to statewide education and a determination to provide accessible instruction, information, and service. By holding ourselves and our programs to high standards, we have cultivated a legacy of trust and a tradition of reliability and creativity.

Looking forward and acting strategically are critical to the success of UW CES. We are undergoing enormous social, economic, political, and technological changes, as well as innovations in higher education and distance learning. Winston Churchill observed you had “better take change by the hand or it will take you by the throat.” The UW CES strategic planning process has been a proactive response, an effort to take change by the hand. We will use this framework to position our organization, its programs, and its resources to maintain a position of leadership. Excellence depends on realistic goals and action to meet challenges and solve problems.

The 2002 UW CES Strategic Plan reaffirms our mission to provide research-based knowledge to improve the lives of Wyoming’s people, strengthen families and communities, and enhance Wyoming’s natural landscape. As our partners, it is the role of Wyoming citizens to be involved, to provide feedback for our improvement, and to apply knowledge in meaningful ways to their lives and communities.

I encourage all of you to play an active role and work with us to implement our Strategic Plan. Our challenge is to build upon our successes to meet the changing needs of people throughout the state and to help Wyoming’s communities address concerns related to agricultural sustainability and profitability, 4-H and youth development, rangeland and other natural resources, community development, and nutrition and food safety. Our goal is to forge a partnership that encompasses the university’s research and technological resources, CES specialists and educators, as well as each person and community throughout the state.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *Extension Connection*. It highlights the work of our five State Program Initiative Teams. We are excited about our new programs and hope you will feel the same. If you would like to discuss the things you read here or anything regarding Cooperative Extension programs, give me a call or send me an e-mail (307-766-5124 or glen@uwyo.edu). ☺



Cooperative Extension Service



4-H and Youth Development team seeks to revitalize programs

By Vicki Hamende, Senior Editor
Office of Communications and Technology

The future of 4-H may revolve around terms like robotics, Wonderwise, and portfolios. Traditional and popular 4-H programs will still be the foundation, but a statewide group is looking ahead at ways to keep 4-H fresh, interesting, and exciting.

One of five state initiative teams, the CES 4-H and Youth Development team is working to revitalize the organization by focusing on building strong programs with high interest, helping 4-H members develop portfolios of their accomplishments, partnering with educators to provide after-school activities, and updating leader training.

“Our goal will always be to help youth develop skills for life, and 4-H programs are the vehicle we use,” said Johnathan Despain, team member and 4-H coordinator. “What we’re doing now is trying to establish issues that need to be addressed statewide. It’s time to toot our own horn about the good things we are doing while continuing to look at what else we can do to help develop Wyoming’s young people into the best adults they can be.”

Led by Warren Crawford of Carbon County, the team of 4-H specialists and educators from throughout the state has been meeting for more than a year to try to enhance the 4-H experience in Wyoming for the more than 7,400 kids and teens who participate. One step has been to rank existing programs so that popular ones like shooting sports, livestock, and sport fishing



Zach Johnson, a junior leader and livestock participant in the Goshen County Huntley Farm and Homebuilders 4-H Club, teaches youth the proper way to inject medication into their livestock. His presentation was part of a beef quality program at a Goshen County Livestock Frenzy organized by CES educator Wayne Tatman, standing on the right.

are expanded while others with low enrollment are reclassified as individual self-determined projects.

On a statewide level, the team is looking at the feasibility of starting a natural resources camp and adding a sport-fishing contest to existing state venues such as youth judging contests (for livestock, meat, wool, vegetables, horses, and wildlife habitat), Camp Fantastic, Horse Camp, State Fair, the Ambassador Program, Youth Council, and State Shoot. To encourage youngsters to remain involved in 4-H through their high school years, the team is considering developing a youth leadership camp for 10 to 13-year-olds.



Organizing a poster display about 4-H sport fishing in Uinta County are, from left, Mark Gillies, Ron Taylor, P. J. Sandler, and Paul Sandler.



Karl Jaeger, a member of the Uinta County Midnight Rustlers 4-H Club, gets some tips on computerized record keeping from his mother, Rose Jaeger.

Older junior leaders would work with them, Crawford explained, “to get them enthused about leadership and staying in the 4-H program.”

