The County Agent

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OF COUNTY AGRICULTURAL AGENTS

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NACAA - 6584 W. Duroc Road - Maroa, IL 61756 - (217)794-3700

President's Corner

Great Way to Start 2nd Century of NACAA

NACAA's 101st Annual Meeting and Professional Improvement Conference held in Little Rock, Arkansas was a great way to start the second century of professional excellence for NACAA. The Arkansas Association put on a fantastic meeting and a wonderful professional improvement program. All of us who had the opportunity to attend came back recharged and ready to renew our work in our respective states and counties. Special thanks go out to all of the members of the Arkansas Association as well as the many volunteers who assisted them with planning and executing of a very successful AM/PIC.

I would also like to express my appreciation to all of the council chairs, committee chairs, and vice-chairs for their dedication as well as the entire NACAA Board who worked tirelessly to plan the many different professional development and recognition opportunities at this year's AM/PIC. The opportunity to network and visit with peers from across the United States is always a valuable component of the annual meeting. This year was no exception as everywhere I looked I saw groups of members talking about the things that are important to us as Extension professionals.

I would like to congratulate all the award winners who were recognized at the AM/PIC. Recognition is always an important part of NACAA and our annual meeting. I would like to say Thank you to all of the many 2016 winners for the amazing job you do and your willingness to share with everyone.

Thank you all for demonstrating your professional improvement commitment by belonging to NACAA. I encourage you to get involved in NACAA by serving on state, regional and national committees. An association is as only as strong as its members. By working together NACAA will continue to be a strong association and beneficial to us all. I am honored and humbled to serve as your president during this upcoming year. As always if you have suggestions for NACAA please let us know.

The Utah Association of County Agricultural Agents are hard at work preparing to host the 2017 Am/Pic in Salt Lake City, Utah, July 9-13, 2017. We would like to invite you to make plans now to come west to the heart of the Rocky Mountains and enjoy our western hospitality. I look forward to seeing you all there.

NACAA President R. Mark Nelson with wife Janet Nelson

INSIDE THIS EDITION

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Photos of the 2016

AM/PIC can be found for free upload at

http://www.nacaa.com/ampic/2016/2016AMPICPhotos.php

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FDA releases guidance document for animal producers about keeping feed safe

The Food and Drug Administration has released a document written for animal producers that provides advice on how to keep feed stored and used on the farm from becoming unsafe. We want you to know about it so you can use it in your work with animal producers.

The document, titled "Ensuring Safety of Animal Feed Maintained and Fed On-Farm," was prepared by FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM). CVM has much of the responsibility in the Federal government for ensuring the safety of animal feed and animal drugs used in the United States.

We described the document in a presentation during the Trade Talk Session at the 2016 Annual Meeting and Professional Improvement Conference in Little Rock.

The document describes what a feed contaminant is. It's "any biological, chemical – including radiological – or physical agent that, if present in feed, has the potential to cause illness or injury to animals or humans."

The document points out that the mere presence of a contaminant in feed is not the same as the likelihood that the contaminant will cause adverse health effects. To help explain that point, the document uses a concept of "unacceptable feed risk."

An unacceptable feed risk occurs when the level of a contaminant in feed is high enough to harm the health of animals or the health of humans consuming food derived from those animals.

However, the document says, contaminant levels causing an unacceptable feed risk are not the same in all species of animals. Nor are the risks from different contaminants the same in all species.

The document identifies sources of information that animal producers can use to find out more about contaminants they might encounter on their farms, sources such as USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, FDA's Animal Feed Safety System web page, Land-Grant university web pages, or private publications.

The audience that CVM hopes to reach with this document is the animal producer, especially the smaller producer, because smaller producers are busy and don't have much time to research feed safety issues. The small producer can benefit greatly by receiving information about safe feed provided by a County Agricultural Agent like you. Our document gives you the information you need to help all animal producers, big and small. It covers many topics important to safe feeding.

You are free to download and reproduce as many copies as you need to give to animal producers.

To find the document, come to the CVM Safe Feed web page: www.FDA.gov/SafeFeed. Scroll about a third of the way down, and you'll find a section on "Guidances." In that section, you will find "Ensuring Safety of Animal Feed Maintained and Fed On-Farm." It is Guidance for Industry #203.

Or, to directly access "Ensuring Safety of Animal Feed Maintained and Fed On-Farm", use this link (http://www.fda.gov/downloads/AnimalVeterinary/GuidanceComplianceEnforcement/GuidanceforIndustry/UCM438641.pdf.)

Also, please come to FDA's Animal Feed Safety System's landing page at www.FDA.gov/SafeFeed for other safe feed information.

2017 Pre Conference Tours Offered

Utah has worked with Western Leisure Tours to arrange two pre-conference tours before the Salt Lake meeting in 2017. Tour one goes to Zion and Bryce Canyon and tour two goes to Yellowstone and Grand Tetons. Both tours depart the morning of Friday, July 7 and return Sunday, July 9 in time for the Welcome to Utah dinner. Travelers should arrive in Salt Lake by the evening of Thursday, July 6. Tours will depart from the Red Lion Hotel and lodging there on July 6 is included in the price. Full itineraries and registration information are available at:

www.westernleisure.com/store under the NACAA Tours button.

Puerto Rico Joins the National Association Of County Agricultural Agents

Lenny Rogers
Past NACAA Southern Region Director

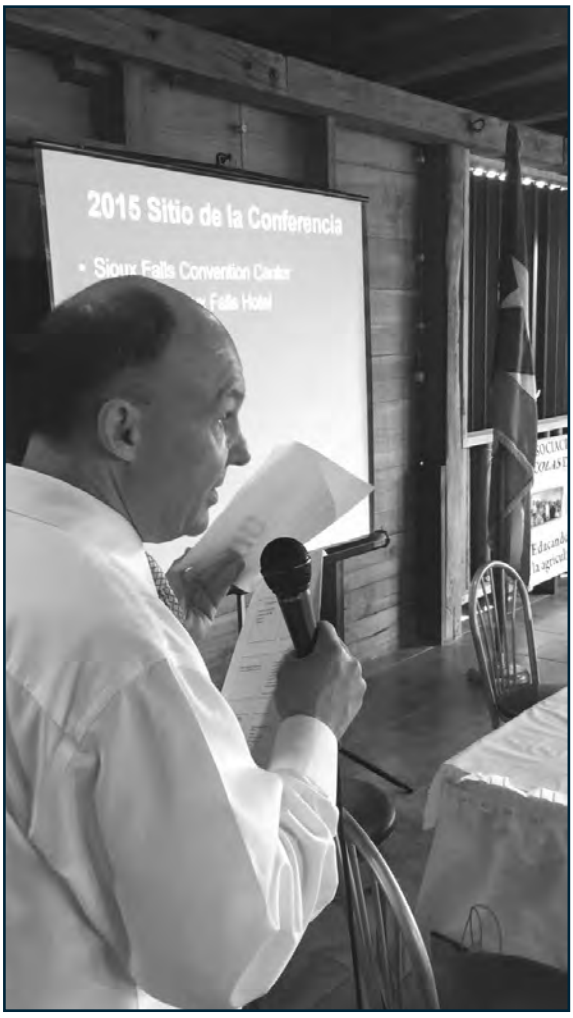
On Tuesday, December 1st, 2015 NACAA Southern Region Director, Lenny Rogers, with the assistance of Florida County Extension Director and Puerto Rican native, Jonael Bosques landed in Puerto Rico with the mission of learning about and trying to unite the Puerto Rican Agents' Association and NACAA.

The first stop was the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) Cooperative Extension Service office in Moca where Professor Edrick Marrero, County Extension Ag Agent, welcomed them and outlined the next two days of visits he would lead them in. One of the main initial visits was the UPR, Mayaguez where they visited with the Agriculture Dean, Dr. Raul Macchiavelli and several other agriculture faculty, including professors and Extension specialists. Afterwards they then traveled to the Lajas Agriculture Experimental Station where Professor Anibal Ruiz greeted them and then led them on a tour of the vegetable, fruit tree and rice demonstration plots. Surprisingly one of their major pests in the produce plots are invasive green iguanas (*Iguana iguana)* native from Central and South America. These creatures have no predators in the island and can get up to 6 feet in length!

From there over the next day and a half they met with several UPR Extension Agents and visited beef, dairy, plantain, breadfruit, banana, pineapple, orange, lemon, papaya, coffee and other type farms. The banana growing/harvesting process is amazing. During the growing season, they bag the huge bunches of bananas with perforated plastic white bags while still hanging on the tree and insert pheromone cards for repelling insects. Then during the harvesting process these huge bunches are cut, transported and then hung on huge hanging rolling racks. Here then smaller bunches of 4-7 bananas are cut off, dropped in a cleaning water solution, then lifted out, placed in plastic crates where dried and then moved into large cooling units until shipped.

The coffee production process was also very interesting. Here the bushes were hand-picked, placed in baskets, hauled to the processing area, a machine then removed the pulp from the bean, then the beans were dried in a heated forced air chamber, then air dried on racks, then moved on into the coffee bean roasting oven. Once the beans were roasted they were ready to be ground and sold.

