

Title:	Beginning Entrepreneurs Expanding the Future of South Dakota (BEEFSD)		
Sponsoring Agency	NIFA	Project Status	COMPLETE
Funding Source	Non Formula	Reporting Frequency	Annual
Accession No.	223530	Grants.gov No.	
Project No.	SDW-2010-03104	Proposal No.	2010-03104
Project Start Date	09/01/2010	Project End Date	08/31/2013
Reporting Period Start Date	09/01/2010	Reporting Period End Date	08/31/2013
Submitted By	Kenneth Olson	Date Submitted to NIFA	02/13/2015

Program Code: BFRDP

Program Name: Beginning Farmer and Rancher

Project Director

Kenneth Olson
605-394-2236
kenneth.olson@sdsstate.edu

Recipient Organization

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY
2201 ADMINISTRATION LANE
BROOKINGS, SD 57007
DUNS No. 929929743

Performing Department

Animal Science

Co-Project Directors

Walker, Julie

Departments

Animal and Range Science

Non-Technical Summary

This project will provide an educational program that assists beginning range-based beef cow-calf ranchers in central and western South Dakota to become economically, ecologically, and socially sustainable beef producers. It is comprised of instructional workshops (topics will include livestock production, natural resource stewardship, marketing, financial, business, risk, and legal management), case studies of alternative beef production systems and management practices, evaluation of post-weaning performance of participants' cattle, mentoring from established beef ranchers, web-based interaction (using social networking, podcasts, webinars, and uploaded instructional materials), and travel study trips to learn about marketing alternatives and other segments of the beef cattle industry. The target audience is a core group of 30 beginning ranchers (plus additional beginning ranchers invited to portions of the instructional workshops) with 10-15 established beef producers as mentors. Project instructors will work with various agriculture organizations and agencies to allow beginning ranchers to create Management Advisory Teams. Our goal is to present beginning ranchers a curriculum that will provide them the tools to make wise management decisions that will lead to economic, ecological, and sociological sustainability and in turn contribute to ongoing agricultural production, land stewardship, and rural community viability.

Accomplishments

Major goals of the project

Our goal is to provide beginning ranchers a curriculum that will equip them with the tools to make wise management decisions that will lead to economic, ecological, and sociological sustainability and in turn contribute to ongoing agricultural production, land stewardship, and rural community viability. Our objectives are to: 1. Provide knowledge, skills, and experience with production, business, financial, and marketing tools, including their use in the overall ranch system. 2. Provide case studies of alternative range-based beef cattle production systems so beginning ranchers understand the potential opportunities and management requirements of each alternative. 3. Provide feedback to beginning ranchers with cow-calf herds about the post-weaning feeding and carcass performance of their calves, as well as calves from alternative production systems. 4. Provide beginning ranchers with mentors that are established ranchers and who may be older generation ranchers considering transfer of assets and management to beginning ranchers. 5. Provide opportunities to gain firsthand knowledge of production, business, financial, and marketing aspects of the other segments of the beef cattle industry, including the feedlot, packing, and retail sectors. Expected Outcomes: The ultimate outcome of this project will be the successful establishment of beginning ranchers that participate as financially, ecologically, and socially sustainable beef cattle ranchers, land stewards, and members of their communities. Completion of the objectives listed above as a Standard BFRDP project will fulfill the goal of BFRDP to "enhance food security" by ensuring that the next generation of ranchers will successfully establish viable enterprises and thus contribute to the level of agriculture production that will be needed to feed the world. Another long-term

outcome of this project will be instilling leadership skills in beginning ranchers that can be used to increase their involvement and provide leadership in their local communities, commodity groups and other organizations. The final long-term outcome will be the development of this educational program into a self-sustaining effort that positively impacts additional beginning ranchers in the future. Our mid-term outcome will be the successful completion of the curriculum at the end of the 3-year program. Successful completion will mean that participants have not just attended the activities, but have individually completed and implemented the various plans and projects of the curriculum (e.g., a marketing plan) for their operation. To fulfill this outcome, short-term outcomes will be fulfilled by gain of knowledge and understanding throughout the 3-year time span of the project by completion of each planned activity.