Another goal of the team is to redesign the traditional 4-H record books with the help of computers to make them more like portfolios illustrating each participant’s progress from year to year. Despain envisions the portfolios as being valuable tools in helping 4-Hers apply for college and scholarships, develop resumes, and seek jobs. “What we are hoping is that the portfolios will benefit them over time so that they will be able to see their own growth and progression,” Despain said. “The portfolios will also provide proof that 4-H makes a difference. Each year we can support and show that.”

To meet the team’s objective of offering life skills education to nontraditional audiences, 4-H is partnering with Wyoming classrooms to provide hands-on in-school and after-school enrichment activities such as the science-based Wonderwise program, a mini-society entrepreneur program, Cent\$ible Nutrition, and projects promoting agriculture. “This will provide an opportunity for us to try to offer education through the general classrooms,” Despain said. “The whole process behind 4-H is that we teach differently. We use experiential means whereas classroom teachers are sometimes more oriented to subject matter. They are

slowly shifting into what we have been doing for 100 years.” In addition to highlighting productive free-time activities, he said the plan could also help recruit new 4-H members who can see that “there’s more to 4-H than fairs.”

To better empower volunteers to play key roles in 4-H and youth development programs, the team is updating the 4-H training manual. Despain also hopes to see a process of metamorphosis as new leaders try to learn as much as they can by consulting with established leaders. “We are at a time in which it’s pretty critical that we stay on top to be able to provide them with as much information as we can,” he said.

Ultimately the state initiative team wants to see 4-H continue to do what it does best – listen to young people and work with them at the grass roots level to put together programs that interest them and that volunteers are willing to support. As pointed out in the team’s directive, “4-H and youth development programs evolve from subject matter knowledge and skills, self-development, and social interaction among people of different backgrounds, experiences, and ages. 4-Hers develop good work habits by sharing ideas and helping each other. Most project work is done in or near the home, so families can work and be together. 4-H projects are real-life experiences that help members take responsibility for their own actions.” ☺

Team seeks action plan to deliver educational programs

By Vicki Hamende, Senior Editor
Office of Communications and Technology

What issues are producers in Wyoming concerned about? How can educational information about those issues best be organized? How can the resulting message be delivered to those interested in a timely manner despite shortages of manpower and funding? These are the questions being tackled by the Profitable and Sustainable Agricultural Systems State Initiative Team as it works toward meeting its goal of promoting the adoption of sustainable agricultural systems through education.

What are the answers? “Good question,” said Bill Taylor, chair of the initiative team and a Weston County Cooperative Extension Service (CES) educator. His group of specialists, field educators, and College of Agriculture department heads has been meeting for more than a year and has been gradually developing an action plan revolving around issue teams investigating sustainable livestock, cropping, and horticulture systems.

The first project the group organized to provide education in the area of forage-based livestock was an interdisciplinary young beef female program under the leadership of Wayne Tatman, Goshen County CES educator, that provided information about agroeconomics, breeding, forage and nutrition, herd health, and the human stresses involved with raising cattle. It was presented in Pinedale, Torrington, Gillette, and Cody. “It was unique in that we worked together as an

initiative team focusing on an all-encompassing program for developing the young beef female using elements of other parts of the university,” said Paisley. Content information was posted on the team’s Web site and follow-up material was sent to those who attended the traveling program.

“We hope to expand to the rest of the beef herd – mature females and bulls – and then to adapt the same type of educational program to other types of livestock,” Taylor said. Finding ways to better publicize educational events to improve attendance is an issue the team will work on for the future. “There’s never a good time to give a program to ranchers. They are always busy,” Taylor said.



Steve Paisley participated in his initiative team’s young beef female educational program.

Profitable & Sustainable Agricultural Systems

Two simulation programs endorsed by the initiative team are available online to producers. A risk-management simulation coordinated by John Hewlett, an agricultural and applied economics CES specialist, allows participants to use different management scenarios to determine if a ranch or farm operation has saved or lost money. Commodity Challenge, another online simulation, gives producers of corn and hard red winter wheat a chance to trade on cash, futures, and option markets without exposing themselves to actual market risks.

A future task for the agricultural systems group will be the promotion of its sustainable cropping systems issue team, which will focus on topics like irrigated crops. “We’re asking people to think about issues prominent in their county and region that producers would be interested in,” said Jim Krall, a UW plant sciences professor at the Research and Extension Center in Torrington and issue team chair.