The final day, Lenny Rogers and Jonael Bosques both spoke to all of the Puerto Rican agents in Arecibo at the Puerto Rico Agriculture Agent Association Annual Meeting. Outgoing president, Professor Karen Bengoa, Extension Agent from Yauco, welcomed them with open arms and truly embraced their visit. Here through the Puerto Ricans bi-lingual ability and through a power point translated in Spanish, thanks to Florida Agent – Elena Toro, Lenny and Jonael were able to communicate quite well with the group. They shared the many benefits of being a member of NACAA: awards programs, scholarship program, poster contest, professional development, county agent magazine, webinars, etc. Then they shared more detailed information on last year's AM/PIC in Sioux Falls, SD. Last year there was over 400 hours of professional development offered via multiple presentations, 28 different educational agricultural tours, 17 different educational agribusiness sponsored lunches, and much more. Many pictures were also shared of the 2015 AMPIC.



The agents in Puerto Rico received the invitation openly, several wanted to pay their dues and join that day. Dean Raul Macchiavelli and Extension Director Luis Mejia-Maymí, both present at this annual meeting, were very supportive of the agents joining NACAA. They agreed to find funds to assist some of their members attending our next AM/PIC which will be in Little Rock, AR this year.

Since the efforts in December by NACAA, the new Puerto Rican Agents' Association President, Professor Irving Rodriguez has submitted a letter to the NACAA Board, requesting their acceptance into our National Association. On January 13th the NACAA Board of Directors unanimously voted to approve The Puerto Rico Association of Agricultural Agents as an official National member. We are excited to have them on board and we look forward to a long and beneficial relationship in the future.

2016 Service to American/World Agriculture

Lloyd Murdock

University of Kentucky Extension
Soils Specialist

Dr. Lloyd Murdock is, and has always been, a farmer's scientist. His career of over forty-five years as Extension Soils Specialist at the University of Kentucky (UK) College of Agriculture's Research and Education Center at Princeton has been devoted to conducting applied research focused on farmers' most significant production problems. His research projects and Extension educational efforts have helped farmers develop and maintain sustainable farms by adopting cropping and soil management methods that conserve topsoil, increase yields, improve water quality, and enhance profitability. Dr. Murdock's efforts have benefitted tens of thousands of producers; particularly in mid-western and southeastern states, but also in countries around the world.

Murdock's soil and crops-related research serves as a foundation for many agronomic practices currently used by modern farmers. The efforts discussed in this nomination have had major impacts on agriculture; yet they are only the "tip of the iceberg" in terms of his agricultural accomplishments.

In the early 1970's, Dr. Murdock worked with three other UK specialists to investigate causes and possible solutions to grass tetany in beef cows. This group of scientists was the first to intentionally produce grass tetany symptoms in a field trial in the United States. They learned that grass tetany was caused by low levels of magnesium and high levels of potassium in fast-growing pastures. They also discovered that the disorder could be prevented by feeding a magnesium supplement in late winter and early spring. They documented that proper magnesium supplementation could result in a 90% reduction in the occurrence of this disorder; and this work has saved thousands of beef cows in Kentucky and surrounding states since 1975.

The utilization of larger and heavier farm equipment has increased the incidence of soil compaction on many American farms. When Dr. Murdock began studying compaction in 1978, there were no inexpensive, easy-to-use tools for measuring soil compaction. He collaborated with a local machinist who designed, built, and patented a relatively inexpensive hydraulic soil penetrometer. This penetrometer design has been in use since the 1980's, and is still the one most commonly used by farmers and crop advisors across the country. Dr. Murdock conducted research trials which allowed penetrometer readings to be translated into practical predictors of compaction-related yield losses. He then developed compaction-reducing deep-tillage recommendations tied to expected economic returns.

Dr. Murdock conducted research from 1980-1995 on the use of urease inhibitors with urea fertilizers to reduce or prevent volatilization of the fertilizer. This work was utilized to help develop recommendations for when and how urease inhibitors should be used with urea. The proper use of these products has helped reduce nitrogen losses and improve the efficacy of urea fertilizers applied to millions of acres in this country.

Kentucky was an early leader in the development and adoption of no-till cropping for corn and soybeans. Although Kentucky's first no-till wheat was planted in 1980, farmers were slow to adopt no-till wheat due to inconsistent yields. Over a period of 15 years, Murdock led the UK Wheat Science Group in investigating virtually every practice involved in no-till wheat production. As a result of these long-term studies, UK no-till wheat recommendations were developed and disseminated (planting methods, seeding rates, weed control, and nitrogen management, etc.) Adoption of no-till wheat production has since grown significantly in Kentucky and in other mid-western states.

Planter row cleaner attachments were invented by a Kentucky farmer who practiced no-till farming on cool, wet-natured soils that were difficult to plant. Dr. Murdock conducted the first research to study the effects of row cleaners on no-till corn. The research measured soil temperature, seedling emergence, growth, and yields under different conditions

and crops. Research results proved the worth of these attachments; and hundreds of thousands of row cleaners are now utilized worldwide to allow no-till planting on soils that may not otherwise be successfully no-tilled.

Some of Dr. Murdock's other research and education efforts have included understanding major nutrient and micronutrient fertilizer needs of grain crops and forages; developing a protocol for how to lime no-till crop fields; developing production practices for growing canola in Kentucky; and using chlorophyll meters and variable-rate technology to make nitrogen applications on wheat. His current research is focused on reducing or eliminating drainage-related problems caused by fragipans that are found under millions of acres of U.S. soils. Although much work remains to be done, he has already identified some materials that tend to break up fragipans.

In addition to his extensive applied research and education efforts, Dr. Murdock has served in dozens of roles with regional and national academic, government, and industry groups. Many of his collaborative efforts have been with industry scientists and university specialists in the North Central and Southern Extension regions. He has been heavily involved with the Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) program on both state and national levels. Murdock has also worked with thousands of Kentucky 4-H and FFA youth in land judging trainings and contests, with some of his teams winning on the national level.

Dr. Murdock has served as a consultant to agricultural groups for soil and soil fertility improvements in Thailand, Ecuador, and Bangladesh. He has presented his research findings at international symposiums on minimum tillage in China, Mexico, Bangladesh, England, France, and Thailand. Additionally, he has hosted dozens of groups of foreign farmers and scientists who have come to Kentucky to learn practical no-till cropping techniques.

Lloyd Murdock has received numerous awards from professional groups and farm organizations over the years. His most recent recognition came in January 2016 as he was named the Research and Education No-Till Innovator at the National No-Tillage Conference.

It is a privilege for Kentucky Agricultural Extension Agents to have nominated Dr. Lloyd Murdock for this prestigious award. He has tirelessly served farmers for more than four decades; and there are few modern crop producers who have not benefitted from his applied research discoveries.

NACAA Professional Excellence Poster Competition

National Winners
1st Place - *Applied Research*

TARGETED GRAZING TO REDUCE WILDFIRE SPREAD IN SAGEBRUSH STEPPE ECOSYSTEMS

Jensen, S.[1]
[1]Extension Educator, University Of Idaho, Marsing, ID, 83639

Wildfire is a major threat to the greater sage-grouse (Centrocercus urophasianus) severely impacting key habitat every year. Although fire is a natural ecological process in these habitats, the presence of annual grasses has increased the continuity of fuels and has aided in shortening the fire return interval. Many studies have observed how fire affects plant communities at different grazing usage, but few have looked at how livestock grazing alters fire behavior in sagebrush ecosystems. Even without scientific studies, livestock grazing has been suggested as a tool to reduce fine fuel biomass and fuel continuity. This study bridges a gap in our knowledge of how livestock grazing can be used to reduce fire behavior. We created 30 paddocks (30 x 30 meters) in mountain and Wyoming big sagebrush (Artimisia tridentata) ecosystems. Cattle were used to graze at low and moderate utilization levels, 30-40% and 55-65% respectively, in the summer (June-July) and fall (September). Utilization was 60% and 31% in the Wyoming big sagebrush and 55% and 33% in the Mountain big sagebrush summer treatment paddocks. A prescribed burn was conducted across control and grazed plots in late September of 2015. Flame height, rate of spread, and burn characteristics were observed. Grazing treatment reduced fire behavior in mountain sagebrush sites.

2nd Place - *Applied Research*

USING CHLOROPHYLL METER AND TISSUE TESTING TO DETERMINE IN-SEASON NITROGEN NEEDS IN TIMOTHY HAY PRODUCTION

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[2]Regional Livestock Specialist, Washington State University, Kennewick, WA, 99336
[3]Forage Specialist, Washington State University, Prosser, WA, 99350
[4]Economist, Washington State University, Pullman, WA, 99164

Timothy (Phleum pratense L.) hay is the largest grass hay commodity in Washington State and the majority of hay is exported to Japan and other countries. Very little research work has been done on determining optimum nitrogen rates for this commodity or a tool for in-season adjustment of nitrogen rate.

