

A dramatic landscape featuring a vast, golden field of mature crops in the foreground. In the distance, a small, dark barn stands on a slight rise. The sky is filled with large, dark, heavy clouds, suggesting an approaching storm or late afternoon light. The overall mood is one of resilience and preparedness.

Extension helps facilitate

**COMMUNITY**

**AGROSECURITY**

**PREPAREDNESS**



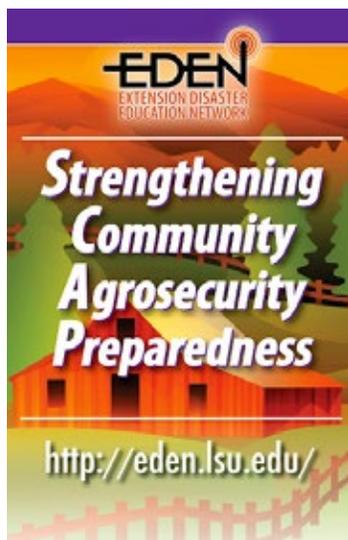
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Wyoming Homeland Security Training Program

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## Situation

A review of local emergency operation plans by several county emergency managers and the Wyoming Homeland Security Training coordinator showed most of the plans in the Converse, Natrona, and Niobrara (CNN) Area counties and many others in Wyoming were not refined enough to conduct effective disaster responses to agricultural instances or impacts. Wyoming Homeland Security attempts to engage agricultural interests in planning functions resulted in limited success. Expected effects to agricultural systems, due to lack of effective planning, were unacceptable.



Area educator Scott Cotton agreed to work with emergency managers and the Wyoming Homeland Security system to conduct a Strengthening Community Agrosecurity Preparedness (S-CAP) training session with support of the national Extension Disaster Education S-CAP Team using a curriculum proven effective in over 324 counties across the country.

The training program was in Casper September 24- 25, 2014. Attending were 28 individuals including producers, emergency managers, public health, state veterinarians, USDA veterinarians, brand inspectors, law enforcement, public health officials, animal/pet enthusiasts, Wyoming stock growers, Farm Bureau, Wyoming wool growers, Wyoming Business Council representatives, and other citizens.

The curriculum led the group through an understanding of disasters and the federal and state guidelines. The group reviewed significant agricultural systems and resources within the

### Scott Cotton



*Area Extension Educator  
Agriculture and Small-acreage Management  
CNN Area/Natrona, Converse, Niobrara counties  
University of Wyoming Extension  
(307) 235-9400  
[scotton@natronacounty-wy.gov](mailto:scotton@natronacounty-wy.gov)*

area. Group members then reviewed emergency plans and the estimated available resources. The group listed risks to area agriculture and related vulnerabilities not currently addressed. The curriculum, delivered by lecture, video, case studies, and PowerPoint, led to regularly paced, small-group discussions (based on county groups) to generate feedback and detailed recommendations to the group. Each set of discussions, findings, and suggestions were recorded by the groups for discussion within their counties. Each group was provided copies of their county's plan for further discussions within the counties.

## Impacts

Participants were given a pre- and post-test by the S-CAP team. All participants completed an evaluation for the S-Cap project and another for the Department of Homeland Security.

### Short-term impacts

- Several agricultural organizations and a number of producers realize the need to effectively interact with emergency managers to reduce risks to agricultural systems.
- Wyoming Homeland Security and several emergency managers have realized producers can assist with expertise and resources in disasters and that the University of Wyoming Extension is an effective conduit to conduct educational programs facilitating that connection.
- Threats and vulnerabilities related to agriculture in Natrona, Converse, and Carbon counties have begun to be addressed.

### Medium-term impacts

- Citizens and producers in three counties have indicated a willingness to work with emergency managers to update plans.
- Three state-level S-CAP trainers have been certified to allow replication of the program at low-cost and maximum convenience across Wyoming.
- Wyoming Homeland Security is interested in expanding its collaboration with UW Extension's Extension Disaster Education Network team.
- Emergency managers from Carbon, Fremont, Johnson, and Converse counties have expressed a desire for UW Extension to conduct additional sessions.

### Long-term impacts

- Expanded training could reduce possible agricultural disaster losses as much as 40 percent based on experiences in other states.