Meanwhile, the sustainable horticulture issue team, chaired by CES educators Jim Gill of Worland and Scott Hininger of Sheridan, has been charged with developing a vision that will consider the organizational needs of the Master Gardeners program and horticulture problems such as disease, entomology, and soils.

Other focus areas identified by the overall team include working with the Wyoming Department of Agriculture, the Wyoming Business Council, and other agencies to develop partnerships in planning and presenting programs on organic farming, crops that perform well in drought conditions, and the effects of the new farm bill. Tatman would like to see CES work more closely with its sister agencies like the Natural Resource Conservation Service and the Farm Service Agency. “We’d like to push to try to get everybody working together from an educational standpoint and also in how we want to deliver our programs,” Tatman said.

Team chair Taylor has to look for ways to make it all possible within the budgetary and manpower constraints of the initiative team. “There are so many things that should be done to address all of these different issues, but we can only bite off a small part of each one at a time.”

Paisley also points out that the number of ranching families in the state is dwindling in the current economic environment. “From an Extension standpoint, I think there’s more competition for their time since more companies are emphasizing service,” he said. “It’s up to us to develop a good product and to try to develop it successfully so that we can provide a helpful voice.” ☺

Nutrition and food safety team looks to enhance existing programs

By Vicki Hamende, Senior Editor
Office of Communications and Technology

When the Nutrition and Food Safety State Initiative Team first met more than a year ago, team members made an interesting discovery—some of what the group needed to do to meet its goal of improving the health of Wyoming citizens through wise nutrition and health decisions and safe food-handling practices was underway.

“We already have some good cutting-edge kinds of things going on,” said Christine Pasley, a CES educator and chair of the initiative team. So the task shifted to investigating ways of enhancing the educational programs offered throughout the state while exploring emerging issues such as how homeland security fits into food safety, the safety of drinking water, the increasing number of people diagnosed with diabetes, family and therapeutic nutrition, and safety issues related to antibacterial soap, chlorine bleach, and pesticides.

The challenge now for department heads, extension specialists, and educators on the team is how to direct issue teams such as the Wyoming Food Safety Coalition to best use the skills and services of the limited number of available family and consumer sciences experts.

The initiative team plans to continue and perhaps expand the collaborative educational work now being done in the field of food safety. “We have a good working relationship with the department of agriculture,” said Ruth Wilson, administrative liaison to the team and an associate director of CES. The offerings

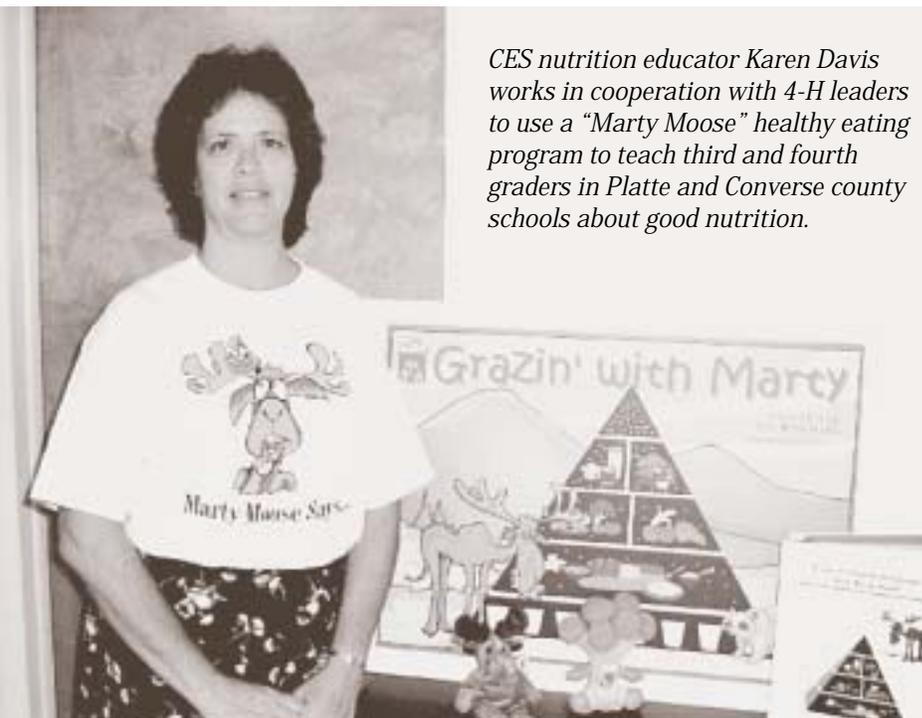


The Nutrition and Food Safety State Initiative Team meets to discuss plans to enhance its educational offerings. From left are Denise Smith of Niobrara County, Phyllis Lewis of Washakie County, CES Associate Director Ruth Wilson, Stella McKinstry of Sublette County, and team chair Christine Pasley of Platte County.

include the three-tiered “Going for the Gold” food service training program, the ServSafe National Restaurant Association Education Foundation certification program, and food safety information for outfitters, fundraisers, and senior citizens.