We hypothesized that in-season nitrogen status of timothy could be assessed using a Soil Plant Analysis Development (SPAD) units or by nitrogen content of leaf samples. A calibration of these parameters would be accomplished so farmers would be able to in-season apply the nitrogen using fertigation. The SPAD meter measures how much of red light is absorbed and infrared light transmitted by the sample and gives a greenness measurement (SPAD unit). These SPAD units are compared to an over-fertilized strip in the field and relative chlorophyll units (RCM) are calculated (SPAD in question/SPAD over fertilized=RCM) averaged over at least 20 measurements. The objective of the research conducted is to calibrate the SPAD meter and tissue testing for nitrogen in timothy and determine their effectiveness. Research was conducted at two Washington State University Experiment Stations located near Prosser, and Othello, Washington using different nitrogen rates. Results indicate that the vegetative stage (stems 6 inches in length) will be the most accurate time to assess nitrogen status using RCM and leaf tissue nitrogen content. Results also indicated that both tools RCM and tissue testing will be useful tools to predict in-season nitrogen to maximize yield and profit.

3rd Place - *Applied Research*

EVALUATING FUNGICIDE PROGRAMS FOR REDUCING WHITE MOLD IN PEANUTS

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[2]Department of Plant Pathology, University of Georgia, Tifton, Georgia 31793

White Mold (*Sclerotium rolfsii*) is considered one of the most destructive diseases in peanuts in Georgia. The disease desiccates vines and can significantly reduce yield and quality. In 2014 a fourteen acre field trial was established in Cook County, Georgia to evaluate eight fungicide programs for controlling white mold in peanuts. Treatments were replicated three times. Check included chlorothalonil only treatments. Treatments were rated for white mold as percentage of white mold hits per 600 feet of row after digging. Variability in white mold hits across the eight treatments replicated three times made statistical separation not feasible however large numerical differences were evident. Programs that included fungicides with active ingredient (A.I.) penthiopyrad, and fluxapyroxad + pyraclostrobin had the greatest control of white mold when compared to the untreated check. The same chemistries produced the greatest yields when compared to the untreated check. Products with A.I. tebuconazole had greater control of white mold when compared to the check however white mold incidences were greater when compared to other programs.

1st Place - *Extension Education*

USING INTERACTIVE AUDIENCE RESPONSE TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE TRAINING

Langley, L.[1]
[1]Livestock Extension Agent, North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Burlington, NC, 27217

Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) is a voluntary certification program known nationwide. In North Carolina, BQA is delivered through face-to-face trainings with producers. The majority of the training focuses on a BQA guidelines lecture with a PowerPoint presentation and an optional hands-on demonstration. During 2015, training materials were reviewed and audience response technology was added into the BQA PowerPoint presentation to increase participant engagement and subject matter comprehension. The revised BQA presentation with audience response technology was delivered at three regional trainings and one focus group training in 2015. Participants were able to use the audience response device to click in their answer to questions throughout the presentation for immediate feedback. For the three regional trainings, participants were able to body condition score live cows with the audience response device. As a result, 95% of participants agreed that the audience response technology helped them stay engaged and 77% agreed that the technology helped them learn the subject matter better. Furthermore, 90% of participants stated that they would like to see more Extension programs using the audience response technology. Participants commented that the device encouraged them to interact with the group and that the device made learning interactive and fun.

2nd Place - *Extension Education*

CHEMICAL AND PHYSICAL PROPERTIES OF EDUCATING GROWERS IN GEORGIA AND FLORIDA TO PRODUCE AND MARKET SATSUMA MANDARINS

Price, J.[1]
[1]County Extension Coordinator Lowndes County, University Of Georgia, Valdosta, GA, 31601

Satsuma mandarins are a citrus crop that has generated interest from small farmers and landowners in Georgia, Alabama, and North Florida. Extension programs have never before been conducted on satsumas in Georgia prompting agents in Lowndes County Georgia and Madison County Florida to collaborate and educate clientele about these fruits. Five programs focused on production and marketing have been conducted in the last two years reaching over 350 participants. The meetings are videotaped and available to distribute on DVD to potential growers. Due to demand these videos will be put on-line. Seven newspaper and magazine articles generated have been viewed by approximately 150,000 viewers as many media outlets across Georgia and nationally have picked them up. Three power-point presentations and two fact sheets have been produced. The objectives of the programs and media produced are to educate growers in all facets of production and marketing fruit. Topics covered include: orchard establishment, freeze protection, marketing, budgets, developing business plans, regulation of citrus plants, propagation, fertilization, weed control, food safety, rootstocks, diseases, insects, new varieties, and forming a cooperative. Results from surveys indicate a 67% increase in knowledge and 100% of participants gained information that will help them make decisions about satsuma production. 75 acres or 11,250 satsuma trees have been planted in Georgia since the initial production meeting which represents an investment of $412,000. Virtually all plants produced on rootstocks we recommended have been sold out or pre-sold in Alabama, Louisiana, Georgia, Florida, and Texas since late 2013.

3rd Place - *Extension Education*

CENTRAL VIRGINIA AG SPOTLIGHT BRINGS THE FARM TO READERS

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Poster URL: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B7GnS3Mln4JVVERxNTdzLXhram8/view?usp=sharing

Consumers are increasingly concerned with agricultural issues but many rarely engage with farmers. Many producers seek information on farm practices. Both groups often rely on online resources. The Central Virginia Ag Spotlight blog was created in 2013 to engage readers each month with stories about local farms that utilize good practices, creatively solve challenges, or offer unique products. It aims to raise consumer agricultural literacy and provide ideas to producers. 40 stories have been shared to date. The blog is marketed via social media, web, and newsletters. Impact is tracked via Google Analytics, conversations, site comments, and social media. By January 2016, the site had 28,638 page views by 14,034 users. 20% of traffic comes from returning visitors. Several producers considered diversifying as a result of reading the blog. Stories garnered dozens of Facebook engagements, and 24 people commented directly on the blog site. An estimated 30 people interested in the emerging hops industry contacted agents as a direct result of finding hop stories on the blog. Many other client calls and emails resulted from encounters with the site. Several readers sought follow-up information and tours of featured farms. Four blog stories were reprinted in Virginia Cattleman. One was reprinted in The Virginia Forager and one was reblogged by the Farm Credit Knowledge Center. Three were used as feature stories in two newspapers. The blog was the National Finalist website in the 2014 National Association of County Agricultural Agents communications contest, and a blog photo was National Winner in 2015.

2016 COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS

AUDIO RECORDING

Ludlow, J.*[1]
[1] County Extension Director/Ag & Natural Resources, UF/IFAS, Blounstown, FL, 32424

The Calhoun County Extension News is an educational radio program recorded at, and aired by WYBT AM 1000 and FM 98.1 twice each day, Monday through Thursday at 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. The agent writes a script then pre-records the 1-3 minute broadcasts at the radio station. Between February 12, 2015 and February 19, 2016, the agent recorded 91 original segments related to Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Horticulture. Each segment is aired an average of 2 times during the year. The radio station is located in rural Calhoun County which has a population of 14,500. The radio station listener base is estimated at 500-1000 and expanding under the station's new management. The agent's objective, in concert and partnership with the goals of the local radio station, is to educate the public on topics that are current and relevant to the community in the listening area. In this rural county the radio station is another channel of information we have to disseminate UF/IFAS research-based data to existing and potential Extension clientele. Listeners are provided the Extension office phone number at the end of each segment to call for additional information. Reactions from client feedback to the agent personally, and from radio station staff, have been positive. The segment submitted is about the importance, biology, and ecology of pollination, and aired on February 10, 2016.

BOUND BOOK

Chalker-Scott, L.*[1]
[1] Extension Specialist and Associate Professor, Washington State University, Puyallup, WA, 98371

Witten by Dr. Linda Chalker-Scott (WSU's Urban Horticulture Extension Specialist), this book explains practical plant physiology in terms that any gardener will understand. The need for this science-based book is explained best in the publisher's description for it on Amazon (http://www.amazon.com/How-Plants-Work-Science-Gardeners/dp/160469338X/ref=asap_bc?ie=UTF8):

> "*How Plants Work* brings the stranger-than-fiction science of the plant world to vivid life! It explains how plants tell time, how they move to follow the sun and capture food, and why they change color…By revealing the science behind what plants do every day, this book arms you with information that will change the way you garden. You'll learn how to fertilize and prune more effectively, how to weed less than you ever have, and how to determine which garden products are worth your time and money."

The target audience for this book includes home and Master Gardeners, nursery owners, certified horticulturists and arborists, plant science teachers, landscape architects, and government employees. The typical reader of this book might have a college education in a field outside of the sciences, but is not familiar with practical plant and soil sciences as applied to gardens and landscapes.

Based on reader reviews on the Amazon link above, it has been successful in increasing the public's understanding of basic plant physiology as they see it play out in their landscaped surroundings. It recently received a book award from the American Horticultural lSociety.

The first printing of 8,000 copies was made available April 22, 2015. Of those, approximately 6,700 have been purchased.

COMPUTER GENERATED GRAPHICS PRESENTATION

Badurek, T.*[1]
[1] Extension Agent II, UF/IFAS, Tarpon Springs, FL, 34688

The "Summer in the Florida Vegetable Garden" computer generated graphics presentation was created as part of an education program to teach local residents to grow their own food. Summer is the most difficult time of year to grow vegetables in Florida and required a special presentation to address those challenges. The objective of this presentation was to provide a better understanding of summer conditions, what to grow in summer, and what else a gardener can do in summer if not using the garden for production. The "Summer in the Florida Vegetable Garden" computer generated graphics presentation was delivered to 63 Pinellas County residents during 2 separate classes in 2015. Evaluations were given at the end of class to measure knowledge gained. One hundred percent (n=57, evaluations returned) of participants indicated knowledge gain in summer vegetable gardening skills. The "Summer in the Florida Vegetable Garden" module was created using Microsoft Powerpoint®.