What was accomplished under these goals?

We fulfilled our overall goal of developing and executing an integrated and intensive curriculum for beginning beef producers to increase their ability to become sustainable. beefSD participants are displaying improved capacity in beef cattle production, land stewardship, and rural community involvement and leadership. Our goal for short-term outcomes was increased participant knowledge to be applied to livestock production, natural resource stewardship, marketing, financial, business, risk, and legal management. Participant responses on evaluation instruments indicated that they found instruction in these topics to be highly useful (e.g. 100% of respondents found production topics to be beneficial to extremely beneficial, 90% found business topics to be beneficial to extremely beneficial, 100% found financial topics to be beneficial to extremely beneficial, and 93% found marketing topics to be beneficial to extremely beneficial). Our goal for medium-term outcomes was implementation of new management practices that would lead to long-term impact. In an open-ended evaluation question, we asked what they were doing now because of beefSD. Almost everyone listed at least one thing and several listed a number of changes. Changes were numerous and substantive. In terms of long-term outcomes/impact, we have seen early evidence of positive impact in the beef cattle industry in South Dakota because of the influence of the participants in beefSD. Another long-term outcome goal that we completed was for beefSD to be a self-sustaining effort. The "alumni" continue to interact and meet after completion of the 3-year program, and we initiated class 2 with a new set of participants. The broader impact of this program for the World is improved food security.

We delineated 5 objectives for this program:

1. Provide knowledge, skills, and experience.

· Activities:

a. 8 required instructional workshops that were 1-3 days in length were completed. Four of these were integrated with a case study of an alternative production system (see objective 2). The overall workshop curriculum was integrated and cumulative over the 3-year life of the program.

· Data and Results:

a. Evaluation instruments were conducted at the beginning, 18-month, and end of the 3-year program to allow us to assess outcomes relative to our goals and objectives. We asked participant to rate the value of every component of each workshop.

b. Overwhelmingly, participants found the information gained to be beneficial to extremely beneficial.

c. We had participants complete homework based on information and tools presented in the workshops, e.g. they had to write their business and personal goals, a marketing plan, various budgets, various financial statements, and balance rations for their cattle.

· Key outcomes

a. Interactions with participants provides evidence they gained the desired knowledge and are using it to create medium-term outcomes.

2. Provide case studies of alternative range-based beef cattle production systems.

· Activities:

a. The four case studies were completed.

b. All case study coaches served as mentors for the participants.

· Data and Results:

a. In the evaluation instruments, we asked participant to rate and comment on the value of each case study.

b. Participants found the information gained to be beneficial to extremely beneficial.

· Key outcomes

a. On the final evaluation, 79% of participants indicated that their understanding of all alternative production strategies increased.

b. Participants indicated that they learned there are many successful ways to manage a beef cattle enterprise.

3. Provide feedback to beginning ranchers about the post-weaning feeding and carcass performance of calves

· Activities:

a. Participants placed calves in a post-weaning performance program wherein calves were fed together to compare feedlot performance. When finished, all calves went to slaughter and carcass data was collected.

b. The feedlot had a 1-day meeting near the midpoint of the feeding period to allow the participants to observe their cattle and received a report of performance to date.

· Data and Results

a. Participants received a final report with individual feedlot and carcass performance for each animal.