CES and its sister coalition members also focus on educating consumers about organic and genetically engineered food, wild game, Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP), and about food preservation. Newspaper columns, media releases, Web sites, and participation on state councils help the team publicize its food safety line-up. Preschoolers and elementary students are drawn in through activities and puppets that teach them about germs and the importance of washing their hands.

Nutrition & Food Safety



CES nutrition educator Karen Davis works in cooperation with 4-H leaders to use a "Marty Moose" healthy eating program to teach third and fourth graders in Platte and Converse county schools about good nutrition.

Issue teams have also been tapped to look at enhancing the multi-agency WIN (Wellness In) Wyoming, the four-state, grant-run WIN the Rockies, and the Cent\$ible Nutrition (CNP) programs that are already recognized nationwide and have won awards for their impact. "A New You" and "WIN Kids" are programs associated with WIN Wyoming that promote fitness, good nutrition, and having a positive self-image. A "Marty Moose" character helps school children learn more about the foods that benefit them. A home study CNP course is available for the study of nutrition. Cent\$ible Nutrition cookbooks are being translated into Braille for the blind and are also being adapted for use in specific institutions. The program has applied for a grant to work with food banks on the issue of food security. More information and links are being added to the Web site at www.uwyo.edu/cesnutrition to help the public find useful tips and also learn about the work of the state initiative team.

The group has brainstormed to pinpoint issues to help meet the needs of the state's citizens, some of whom are overweight, inadequately fed, ill, and poverty-stricken. In the area of good nutrition, the Nutrition and Food Safety team will be working to promote healthy diets, appropriate serving sizes, proper nutrition habits throughout the life cycle, cooking within a budget, weight realities, food preparation, and pleasurable eating. In the area of therapeutic nutrition, the team hopes to offer more education concerning cholesterol, salt, dietary and herbal supplements, osteoporosis, food and supplemental drug interactions, diabetes, sports nutrition, healthy weights, and eating disorders.

Wilson praises the team for setting its directions and sees her role as providing helpful information that comes from other states. "This team is definitely running the program. They are in charge," she said. "I am there to support them." ☺



Reviewing a lesson on the nutritional content of fast-food items as part of "A New You" are Mary Kay Wardlaw, education specialist for WIN the Rockies, and Suzy Pelican, CES food and nutrition specialist.

Range college to provide custom-made education programs

By Vicki Hamende, Senior Editor
Office of Communications and Technology

Every college needs a library. A “range college” should have a well-stocked “library” of timely topics of interest to rangeland managers. The library should be available at all times throughout the state. These conclusions reached by the Sustainable Management of Rangeland Resources State Initiative Team are the foundation of the group’s plan to reach its goal of using the resources of CES to provide accurate, objective, and educational programs to Wyoming ranchers and farmers.

“There’s no end to the different kinds of topics we can put together in this curriculum,” said Eric Peterson, team chair and CES educator in Pinedale. “The idea is to provide in-depth, integrated educational offerings by having resource materials, faculty members and educators, and organized programs ready on deck for county use,” he added. “We believe that the initiative team is providing leadership by developing curricula specifically targeting objectives. It is being responsive to the needs of field educators by identifying educational resources upon which they may draw in building their own educational program. And, by serving as an ‘architect’ of educational programs rather than as a ‘stand-up presenter,’ we acknowledge, recognize, and preserve the importance of area teams and county coordinators in directing educational programming for their clientele.”