FACT SHEET

Elsner, E.*[1]

[1]Consumer Horticulture Educator, Michigan State University, Traverse City, MI, 49684

The intended use of this fact sheet was for educating consumers about plant choices to support monarch

butterflies, with the primary distribution to occur at nurseries and other retail plant outlets in Michigan. I prepared the text and supplies all but one of the photographs used in the fact sheet. The final layout and editing services were provided by communications specialists at Michigan State University. The fact sheet can be found on-line at:

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/uploads/files/AABI/Milkweeds_Monarchs.pdf

The same textual material and photographs were released in an electronic article through the Michigan State University Extension News and has generated over 4,000 page views:

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/growing_milkweeds_for_monarch_butterflies

FEATURE STORY

Stevens, M.*[1]
[1] Agriculture Agent- Horticulture, Nash County Cooperative Extension, Nashville, NC, 27856

"How to Grow Strawberries in Less Space" is an original feature article submitted to Fine Gardening Magazine for publication in their April 2015 issue. The article discusses a series of alternate methods home gardeners can use to grow strawberries rather than the typical backyard garden patch. These methods are suitable for gardeners with limited space available as well as those simply looking to try something new. Pros and cons of each method are discussed, along with estimated costs of establishment and recommended varieties. Fine Gardening is a nationally distributed, bi-monthly garden publication, with 85,968 paid subscriptions and 24,706 average single-copy issue sales on newsstands, for a total average circulation of 110,674 per issue.

LEARNING MODULE

Maccini, R.*[1], Bryant, Heather*[2], Cragin, Faye*[3], Gladders, Dode*[4], Majewski, Carl*[5], Papineau, Amy*[6], Smith, Cheryl*[7]
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[7] Extension Professor/Specialist, Plant Health, UNH Cooperative Extension, Durham, NH, 03824

It is with great pleasure that I nominate the UNH Cooperative Extension, Pesticide Safety Program for consideration for the 2016 Communication Award in recognition of their outstanding team work and tireless efforts in addressing and reacting to the needs of their clientele in New Hampshire.

In the state of New Hampshire pesticide applicators are required to earn recertification credits in order to remain certified. Responding to the needs of NH pesticide applicators, the PSEP Committee began an initiative in 2009, to create an online recertification program. These new online courses provide applicators a more convenient and timely method of obtaining credits.

Since its launch in October of 2013, the program has provided 97 applicators with at least 146 recertification credits. This initiative has made a huge and positive difference in the lives of many pesticide applicators. Since the first online courses were released in 2013, the committee has actively worked to

release 9 additional courses, with completion of all courses expected during 2016.

In this nomination we would like to showcase the Storage and Disposal course. Carl Majewski designed the Storage, and Disposal course content using a number of adult learning concepts. The storage facility used as an example is a real facility bringing the concepts to life for the applicator. Each course includes videos, power-point presentations with audio, and interactive materials as well as appropriate articles, plus other written material for review. An online quiz is administered at the completion of each course to measure competencies.

NEWSLETTER - INDIVIDUAL

Sandy Stuttgen
Agriculture Educator
UW-Extension
Taylor

Three different issues (Spring, Summer, Fall) of the newsletter were mailed to 1,139 Taylor County agriculturists in 2015, for a total of 3,417 distributed. Mailing addresses were derived from the 2014 WI DATCP dairy producers list, Taylor County landowners provided by the Taylor County Land Conservation office and addresses of those served by Taylor County Farm Service Agency in Taylor County and immediately adjacent areas. The newsletter is mailed with both male and female operators included on the address label.

NEWSLETTER - TEAM

Wycoff, C.L.*[1], Burns, M.G.*[2], Beer, B.L.*[3], Craig, L.D.*[4], Starnes, A.R.*[5], Barnes, J.M.*[6], Hall, M.A.*[7], LeMaster, C.T.*[8], Van Vlake, R.L.*[9], Warner, M.B.*[10], Smith, W.B.*[11], Helm, J.D.*[12], Horn, T.M*[13], Krugler, C.A.*[14]

[1] Area Livestock and Forage Agent, Clemson Extension, Laurens, SC, 29360
[2] State Beef Specialist, Clemson Cooperative Extension, Clemson, SC, 29634
[3] Area Livestock and Forage Agent, Clemson Cooperative Extension, Lancaster, SC, 29720
[4] Area Livestock and Forage Agent, Clemson Cooperative Extension, Pickens, SC, 29671
[5] Area Livestock and Forage Agent, Clemson Cooperative Extension, Chesterfield, SC, 29709
[6] Senior County Extension Agent, Clemson Cooperative Extension, Hampton, SC, 29924
[7] Extension Associate, Clemson Cooperative Extension, Clemson, SC, 29634
[8] Area Livestock and Forage Agent, Clemson Cooperative Extension, Gaffney, SC, 29341
[9] Area Livestock and Forage Agent, Clemson Cooperative Extension, Florence, SC, 29505
[10] Senior Extension Agent, Clemson Cooperative Extension, Walhalla, SC, 29691
[11] Senior Extension Agent, Clemson Cooperative Extension, Laurens, SC, 29360
[12] Extension Veterinarian, Clemson Livestock Poultry Health, Columbia, SC, 29229
[13] State Extension Dairy Specialist, Clemson Cooperative Extension, Newberry, SC, 29108
[14] Extension Veterinarian, Clemson Livestock Poultry Health, Columbia, SC, 29229

A team newsletter was developed for the purpose of distributing timely educational articles and announcements to Extension clientele with interests in subject matter pertaining to the production of livestock, hay and pastures. Articles for the electronic newsletter are prepared by Clemson Livestock and Forage Agents, Specialists, and State Livestock and Poultry Health Veterinarians and assembled by agent and newsletter editor, Cassie Wycoff. Program Team Leader and State Beef Specialist, Dr. Matthew Burns, conceived the concept for the collaborative email newsletter, and encourages participation among agents while contributing regularly. The newsletter is emailed to a list of approximately 1,037

people throughout South Carolina and surrounding states and shared with the 830 social media followers, through the use of an online email marketing software. The software allows for a sign-up form, so those interested can 'subscribe' to future email distributions. The number of "clicks" the email generated, also tracked by the software, identifies the number of times the newsletter was opened, even when forwarded to a non-subscriber. 'Clicks' for the first two newsletters totaled 2,171 and 2,396, respectively. The newsletter archives are also housed in PDF format on the team's webpage for clients to locate and reference. Articles from the first two editions were re-printed and appeared in the Southern Livestock Standard's Special Edition magazine and the Angus Beef Bulletin EXTRA, extending the impact far beyond the initial reach.

PERSONAL COLUMN

Moore, S. *[1]

[1]Senior Extension Dairy and Human Resource Management Educator, Michigan State University, Bellaire, MI, 49615

The purpose of this column is to share employee management principles with dairy owners and managers. The column seeks to help managers build employee management skills and leadership skills that will help move the business forward and help employees succeed on the farm. The editor of Dairy Business East approached the author after seeing news releases in major media publications. The column was published every other month in 2015, with Phil Durst (MSU Extension) providing three articles and Stan Moore providing three articles. Two of the articles written by Moore included "Are you being fair with all of your employees" and "How are you communicating with your employees and your management team". The latter article was also included in Dairy Business West. Circulation for Dairy Business East is 15,000. Circulation for Dairy Business West is 10,000. Research conducted by Moore and Durst over the past two years heavily influenced the articles. The research involved 13 farms across four states, and included anonymous input from over 170 employees. Outcomes from the research included management reports back to producers, several speaking opportunities in-state, out of state, and internationally, as well as this personal column. Through columns such as this, the author seeks to elevate the discussion of employee management principles, and encourage owner/managers to develop their skills in this management area.

PROGRAM PROMOTIONAL PIECE

Miller, D.L.*[1]

[1] Extension Educator, Penn State Cooperative Extension, Pottsville, PA, 17901

This promotional flyer was developed by the candidate for the 2016 Schuylkill County Ag Day. This meeting features cooperation between 4 agricultural related agencies within Schuylkill County. The meeting focuses on topics relevant to various types of agribusinesses within the county and beyond. 23 local agribusinesses participated in the trade show, along with 5 local agricultural agencies. Reproduced in full color, approximately 650 copies of the flyer were distributed through direct mail, and another 100 copies at local educational meetings. The PDF was also emailed to local email lists through Extension, Farm Bureau, and the Conservation District. The meeting was attended by 142 participants across a 4-county area.