- b. Participants discovered the capacity of their calves to perform in other segments of the industry.
 - Key outcomes
 - a. 79% of participants indicated that the understanding of post-weaning performance of their calves was valuable.
 - b. Some participants indicated they changed their genetics programs, in terms of bull purchases, to improve the genetic capacity for carcass quality because of what they learned about their calves.
- 4. Provide beginning ranchers with mentors
 - Activities:
 - a. Participants were provided instruction and encouragement to form management teams of key business associates and mentors.
 - Data and Results:
 - a. We asked participants to rate and comment on how successful and beneficial their development of mentoring relationships had been. 97% of participants indicated that mentor relationships had been either beneficial or extremely beneficial
 - Key outcomes
 - a. Based on evaluation responses, ranch visits, and subsequent communication, we are aware that some participants have developed highly functioning management teams with vital input being gained from mentors.
 - b. However, we are aware that our success in developing mentorship with established, successful producers was less broad-based than our success in fulfilling our other objectives. We are strengthening our efforts going into the future in coaching the development of mentor relationships.
- 5. Provide opportunities to gain knowledge other segments of the beef cattle industry.
 - Activities:
 - a. Three 4-5 day travel study trips were conducted to provide tour stops at feedlots, a beef packing plant, various wholesale and retail beef product outlets, and other industry segments.
 - 1. The first trip was from South Dakota across the upper Midwest to Chicago. Tour stops included a feedlot, a semen collection business, the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, a wholesaler of USDA Prime beef to high-end restaurants, a Whole Foods store, a high-end steak house that served USDA Prime beef, a sous chef of a restaurant, and an importer of foreign beef.
 - 2. The second trip was from South Dakota through Colorado, Kansas and Nebraska. Tour stops included a visit with Temple Grandin, a livestock behaviorist, the Culinary Kitchen of the Cattlemen's Beef Board, CattleFax headquarters, 3 Southern Plains feedlots, a large commercial packing plant, an elite beef seedstock producer, and a replace heifer development enterprise.
 - 3. The third trip was to Washington DC and then on to the National Cattlemen's Association (NCBA) annual meeting in Tampa, FL. Tour stops in Washington DC included the Farm Bureau national office, the Canadian and Australian embassies, USDA (including BFRDP staff), and South Dakota Congressional delegation staff. The NCBA meeting included the Cattlemen's College (an annual training update for producers), a trade show, and numerous speakers.
 - Data and Results:
 - a. In the evaluation instruments, we asked participants to rate and comment on the overall value of each trip and specific value of tour stops to their understanding of the overall beef cattle industry and its influence on their management decisions.
 - b. 100% of participants indicated that increased knowledge of other segments of the beef cattle industry was beneficial or extremely beneficial to their management decisions.
 - Key outcomes
 - a. Based on evaluation responses, ranch visits, and subsequent communication, we know that many of the medium-term outcomes/changed management practices are driven by knowledge of how their management of cow-calf enterprises influences other segments.

What opportunities for training and professional development has the project provided?

{Nothing to report}

How have the results been disseminated to communities of interest?

We presented an abstract with a proceedings paper at the 2013 meeting of the Western Section of the American Society of Animal Science. The citation of the proceedings paper is:

1. Olson, K.C., J.A. Walker, and S. Hadrick. 2013. beefSD: An integrated and intensive Extension curriculum for beginning beef cattle producers in South Dakota. Proc. West. Sec. Amer. Soc. Anim. Sci. 64:269-272.

What do you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish the goals?

{Nothing to report}

Participants

Actual FTE's for this Reporting Period

Role	Non-Students or faculty	Students with Staffing Roles			Computed Total by Role
		Undergraduate	Graduate	Post-Doctorate	
Scientist	0.4	0	0	0	0.4
Professional	1	0	0	0	1
Technical	0	0	0	0	0
Administrative	0.1	0	0	0	0.1
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Computed Total	1.5	0	0	0	1.5

Student Count by Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code

{NO DATA ENTERED}

Target Audience

The target audience was a group that participated in the entire 3-year curriculum. This group included 41 individuals that represented 25 beginning beef cattle enterprises. They all had less than 10 years of professional agriculture production experience. This group included 14 women. One participant was Native American, and one was Native Hawaiian.

Products

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Conference Papers and	Published	2013	YES

Citation

Olson, K.C., J.A. Walker, and S. Hadrick. 2013. beefSD: An integrated and intensive Extension curriculum for beginning beef cattle producers in South Dakota. Proc. West. Sec. Amer. Soc. Anim. Sci. 64:269-272.

Other Products

{Nothing to report}

Changes/Problems

{Nothing to report}