Here’s how it works. Based on interest and timeliness, a half-day (or shorter or



During an educational field day for ranchers and farmers, CES educator Blaine Horn of Buffalo demonstrates the use of a spring scale to weigh a sack of grass to determine an estimate of production. (Photo by Justin Horn)

longer) curriculum is put together by someone on the initiative team to address, say, rules and regulations important to small-acreage owners who raise animals. The designer of the program decides that critical elements to be discussed should include local zoning restrictions, fencing, liability and legal issues of animal ownership, brand inspection requirements, and health regulations. Having written a curriculum outline, the author then recruits individuals with specific expertise on the topics to organize presentations. The program is thus ready to be delivered when requested by an area coordinator or educator. “Range college is a wonderful rubric to run something like this through,” said Peterson. In addition to the ready-made programs that will be waiting to be “checked out” from the range library, crisis situation issues will be turned into instant

Sustainable Management
of Rangeland Resources



UW CES Specialist Kelly Crane shows how to measure plant utilization by comparing grazed and non-grazed pasture. Also pictured is Mike Smith, a professor in the renewable resources department. Both are at a field day in Buffalo.

courses by drawing quickly on the expertise of knowledgeable people throughout the state. PowerPoint presentations can be made available for local educators to download from the Web, for example, to use to alert county residents.

“We’re trying to allow the educators in the area to say that this is the type of program their clientele needs and to offer flexibility in our offerings so that they can be custom fit,” said Blaine Horn, an initiative team member and CES educator in Buffalo. “We want to be able to say, ‘Here’s a good resource on that topic. Take it and use it in the way that will best help your people.’” Horn has been given the unofficial title of “dean” of the range college since he proposed the idea of organizing range management short courses or schools for Wyoming similar to programs in neighboring states. “Experts can find a niche, develop a program, and teach interested people about it,” Horn said.

So far, the range-college format has been used by the team to organize information about drought planning and

management that is now posted on the initiative team’s Web site at www.wyorange.net. Eighteen different content areas offer articles of interest to producers and links to other drought-related sites. “As people develop information for projects, we will be able to capture it and preserve it on the Web site,” said Peterson. The team was also involved in range plant identification field days in Buffalo and Hyattville. UW department heads and CES specialists and educators on the team are also developing courses for the range library on small-acre production, general range education, assessment and monitoring, the grazing management of range and irrigated pasture, and range manipulation. Alternative formats that could be used for range college offerings include CDs, videotapes, and interactive television shows with speakers in multiple locations. “We not only need to find ways to provide user-friendly information for more people but also to find better ways of learning what people need,” said Horn.

As the Sustainable Management of Rangeland Resources team continues to develop a menu of educational offerings to add to the range college library shelves, Horn says it needs to be “proactive instead of reactive and to develop the foresight to know what’s going to be happening down the road.” Producers need drought-management plans, for example, so that they can take advantage of wet seasons to help prepare for dry ones. “What’s coming that people need to be better prepared for? We need to have a heads-up approach to let them know what could come and bite them. It’s a lot easier to plan for something if it can be anticipated and then addressed with good, sound information.” ☞

Enhancing Wyoming Communities & Households

How to help families, businesses, communities is the job of state team

By Vicki Hamende, Senior Editor
Office of Communications and Technology

How can training in leadership development help a community? How can rural families with businesses make the most of their enterprises while preserving their home lives? What needs to be done to educate consumers about issues like managing their finances? What *can* be done to benefit families, businesses, and communities is the job of the state initiative team on Enhancing Wyoming Communities and Households. To accomplish its work, the team is reaching out to citizens through CES, community organizations, schools, and the Web.

One part of its current plan is to develop a list of skills and topics relating to leadership development that could be

taught through community-based committees under the guidance of area educators and with assistance from the team. “We believe there’s a great deal of expertise within communities that is very useful and vital,” said Rhonda Shipp, team chair and CES educator in Park County. “We will recognize that expertise and build on the strength of it.” Shipp said the initiative group “would like to start conversations with citizens to determine if there’s a need, desire, and support for community leadership development.”

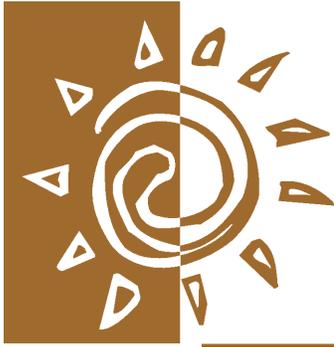
Roger Coupal, team member and assistant professor of agricultural and applied economics, shares Shipp’s philosophy about the importance of community-based training. “Leadership growth will continue to happen because local people are teaching it as opposed to

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drive-by consultants who won't be there the next day or week or month." Shipp added, "Once you have graduates from such programs, there's the opportunity for those people to give back by training others. We are there to backstop them to provide support and information."