PUBLICATION

Wollaeger, H.M.*[1], Cloyd, R.*[2], Smitley, D.*[3]
[1] Greenhouse Extension Educator, Michigan State University Extension, Nazareth, MI, 49074
[2] Professor and Extension Specialist in Horticultural Entomology, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS, 66506
[3] Professor of Entomology, Michigan State University Extension, East Lansing, MI, 48824

Greenhouse growers in the United States are increasingly using biological control as their primary insect management strategy due to increasing pest resistance to insecticides and increasing social and political pressures to decrease pesticide use. There are 4,849 producers (that sell over $10,000 worth of crops) of floriculture crops that contribute $4.07 billion to the United States' economy. Only approximately 15% of greenhouse growers in Michigan, which is the third largest floriculture producing state, are currently using biological control. As growers begin to adopt these new practices, there will be a need for a practical identification guide and recommendations on how to use the 29 commercially-available beneficial insects in an insect biological control program. This bulletin presents key facts, photos, and descriptions of the management strategies for western flower thrips, whitefly, aphids, two spotted spider mites, mealybugs, and fungus gnats. Within two months, it has had 92 downloads off of the Michigan State University Extension website. Over 200 have been distributed at the 2015 regional event "Greenhouse Growers Expo," which drew approximately 325 people to attend the 16 greenhouse educational sessions.

PUBLISHED PHOTO & CAPTION

Danelle Mcknight Cutting
EXTENSION AGENT
NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
ROWAN

The caption of the photo reads: This is not a space alien feeding on a tree, it's a cedar apple rust gall.

The local Rowan County newspaper, Salisbury Post allows the Rowan County Cooperative Extension office to write weekly columns in Friday's Home and Garden section of the newspaper. The Salisbury Post reader base is always intrigued by odd or outer worldly photos about plants, diseases, insects and molds. This photo was during the prime season of Cedar Apple Rust and Quince Rust for Rowan County. The Extension office had received numerous calls and emails about what was attacking their trees so a timely article was needed.

Once the photo and article was submitted the Cooperative Extension office received additional calls about the cedar apple rust fungus and if that was the only thing affecting their beloved apple trees. This photo made a great connection to readers in the county because it was something they were interested in and it also encouraged them to contact the Cooperative Extension office for additional assistance. Great photos and timely articles aide agents with gardening questions and build rapport with the community.

VIDEO PRESENTATION

Handley, D.T.*[1]
[1] Vegetable & Small Fruit Specialist, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Monmouth, ME, 04259

Red raspberries are a popular crop with home gardeners in Maine. Commercial acreage is also expanding, and the UMaine Extension bulletin "How to Grow Raspberries and Blackberries" is one of our most popular hard copy and most frequently viewed on-line publications. In an effort to enhance the educational value of our information and to expand its accessibility, we have produced a series of YouTube videos regarding raspberry growing. The "How to Plant Raspberries" video was filmed at the Highmoor Farm Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station in Monmouth in the spring of 2015. The script and staging were developed by the author with an informal "friendly advice" atmosphere coupled with scientifically sound information. We wanted the video to be short and relevant for both home gardeners and small commercial growers. The ten minute video was produced by the University of Maine and posted on YouTube and UMaine's YouTube.edu channel in May of 2015 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xju6QmusCJo). The video was also embedded within our on-line raspberry growing factsheet (http://umaine.edu/publications/2066e/) to give readers an alternate method of learning about the topic. They can simply click on the video within the fact sheet to see a demonstration. In just over ten months, the video has received over 13,500 hits. It is also being used to train Master Gardener Volunteers, and will be used by them to educate home gardeners.

WEB SITE

Siegle, L.*[1]
[1] Extension Agent, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Amelia, VA, 23002

Many consumers lack significant exposure to agricultural production and some hold adverse attitudes towards agriculture in response to misinformation they have encountered. Most consumers have limited opportunities to engage directly with farmers. In 2013, the Amelia agriculture agent determined that a blog with a "Meet Your Farmer" premise could effectively bridge the consumer-farmer connection gap and bring outreach to local and long-distance consumers seeking information about modern agricultural practices. The blog, titled "Central Virginia Ag Spotlight," features monthly illustrated stories about Virginia farmers. 40 stories have been shared to date. The blog is marketed via social media, webpages, and newsletters. Impact is tracked via Google Analytics, conversations, site comments, and social media. By January 2016, the site had 28,638 views by 14,034 users. 20% of traffic comes from returning visitors. Social media links to the stories garnered hundreds of likes, shares, and comments, and 24 people left comments directly on the blog website. In 2015, over 30 people contacted agents for help or information as a direct result of reading the blog. Several readers sought follow-up tours of featured farms. Four blog stories were reprinted in *Virginia Cattleman*. One was reprinted in *The Virginia Forager* and one was reblogged by the Farm Credit Knowledge Center. Three were used as feature stories in two newspapers.

Blog Sample: http://blogs.ext.vt.edu/central-virginia-ag-spotlight/2016/01/01/meet-bobby-maass/

2016 Achievement Award Winners

North Central Region

Illinois - W. Travis Meteer
Indiana - Danielle Walker
Iowa - Ryan Drollette
Kansas - Holly Dickman
Kansas - Abbie Powell
Michigan - Frank Gublo
Minnesota - Randy Pepin
Missouri - Sarah Denkler
Nebraska - Katie Pekarek
North Dakota - Sheldon Gerhardt
Ohio - Emily G. Adams
South Dakota - Laura Edwards
Wisconsin - Heidi Johnson

Northeast Region

Maryland - Paul Goeringer
New Hampshire - Olivia Saunders
New Jersey - Michele Bakacs
New York - Daniel Welch
West Virginia - Gregory Hamons

Southern Region

Alabama - Ellen K. Huckabay
Alabama - Danny B. McWilliams, Jr.
Arkansas - Lance Blythe
Arkansas - Mike Mcclintock
Arkansas - Trenton Roberts
Florida - Daniel K Fenneman
Florida - Mary Elizabeth Henry
Florida - Shawn T. Steed
Georgia - Carole Knight
Georgia - Amanda R. Smith
Kentucky - Shannon Farrell
Kentucky - Kristin G Hildabrand
Kentucky - Courtney Jenkins
Louisiana - Jeremy P Hebert
Louisiana - Dr. Sara Shields
Mississippi - Darrin Dodds
Mississippi - Ross Overstreet
Mississippi - Brady Self
Mississippi - Steven Tucker
North Carolina - Tim Britton
North Carolina - Paige Burns
North Carolina - Randy Fulk
North Carolina - Teresa Herman
Oklahoma - Dana Bay
South Carolina - Alana W. West
Tennessee - Janie J. Becker
Tennessee - Jason De Koff
Tennessee - Justin Rhinehart
Texas - Caleb Eaton
Texas - Cody Maxwell
Texas - Michael W. Potter
Texas - John Villalba
Texas - Scott Willey
Virginia - Peter L. Callan
Virginia - Neil A. Clark

West Region

Arizona - William K Brandau
Colorado - Robin Young
Idaho - Lance T. Ellis
Montana - Tracy Mosley
New Mexico - John Rilinger Allen
Oregon - Nicole Anderson
Utah - Britney Hunter
Washington - Nicole Martini
Wyoming - Jeff M. Edwards

2016 Distinguished Service Award Winners

North Central Region

Illinois - Stanley Solomon, Jr.
Indiana - William Horan
Iowa - Russ Euken
Kansas - Stacy Campbell
Kansas - Darren Hibdon
Michigan - James Isleib
Minnesota - Nathan Winter
Missouri - Jim Crawford
Nebraska - Michael D Rethwisch
North Dakota - Karl Hoppe
Ohio - Clif Little
South Dakota - Jack Davis
Wisconsin - Barbara Larson

Northeast Region

Maine - Caragh Fitzgerald
Maryland - Ronald David Myers
New Jersey - Stephen John Komar, Jr.
New York - Roberta Harrison Severson
Pennsylvania - Andrew D Frankenfield
Vermont - Wendy M Sorrell
West Virginia - Rakesh Chandran

Southern Region

Alabama - William East
Alabama - W. Kenneth "Ken" Kelley
Arkansas - Dave Freeze
Arkansas - Joe Moore
Arkansas - Chad Norton
Florida - Stephen H. Futch
Florida - Carrie Stevenson
Florida - J Stacy Strickland
Georgia - James L. Morgan
Georgia - Jake Price
Kentucky - David Appelman
Kentucky - Keith Hackworth
Kentucky - Jason Phillips
Louisiana - Donna S. Morgan
Louisiana - Terry L. Washington
Mississippi - Patrick Poindexter
North Carolina - Al Cochran
North Carolina - Charlotte D. Glen
North Carolina - Norman E. Harrell, Jr.
North Carolina - Taylor Williams
Oklahoma - Donna Patterson
South Carolina - Joe Varn
Tennessee - Michael Barry
Tennessee - Jerry Lamb
Tennessee - Jeremy H. West
Texas - Scott A. Anderson
Texas - Jay M. Kingston
Texas - Julie Massey
Texas - Cary Sims
Texas - Stephen Zoeller
Virginia - Adam Downing
Virginia - Glenn Slade

West Region

Arizona - Monica Kilcullen Pastor
Colorado - Curtis J. Utley
Idaho - K. Scott Jensen
Montana - George Haynes
New Mexico - Patrick Kircher
Oregon - Darrin L. Walenta
Utah - Jody A. Gale
Washington - Stephen M. Van Vleet
Wyoming - Hudson Hill

AGRICULTURE AWARENESS & APPRECIATION AWARD

WILSON REGIONAL AG SUMMIT

Harrell, Jr., N.E.*[1], Bradley, A.L.*[2], Earle, W.F.*[3], Johnson, K.*[4], Little, W.E.*[5], Smith, M.*[6], Spivey, B.M.*[7], Tyson, C*[8]