In addition to helping with the development of leadership skills for adults, the team will be piloting a youth program called "Mediation for Kids" at a Sheridan school to teach children how to handle conflicts. If successful, the program will be marketed statewide.

Being promoted internationally is a new online course about operating family businesses that has been developed by agricultural and applied economics CES specialists Gail Gordon and John Hewlett, CES educators William Taylor and Milt Green, and Family and Consumer Sciences Associate Professor Randy Weigel in partnership with educators in Canada and Australia. "The uniqueness of the course is

that it doesn't focus just on the business," said Shipp. "It offers a holistic approach that takes into account family relationships and a community's influence on an enterprise." Coupal added, "When you have a small business you have to integrate family decisions with business decisions. The course goes over family issues and how to divide your time and allocate resources." Offered for credit as well as enrichment, the course will give students throughout the world a chance to exchange ideas and experiences.

Another prong of the team's objectives is to help educate consumers about issues affecting their lives. This is being accomplished by an extensive resource management Web site being developed by Gordon. The team is also assisting the UW College of Health Sciences and the state health department with a research grant looking for ways to ensure adequate health care for uninsured citizens.

To continue the mission of trying to enhance Wyoming's towns and households, the team intends to work closely with the families, businesses, and communities it is trying to help. "By drawing on the strength and experience of everyone off campus as well as on campus, we can let people know what CES can offer that might be useful," Coupal said. ☞

Enhancing
Wyoming
Communities and
Households

4-Her now helping Bolivians raise dairy goats

By Vicki Hamende, Senior Editor
Office of Communications and Technology

Fourteen years ago, a little girl on a grain farm near Carpenter joined the Helping Hands 4-H Club and began raising dairy goats. Today she is a young woman donating her time to help the poor residents of Carmen Pampa, Bolivia, improve the size and production of their goats. Kirstan Butler's next plan is to become a veterinarian.

"Sometimes we don't know the true impact 4-H has on youth until years later," said Phil Rosenlund, University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service (UW CES) educator in Laramie County. Butler, he added, is a wonderful example of someone who learned from others and is now giving that knowledge back.

Butler spent nine years as a 4-Her, raising as many as 20 dairy goats per year and also serving as a junior leader and participating in a variety of other 4-H activities. "She really found her niche with the goats," said her mother, Karen Butler. For Kirstan, animal husbandry was a year-round commitment, and Karen reports that her daughter researched and experimented with ways to produce healthy offspring.

Kirstan went on to earn a degree in biology from South Dakota State University (SDSU), minoring in microbiology and philosophy. It was as an undergraduate that she first traveled to Bolivia in the spring of 2001 as part of a group of faculty members and students. SDSU's College of Agriculture has a consulting and research exchange program with Universidad Academica Campesina in Carmen Pampa. As a result of her trip, she outlined a plan for improving the size of the sub-tropical country's dairy goats, which tend to be much smaller than those in the United States. On a second trip she served as an instructor and presented a clinic for students.



Long-time Laramie County 4-Her Kirstan Butler is now helping Bolivians raise dairy goats.

Now Butler is back in Bolivia and is a few weeks into a two-year project of volunteering with her 4-H expertise under the auspices of the university there to help the people of the area raise larger goats so that goat products can better help improve the nutrition and income of rural families in a country with a high infant mortality rate.

Bucks and semen are being imported from Brazil to Bolivia to get Butler's work started. Part of the plan for the project is to give female goats that have produced offspring to local families at no cost to help provide them with needed milk, milk products, and meat. If the gift goats produce kids, those kids will be given back to the university to help with the project. She is also working with farmers to improve their goat-grazing practices.

Butler, who plans to attend veterinary school when she returns to the U.S., is keeping a detailed journal of her experiences. Although she spends part of her time at the university in Carmen Pampa, her work in the goat project area puts her in a remote setting without hot water and with a cement block for a washing

Bolivia

machine. Her salary is \$12 per month, half of which she is donating to a scholarship fund in the community.

Butler's humanitarian efforts and expertise in her vocation led to her being honored as a 2002 "Woman of Distinction" at SDSU. "4-H has always contributed to my idea of being a volunteer and giving back to the community," she said in an

announcement of her award.

Rosenlund describes her as a true role model for 4-Hers and as an embodiment of the impact that CES can have on people's lives. "Kirstan is a person who has been in our program and who developed an interest and expanded on it. Now she is helping a lot of other people with her knowledge and skill." ☞



Duane Williams

Duane Williams named new CES associate director

By Vicki Hamende, Senior Editor
Office of Communications and Technology

Duane Williams brings a background of experience as a 4-Her, rancher, farmer, farm management specialist, and 20 years of service in Extension to his new role as associate director of the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) for the College of Agriculture. His bachelor's and master's degrees in agricultural economics and doctorate in rural sociology add to his qualifications.

"My interest in the position grew out of my learning about the University of Wyoming's strategic planning process and the changes that are being implemented," Williams said.

While living in Oklahoma, where he earned his first two degrees from Oklahoma State University, Williams spent time on a small ranch and excelled in national 4-H poultry judging during his junior high and high school years. During his time at Kansas State University as a county and state-level farm management, community development, and economic analysis specialist for a 22-county area, he

operated a small crop and livestock farm. "It gave me a chance to learn what it was really like for the people I worked with in the counties," he said. Williams also completed his doctoral degree while in Kansas.

Prior to coming to UW in September, Williams worked in extension and outreach as a regional county development specialist at the University of Missouri, overseeing a five-county area and addressing such issues as value-added agriculture and the use of alternative crops. He sees his experience at the county, regional, and state level as valuable assets in meeting the needs of agriculturalists on the western side of Wyoming, which will be his new focus.

An immediate goal for Williams is to visit educators in each of the county offices with which he will work, to meet the college's faculty and staff, and to become acquainted with people like the county commissioners and other officials with whom he will have contact. Williams hopes to foster what he sees as Wyoming's "team approach" to CES. ☞

Sheep Basics course reaches large audience

By Vicki Hamende, Senior Editor
Office of Communications and Technology

More than 300 people from Wyoming, other states throughout the nation, Canada, and even as far away as Israel have completed the UW CES Sheep Basics correspondence course since it began in 1999. “We have had a big response from people interested in taking this core bit of knowledge of sheep production,” said Phil Rosenlund, coordinator of the course and CES educator in Laramie County.

Written by a group of wool and animal science specialists, representatives of the Wyoming Wool Growers Association, and CES educators, the program includes lessons on sheep handling, the history of wool, facilities and equipment, feeds and nutrition, reproduction, breeding and selection, health and disease, management of the flock, economics and marketing, grazing, predators, orphan lambs, and sheep showmanship.

Students have been primarily small operators, commercial sheep producers, and farm flock families, but a variety of other people have also made it to the roster. “The common thread is interest in sheep production,” Rosenlund said. “Some are just getting into the business and others are thinking of starting.” Other students, however, look at Sheep Basics with a creative eye and are interested in the spinning, dyeing, and weaving of wool for fiber arts.

Marcia Federer, who has raised sheep north of Cheyenne for many years, recommends the course for those new to sheep and also for “older sheep producers who probably don’t know about new technology for sheep diseases.” She added, “Unless they are active in an organization



and go to the meetings, they wouldn’t know about a lot of this.” Federer said new information about sheep nutrition could also benefit producers who take the course.

Rosenlund says he enjoys working with the variety of people who enroll. He added, “Normally extension agents don’t get to grade papers.”

Students who have evaluated the course have offered helpful information about its contents and benefits. One said, “I enjoyed the course because it covered sheep management, and in vet school we didn’t do that. It has helped me in my vet practice.” Another student wrote, “It helped me in the design of our new facilities, in our selection of breeding ewes, and in grading market lambs.” Another comment was, “I am making some major changes in pasture management, handling equipment, and barn and pen layout.” Other responders said they appreciated picking up such information as the length of adjustment time needed after changing feed. The course might even have led to the recruitment of a new UW student; one home-schooled enrollee wrote that he was interested in animal science as a career and asked to be sent information about the university. ☺



Barb Farmer, manager of communications and technology for the University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service, teaches new county educators how to use Accountability Evaluation System Information Software (AESIS) to keep track of their activities. The workshop also included instruction in how to operate the 4HPlus! software program that is used for tracking the enrollment of 4-H members and leaders in Wyoming.

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