[1] Extension Agent, , Wilson, NC, 27893

[2] County Extension Director, Cooperative Extension, Tarboro, NC, 27886

[3] County Extension Director, Cooperative Extension, Wilson, NC, 27893

[4] County Extension Director, Cooperative Extension, Goldsboro, NC, 27530

[5] Extension Agent, Cooperative Extension, Wilson, NC, 27893

[6] County Extension Director, Cooperative Extension, Greenville, NC, 27833

[7] County Extension Director, Cooperative Extension, Smithfield, NC, 27577

[8] County Extension Director, Cooperative Extension, Nashville, NC, 27856

In 2015, a seven-county region in Eastern North Carolina collaborated to conduct a Regional Agricultural Summit to highlight the contribution of agriculture and agribusiness to the area economy. The seven counties included Edgecombe, Greene, Johnston, Nash, Pitt, Wayne, and Wilson; each ranking in the top 12 among North Carolina counties in farm income from crops that generated sales over $1.85 billion. Additionally, agribusiness including processing, wholesale, and retail provides critical jobs and is a primary economic driver. However, the population of North Carolina is rapidly growing and both commercial and residential development compete with agriculture for land resources. In addition, agriculture is sometimes left out in discussions regarding economic development in the region. Extension Agents in the seven-county region partnered with the Wilson Chamber of Commerce and the Wilson Economic Development Council to hold an Agricultural Summit on March 12, 2015. The summit program included Dr. Richard Linton, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at NC State University, The Honorable Steve Troxler, Commissioner of Agriculture, and Dr. Blake Brown, Hugh C. Kiger Professor in the Agricultural and Resource Economics Department at NC State University. Ag Summit participants toured Scott Farms, a modern farming operation including state of the art automated vegetable packing facilities and a demonstration of a new self-propelled high clearance sprayer equipped with Global Positioning System, autotrac-assisted steering, and boom section control. The summit was attended by over 400 individuals including elected officials, business leaders, and economic development officials from the region.

EXCELLENCE IN 4-H PROGRAMMING

CATTLE HANDLING CONTEST

Anderson, N.*[1]

[1] EXT EDUCATOR AG/4-H, , Stillwater, OK, 74074

Most young people today are removed from the family farm and have little or no animal agriculture experience. This program was established in 2004 to educate young people, grades 7th through 12th, on livestock handling, Beef Quality Assurance, animal health, record keeping and teamwork. The contest is made up of three member teams. Teams are divided into two divisions, juniors – 7th -9th grade and seniors – 10th -12th grade. Participants are given explicit instruction and details concern all aspects of the contest. After participating in a live action, inter-active training, teams are active participants in processing beef calves. Teams utilize their livestock handling skills to sort, move and catch calves in chute and head gate. Team members then divide and conquer to tag, take temperature, apply pour-on, oral and injectable pharmaceuticals. Teams complete a health evaluation including checking for runny noses, temperature, injection site lumps, lesions, eyes and feet. Teams record all work performed including pharmaceutical lot numbers and expiration dates. This process is repeated until the set number of cattle has been processed.

Teams are evaluated by a panel consisting of industry professionals, producers, and extension specialists. Panel evaluates teams on efficiency/speed, record keeping, cattle handling techniques and teamwork. Sponsors provide all facilities, cattle, pharmaceuticals, supplies and prize money of $1200.00. This event has educated over 600 Payne County youth on proper cattle handling practices and BQA protocol.

Results speak for themselves-we've never lost a kid or a calf!

SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE CROP PRODUCTION

PEANUT PRODUCTION EDUCATION IN HAMILTON COUNTY, FLORIDA

Wynn, K.*[1], Dufault, N.*[2], Tillman, B.*[3]

[1] Extension Agent I, University of Florida, Jasper, FL, 32052

[2] Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, 32611

[3] Associate Professor and Extension Specialist, University of Florida, Marianna, FL, 32446

Peanut production has become an important commodity crop for Hamilton County and the surrounding counties over the past ten years. In North Florida, throughout the Suwannee River Valley, peanut producers generate approximately $56,482,000 from the 70,603 acres of peanuts produced. Often the only data producers have to determine the best peanut cultivar or spray program comes from small plot trials conducted at research stations some distance from their fields. While this data provides quality insight into cultivar and fungicide selection, it neglects to account for the variability associated with farm equipment and differing production techniques. To assist peanut producers in determining best peanut practices, an annual program consisting of two peanut production meetings and two peanut on-farm trials were conducted during the past five years. Through this platform, University of Florida peanut specialists and the Hamilton County Agricultural Agent were able to help producers increase quality and improve yields. Producers have incorporated new cultivars that possess disease resistance in their production areas which have a history of disease. They have also integrated spray programs patterned by the ones evaluated in the on-farm trials. In Hamilton County 100 percent of peanut producers (n = 45) now use fungicide spray programs consisting of bi-weekly sprays adopted from the Hamilton County peanut on-farm trial. Adopting one of the recommended fungicide programs increased input costs $38.00 per acre (5600 acres) but increased yields over 1,000 pounds per acre resulting in an additional $963,200 in Hamilton County.

SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE FARM AND RANCH FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF FARM EMPLOYEES CONFERENCE

Durst, P.*[1], Moore, S. J.*[2]

[1] Sr. Extension Dairy & Beef Educator, MSU Extension, West Branch, MI, 48661

[2] Sr. Extension Educator - Dairy, Business and Ag Labor Management, Michigan State University Extension, Bellaire, MI, 49615

Agricultural producers today are challenged with managing the people who work for them. Employee management has become one of the primary roles of farm owners with the potential to affect farm performance and profitability to a large degree. Durst and Moore initiated and conducted a project to work with dairy farm owners and managers using feedback from their employees. In that project, anonymous phone interviews were conducted with 174 employees from 13 farms in 4 states. Analysis of the feedback from a farm's employees provided opportunity to make customized recommendations for management. Durst and Moore have used the overall results of these interviews to provide valuable recommendations to many other agricultural producers and professionals to improve employee management and engagement on farms. They have shared principles of effective

employee management with agricultural owners/mangers and agricultural professionals in Michigan, 7 other states and internationally through 28 presentations and conferences, 2014 - 2016. In addition, they have been featured in three webinars, have recorded three podcasts on employee management topics and have written a regular column on Human Resource management for Dairy Business – East. Employee management conferences developed by Durst and Moore featured four sessions to help owners and managers improve their skills and knowledge. Evaluations completed two months after these conferences show that many participants put the knowledge to work on their farms and are seeing positive results.

SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE FARM HEALTH & SAFETY

KANSAS PESTICIDE SAFETY

Miller, F.*[1]

[1] Pesticide Safety and IPM Coordinator, K-State Research & Extension, McPherson County, Mcpherson, KS, 67460

In the state of Kansas, there are 20,811 commercial and private applicators who need pesticide safety education to maintain their licenses. The license is required for applicators to purchase and use restricted use pesticides. The Kansas Pesticide Safety Education program provides education and information resources for applicators, homeowners, and youth to help improve their quality of life by keeping them safe. The program is responsible for educating these applicators and others to ensure they apply pesticides safely and legally while promoting environmental stewardship. The program also provides objective information on the safe handling of pesticides and pest management strategies. This is completed through individual one-on-one consultations, face-to face presentations, hands on demonstrations, and through media and on-line formats. From October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015, a total of 2,136 commercial applicators and 2,261 private applicators were either initially certified or recertified through the program. In the same period, the PESP was responsible for training 1,121, occupational training users and 650 homeowners/youth/non-occupational users. The program evaluates the trainings and manuals to improve the program and to provide documentation of overall impacts and outcomes. One participant shared that he learned that adding extra chemical does not necessarily mean more control. The Pesticide Safety program is instrumental in reducing the risk to public health and decreasing the negative effects to the environment while allowing for effective crop production and pest control in the state of Kansas.

SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE CONSUMER OR COMMERCIAL HORTICULTURE

POLLINATOR PROGRAMS

Roos, D.*[1]

[1] Agriculture Extension Agent, North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Pittsboro, NC, 27312

The primary goal of this comprehensive educational program was to inspire and teach farmers, gardeners, and beekeepers to create and expand habitat to provide vital forage and nesting sites for pollinators. I employed multiple program activities and teaching methods over the past three years to help me achieve this goal. I conducted 52 pollinator conservation workshops and presentations for a total of 3,050 participants. I created a demonstration pollinator garden and led 48 garden tours for approximately 1,400 visitors from across the state. I organized an annual Pollinator Day celebration that attracted hundreds of visitors annually, conducted Beekeeping Schools and workshops, and engaged the public through social media and a pollinator website (www.carolinapollinatorgarden.org). Program participants increased their knowledge over a wide range of topics and 96% said the programs helped them protect and enhance pollinators. Impacts increase when knowledge leads to action: 66% of program participants reported they expanded an existing garden to make it more pollinator friendly while 43% planted a completely new pollinator garden. Visitors came from across the state to visit the demonstration garden, resulting in the unexpected impact that I call "pollinator tourism": 88% of visitors said they spent money eating out and shopping in town when they came to visit the garden, and 74% reported they bought plants from local nurseries after visiting the garden.

Some local nurseries added new species for sale based on my plant lists and saw increased sales from program participants.

SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

INDIANA MASTER CATTLEMAN PROGRAM

Brown, A.*[1], Walker, D*[2], Andrew-Richards, J*[3], Claeys, M*[4], Davis, S*[5], Heckaman, K*[6], Johnson, K*[7], Kepler, M*[8], Lemenager, R*[9], Mosiman, A*[10], Reid, P*[11], Shelton, B*[12], Stewart, K*[13], Stierwalt, C*[14], Turner, M*[15], Ulery, M*[16]

[1] Extension Educator, Purdue Extension, Flora, IN, 46929

[2] Extension Educator, Purdue Extension, Salem, IN, 47167

[3] Extension Educator, Purdue Extension, Rising Sun, IN, 47040

[4] Beef Extension Specialist, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, 47907

[5] Extension Educator, Purdue Extension, Bloomfield, IN, 47424

[6] Extension Educator, Purdue Extension, Warsaw, IN, 46580

[7] Forage Extension Specialist, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, 47907

[8] Extension Educator, Purdue Extension, Rochester, IN, 46975

[9] Purdue Extension Beef Specialist, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, 47907

[10] Extension Educator, Purdue Extension, Boonville, IN, 47601

[11] Distance Learning Coordinator, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, 47907

[12] Feldun Purdue Ag Center Manager, Purdue University, , IN, 47421

[13] Extension Reproduction Specialist, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, 47907

[14] Extension Educator, Purdue Extension, Covington, IN, 47932

[15] Extension Educator, Purdue Extension, Petersburg, IN, 47567

[16] Extension Educator, Purdue Extension, Corydon, IN, 47112

Beef producers in Indiana are in need of in-depth educational programming that will help them increase productivity, efficiency, and profitability of their operations. In order to address these needs, a team of Purdue Extension Educators and Extension Specialists created the Indiana Master Cattleman program and launched it state-wide. This program is designed to help beef producers improve profitability through an increase in production efficiency, forage utilization, reproductive success, genetic selection, herd health, and business management. This advanced, in-depth, 10-week educational experience offers beef producers the opportunity to critically evaluate their cow herd and improve management techniques. Participants created a business plan, evaluated the efficiency of their cow herd, and strengthened their business management skills. The Indiana Master Cattleman program is an innovative, multidisciplinary educational program addressing issues relevant to Indiana beef producers. After hosting the program in two locations, 40 Indiana beef producers have been certified. 100% of participants had a written business plan, mission, and goals for their operation at the conclusion of the program. After participating in the program: over 75% indicated the marketing information will increase revenue potential; 83% had a better understanding of EPDs and $Indexes; 90% had an increased understanding of calving interval and its effects on profits, over 85% identified new or improved ways of measuring reproductive efficiency; and over 80% indicated they would develop a comprehensive herd health plan. Overall, participants indicated that the program helped increase the revenue potential of their operation from $1,000-$10,000.

SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE FORESTRY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

WILDLIFE AND INVASIVE SPECIES EDUCATION

Davis, J.E.*[1], Moffis, B.L.*[2], Boughton, R.K.*[3], Daniels, J.C.*[4], Demers, C.*[5], Enloe, S.F.*[6], Hill, J.E.*[7], Johnson, S.A.*[8], Orlando, M.*[9], Pienaar, E.F.*[10], Westervelt, D.*[11], Clothier, A.*[12], Stout, R.*[13], Lester, W.*[14]

[1] Residential Horticulture Agent/Master Gardener Coordinator, UF/IFAS Sumter County Extension, Bushnell, FL, 33513

[2] Urban Horticulture Agent/Master Gardener Coordinator, UF/IFAS Lake County Extension, Tavares, FL, 32778

[3] Assistant Professor, UF/IFAS Range Cattle REC- Ona, Ona, FL, 33865

[4] Associate Professor, Associate Curator and Director McGuire Center for Lepidoptera and Biodiversity, Gainesville, FL, 32611

[5] Forest Stewardship Coordinator, UF/IFAS School of Forest Resources and Conservation, Gainesville, FL, 32611

[6] Associate Professor, UF/IFAS Center for Aquatic and

Invasive Plants, Gainesville, FL, 32611
[7] Associate Professor, UF/IFAS School of Forest Resources and Conservation, Ruskin, FL, 33570
[8] Associate Professor, UF/IFAS Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation, Gainesville, FL, 32611
[9] Wildlife Biologist, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Eustis, FL, 32726
[10] Assistant Professor, UF/IFAS Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation, Gainesville, FL, 32611
[11] Assistant Chief, Bureau of Plant & Apiary Inspection, Division of Plant Industry, Gainesville, FL, 32611
[12] Sumter County Forester, Florida Forest Service, Bushnell, FL, 33513
[13] Director, Florida Bass Conservation Center, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Webster, FL, 33597
[14] Commercial Horticulture Agent/Master Gardener Coordinator, UF/IFAS Hernando County Extension, Brooksville, FL, 34601

Invasive species are threatening Florida's native wildlife and native plant species. After assessing the need for more education on invasive species and native wildlife, the agent developed a symposium that provides continuing education to Florida Master Gardeners and Florida Master Naturalists on native wildlife, native plants and the control of invasive species in Florida. The "Wildlife and Invasive Species Education" or W.I.S.E. symposium was formed. Objectives were to educate and train participants so that they may take the knowledge learned and educate the public. W.I.S.E. consisted of a two-day event. Presentations were delivered by extension faculty, specialists and other attending agencies. Educational booths were present for questions and for participants to become familiar with the agencies that were present. The third day of the symposium consisted of guided field trips to natural areas and a tour of the Florida Bass Conservation Center. Field trips offered to educate through hands-on experiences and reinforced the knowledge of the lessons learned in presentations. There were over 120 attendees that attended W.I.S.E. 70 attendees responded through a post survey by Qualtrics. 88% of the participants stated they will use the information learned from W.I.S.E. to educate clientele about invasive species, native plants and native wildlife species. 58 participants listed three action items they will take to educate others on invasive species. 100% (n=70) participants demonstrated knowledge gain. A monetary gain of $492.00 was achieved and used to enhance other natural resources events.

SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE (SARE)

National Winners (1 from each Region)

HIGH QUALITY BEVERAGE RAW MATERIALS FOR THE CRAFT BREWING INDUSTRY

Clark, J.*[1], Duley, C.*[2]
[1] AGRICULTURE AGENT, UW-Extension, Chippewa Falls, WI, 54729
[2] Agriculture Agent, UW-Extension Buffalo County, Alma, WI, 54610

The craft brewery industry continues to increase in Wisconsin as new breweries are being built throughout the state. Brewers are looking for locally grown ingredients to reduce the amount of ingredients purchased from outside Wisconsin. The emphasis of this project was to investigate the factors to producing high quality raw materials in Wisconsin, specifically hops and malting barley. The project included replicated on-farm research with malting barley varieties, nitrogen application rates, fungicide efficacy, and impact on quality. The hop component of the project resulted in funding to initiate disease indexing of hop varieties and to develop educational materials to assist growers with decision making. This project was funded through a Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Project grant.

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGMENT FOR STRAWBERRIES WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Handley, D.T.*[1]

[1] Vegetable & Small Fruit Specialist, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Monmouth, ME, 04259

Strawberries are an important retail crop in Maine, due to high consumer demand for fresh, local berries, and the high return on investment this crop can offer. However, an aggressive pest complex, including tarnished plant bug (*Lygus lineolaris*), strawberry bud weevil (*Anthonomus signatus*), two spotted spider mites (*Tetranychus urticae*) and gray mold (*Botrytis cineria)*, combined with very low consumer tolerance for pest damage, can make this crop challenging to grow profitably. Frequent applications of pesticides used in the past to achieve high crop quality are no longer considered economically, environmentally or socially tolerable. The University of Maine Cooperative Extension works with local farmers to develop and support Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices for strawberry production to improve the long-term sustainability of this crop. This program was the first to introduce pest monitoring techniques and the use of economic action thresholds to Maine strawberry growers. The program now reaches over 100 farms statewide. Eight to twelve volunteer farmers work with Extension each season to provide monitoring sites and pest information, which is shared with over 100 growers via weekly electronic newsletters, web sites and a blog. Farmers have participated in applied research projects through the program to enhance alternative pest control measures. Program evaluations indicate that farmers have modified their pest management practices as a result of their participation, usually reducing the amount of pesticide used significantly. Most have seen an improvement in crop quality, and found that IPM has improved crop profitability.

NATURALLY ESCAROSA (NER)

Stevenson, C. T.*[1], Johnson, L.*[2], O'Connor, L.R.*[3], Thaxton, Blake*[4], Verlinde, Chris*[5]

[1] Coastal Sustainability Agent, UF IFAS Extension, Cantonment, FL, 32533

[2] Agriculture Agent, UF IFAS Extension, Cantonment, FL, 32533

[3] Sea Grant Agent, UF IFAS Extension, Cantonment, FL, 32533

[4] Commercial Horticulture Agent, UF IFAS Extension, Milton, FL, 32570

[5] Sea Grant Agent, UF IFAS Extension, Milton, FL, 32570

EscaRosa (NER) is a multi-disciplinary, multi-county project geared to professional development and promotion of agritourism and ecotourism businesses and destinations. Both professions are dependent upon the proper management of natural resources for continued success and financial sustainability. NER is a venue to provide training towards good stewardship of the land and water while diversifying farm and ecotour operations. Through this effort, we can improve the overall economy and ecology of the region. The objectives of NER include increasing awareness of and visitors to local ecotourism and agritourism businesses, improving relationships between hospitality industry and tour operators, and increasing professional development opportunities for agritourism/ecotourism businesses. Extension agents pursued and were awarded a grant from a BP oil-spill related fund, which was used to expand and update the Naturally EscaRosa website (http://www.naturallyescarosa.com) and brochure. Agents also worked with software and graphics professionals to develop a mobile smartphone application, promotional banners, billboards, metal signs for each location and promotional materials. The agents coordinated two 2-day conferences for agritourism/ecotourism business owners and hospitality industry networking sessions. Outcomes from the project include growing use of the new website and smartphone app, new working relationships with ag/ecotour operators, and successful execution of two "Gulf Coast Business Development Conferences" attended by 115 business owners and Extension agents from three states. Surveys from the conference indicate attendees are learning and using new techniques. Agriculture and tourism are the leading industries in Florida and the NER program is considered a model for statewide expansion.

SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE YOUNG BEGINNING SMALL FARMER/RANCHER

DRIP IRRIGATION SCHOOLS IMPROVE ADOPTION OF IRRIGATION AND NUTRIENT BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES BY SMALL FARMERS IN THE SUWANNEE VALLEY AREA

Bauer, M.*[1], Gazula, A.*[2], Hochmuth, R.*[3], Fenneman, D.*[4], Zotarelli, L.*[5]

[1] Extension Agent, UF/IFAS, Lake City, Fl, 32055
[2] Extension Agent, UF/IFAS, Gainesville, FL, 32609
[3] Regional Specialized Extension Agent, UF/IFAS, Live Oak, FL, 32060
[4] Extension Agent, UF/IFAS, Madison, FL, 32340
[5] State Specialist, UF/IFAS, Gainesville, FL, 32611

Ninety-percent of the farms in Suwannee Valley are small farms and some of these farmers have little to no farming background and need to learn production skills that were once taught by experience on farms. Florida's sandy soils have low water holding capacity and often farmers over irrigate to ensure adequate soil moisture levels to meet the crop water needs. Fertilizers are highly water soluble and mismanagement of irrigation water application can lead to leaching of fertilizers. Therefore, for the last six years, a team of Extension agents assessed the opportunities and challenges related to drip irrigation systems based irrigation and nutrient management, and developed educational programs and activities to meet the growers' needs. The objectives of these educational programs were: 1) Annually, 75% of the small and beginning farmers who attend drip irrigation programs will increase their knowledge of irrigation and nutrient best management practices (BMPs) as measured by post-tests. 2) Annually, 50% of the small and beginning farmers who attend drip irrigation programs will adopt/intend to adopt efficient irrigation and nutrient BMPs as measured by post-surveys. So far, 393 small farmers have attended drip irrigation and nutrient management programs. The average knowledge gain was 89% (n=393, all drip-irrigation programs), and 91% (n=132, drip irrigation schools alone) of the small farmers intend to adopt drip irrigation and nutrient BMPs on their farms. Thirty-five vegetable growers (5000-acres) are verified to have adopted irrigation and nutrient BMPs resulting in cost savings of $90/acre, and nearly $450,000 total for cooperative producers.

NACAA/SARE FELLOWS

NATIONAL WINNERS

Michael O'Donnell
Extension Educator
Purdue Extension
Delaware County

Olivia Saunders
Extension Field Specialist, Food & Agriculture
UNH Cooperative Extension
Carroll County

Laura M Miller
County Extension Agent-Commercial Horticulture
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
Tarrant County

Seth Swanson
Extension Agent
Montana State University Extension
Missoula County

JCEP Creative Excellence Award

Jenny S. Carleo, Rutgers Cooperative Extension agent, was honored with the Joint Council of Extension Professionals – Creative Excellence Award (CEA) at the recent NACAA AM/PIC.

During the presentation – Carleo was recognized as "maintaining personal connections with clients in the age of technology."

"We must all learn how to keep up with technology, and our demanding positions, while developing business relationships with our clients," Carleo said. "Through modification of my classroom's dynamic I have been successful in re-connecting with the people I serve."

Carleo has been the Rutgers Agricultural and Resource Management Agent for Cape May County and a faculty member of Rutgers University since 2006.

Currently, she conducts research on local farms growing small fruits. She has worked extensively in floriculture, ornamentals and vegetable production in the past, and serves as project director for "ultra-niche crops for the progressive, new farmer" a USDA funded project.

NACAA Hall of Fame Award

The NACAA Recognition and Awards Committee is proud to present these four 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.

PIPELINE AG SAFETY ALLIANCE

Our thanks to Pipeline Ag Safety Alliance for sponsorship!

2016
Northeast Region
Hall of Fame Award

Robert Leiby

Pennsylvania
36 Years - Retired

2016
Southern Region
Hall of Fame Award

Frank FitzSimons

South Carolina
26 Years - Retired

2016
Western Region
Hall of Fame Award

Mir-Mohammad Seyedbagheri

Idaho
32 Years

2016
North Central Region
Hall of Fame Award

Stuart Hawbaker

Illinois
35 Years - Retired

Life Member Corner

Retirement: The End, The Beginning or Both?

Russell Duncan
NACAA Life Member Vice Chair Southern Region

I truly enjoyed the nearly 30 years I spent as a County Agent. I looked forward to going to work and facing the challenges we faced every day. Perhaps the best thing was being part of an organization that promotes and encourages lifelong learning. I always told my friends and family that I learned something new just about every day. That love of learning and solving problems has stayed with me since my retirement, and I am sure it will be a part of me until the day I die.

Like many retirees, I wasn't ready to stop working and fortunately retirement can be both an ending and a beginning. I took a job with a private agribusiness company helping customers on site specific soil fertility management. This is often referred to a "precision ag". I was familiar with the principles and practices of precision agriculture having worked with a number of farmers during the latter part of my Extension career who were adopting precision ag practices. I enjoyed the new perspective the private sector brought as I continued to learn and improve my skills and knowledge.

As changes in the local industry took place I recognized an opportunity to start my own precision ag business. It was a great move. This past year has been an incredible experience.

Being my own boss was a new experience for me. I have always answered to a supervisor or boss, since I started my first job after graduating from Clemson University in 1978. Now the buck stops with me!

I started small with eight customers that accounted for a little over 7,000 acres. That proved to be a blessing since we experienced a thousand-year flood and record rainfall the first week of October. I had taken less than 1,000 acres of samples at that time. Continued rainfall and wet conditions kept me out of the fields until late November. By the end of February, I had only taken half of my samples due to the poor field conditions. I stayed very busy during the early part of March collecting the rest of the samples. The lab I was working with was able to get the results back to me very quickly and my customers were able to apply lime and fertilizer in a timely matter.

The next few months were almost like being a County Agent again. I assisted my customers with crop management decisions including seeding rates, nitrogen management and pest management. Some of my customers concentrated on improving corn yields on both irrigated and dryland fields.

I had to go "back to school" in order to help with this. They were constantly challenging me. I had to find proven practices and answers to help them reach their yield goals. Fortunately, we had good growing conditions this season Our corn harvest so far has been very good. My customers are happy with their results and are telling their friends so my business will continue to grow.

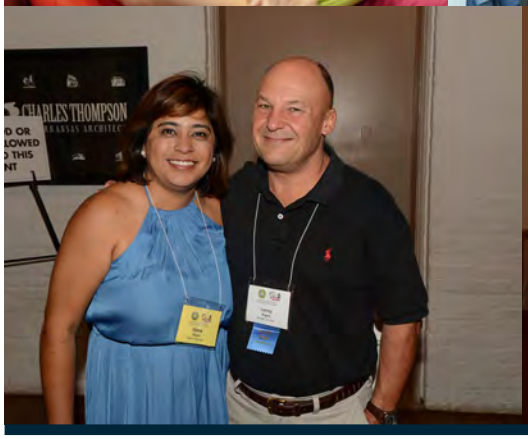
I would like to take credit for their success, but it is truly a joint effort. We worked together to achieve these results. I worked with several of my current customers when I was a County Agent. I have to tell you it is amazing how much better they listen to me now that they are paying me. Maybe Extension should consider sending out a few bills!










IMPRESSIONS OF ARKANSAS

The County Agent

POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO:
The County Agent - NACAA, 6584 W. Duroc Rd.,
Maroa, IL 61756 - Attn: Scott Hawbaker

ANNUAL MEETING AND PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT CONFERENCE DATES

2017
Salt Lake City, Utah....July 9-13

2018
Chattanooga, Tennessee.....July 29-Aug. 2

2019
Forth Wayne, Indiana .....September 8-12

2020
Virginia Beach, Virginia.....July 19-24

Upcoming Issues of The County Agent Magazine

December, 2016	April, 2017	June, 2017
Awards/Committee Directory	AM/PIC Registration Edition	Open Edition
Deadline for articles: December 1, 2016	Deadline for articles: February 16, 2017	Deadline for Articles: May 10, 2017
Mail Date: December 28, 2016	Mail Date: March 20, 2017	Mail Date: June 15, 2017