When land-grant universities were born in 1862 by passage of the celebrated Morrill Act, the goal was that more people would benefit from education and knowledge. At first, the idea was to provide higher education not just for those who had considerable means, but for those who could not afford private higher education. Such an education not only benefits the students, but also the communities where they go on to live and work after graduation. This education ultimately leads to a well-informed, critical-thinking and vibrant democratic society.

However, it was not until 1914 that the idea of the university extending into the community really took hold. The event that made it happen was the Smith-Lever Act of 1914. The Smith-Lever Act authorized the financing and formation of federal-state partnerships in each state with federal funds allocated through the United States Department of Agriculture. Through these partnerships, the knowledge of the university was extended to communities and families. And that is what it’s all about; making the university valuable and available for everyone.

What better way to extend the university into the community than by helping to develop community leaders? Leadership makes all the difference. I recall my first leadership-developing experiences as a middle school-aged kid. I joined the 4-H club in my little town of 300 or so people. The economy was not strong in that place. Mr. and Mrs. Davis, our club’s volunteer leaders, invested their time to create a place and opportunity where we could organize ourselves, plan and complete projects, present our work and our ideas to others, and become “expert” in something of interest to us. I remember reading the project materials we received. At the bottom of every single publication I saw that it was produced by the land-grant university’s cooperative extension. I remember thinking how great it would be to have as much expertise and knowledge as those folks working within cooperative extension. You might imagine I was all the more impressed when I began working with Mr. Markegaard, the new beef cattle and range specialist in our county 4-H office. His knowledge is what I wanted to emulate.

Did that experience develop me as a leader? Of course it did. I learned basic skills like setting an agenda, delegating and follow-up, and especially how to help others to see my vision. The slogan, “learn by doing” characterized the leadership skills we learned and the way we senior 4-Hers developed the younger 4-Hers into leaders who would assure continuity of our club.

Perhaps the most significant developments that grew out of my experiences with university extension were that of perspective about the world and people around me. Little by little, I became aware that the things I do to follow my passions both involve and have an effect on other people. And that is where leadership in society, in communities comes into play.

Leaders take action for the things they care about. If they see a way to make something better, they set about bringing their ideas to fruition. Leaders might lead with a high profile from the front. Or, they might lead quietly and steadily from the shadows. Leaders seek to make something better for someone other than just themselves and their intimate circle of family and friends.

This was driven home to me just this week. In a conversation with my friend and colleague Mike Barber, he said that he has noticed over the years that those people who are striving to make a difference have a different concept of “we.” Their concept of “we” extends beyond their immediate family, beyond their circle of close friends; it often includes people they don’t know or that they know only a little.

In our South Dakota communities, big and small, rural and urban, professional or social, statewide or neighborhood, we need many different types of leaders. Leaders who influence the laws we live by, leaders who influence our wellbeing, leaders who influence our conditions, leaders who are committed to a better way.

As you read the stories of SDSU Extension’s outreach around South Dakota, think about the leaders being developed. Think about the people developing skills that they can then use to step out and make something better for others. Think about not just the committed SDSU Extension staff, but the many, many volunteers who invest themselves into the work of SDSU Extension; volunteers like Mr. and Mrs. Davis who invested so much in me as a young 4-Her.

Thanks for reading.

DANIEL SCHOLL, PH.D – INTERIM DEAN
TABLE OF CONTENTS
VOLUME 7, NO. 3, SUMMER 2017

2 From the Director

3 Water Touches Everything
Multi-State Network Strives to Enhance Water Stewardship

6 From Rubble To Renewal
Unique Art Project Helps Delmont Community Heal

7 Future Focused
Community Development Program Helps Harness Ideas Into Action

8 Health Help
Statewide Program Strives To Help Individuals Better Manage Chronic Health Condition

10 Making An Impact
Master Gardener Program Helps Individuals & Communities Flourish

12 Statewide Highlights & Happenings

14 Outreach to Youth
Programs Foster Engagement With Diverse Youth Audiences

17 A Look At Land Use
Report Documents Status of Eastern South Dakota Native Grasslands

18 Managing Pests & Weeds
Multiple Efforts In Place To Aid Producers Statewide

20 Proactive Program
SDSU Extension Efforts Assist Ag Producers & Lenders With Essential Management Topics

22 Traditional Native American Games
Taught To Encourage Physical Activity & Cultural Awareness

24 Alum Reflects: Elizabeth Marso

25 SDSU Extension Fun Facts

26 SDSU Extension Directory

29 A Message From The SDSU Foundation

<< On the Cover: An inaugural conference focused on linking Native American youth to their heritage and agricultural careers was held in October 2016 and co-facilitated by SDSU Extension. The event included a memorable trek to the top of Crazy Horse Monument. Learn more about the event on page 15. Photo courtesy of and copyrighted by the Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation.
I can clearly remember the very first day of my extension internship. It was my senior year of college and I was beyond ready to start “doing the real stuff” that would apply the concepts, theories and best practices that I had been reading about in textbooks. I had met with my internship advisor and we had determined that I would spend my first day assisting with an educational session for 200 Extension Homemakers from northeastern South Dakota. It was a successful first day, likely because I benefited from their gracious interest in helping the “newbie” get her feet on the ground! Their welcoming spirit, commitment to inclusion and thirst for learning together were infectious. More importantly, their deliberate intention of building a relationship that day left a lasting impression on a budding professional. As the years have passed, I have had the pleasure of remaining friends with many of these wonderful individuals.

Those 200 Extension Homemakers (known today as the South Dakota Community and Family Extension Leaders (SDCFEL)) were my first interaction with a concept known today as a learning community. The concept is not new. In fact, there have been thriving examples of learning communities in extension’s history, including 4-H clubs, crop improvement and more recently, the South Dakota Grassland Coalition, the South Dakota Soil Health Coalition, beefSD and sheepSD.

By definition, a learning community is a group of individuals who are interested in a common topic or area and who engage in knowledge-related transactions as well as transformations within it (Fulton and Riel, 1999). The power of a learning community comes from the core concept of learning from, and with, others who are interested in this mutual topic. The group will indicate, and lead, the direction of learning and outcomes desired.

As you will read throughout this issue of Growing South Dakota, SDSU Extension staff serve as the facilitator, coach, educator or convener for a variety of learning communities across our great state. Within their disciplinary expertise, SDSU Extension faculty, field specialists, 4-H advisors, extension associates and nutrition assistants have fostered opportunities for constituents to engage in a learning environment that is relationship centered and partnership minded. Ultimately, the learning environment that is created provides for the expansion of knowledge while increasing leadership capacity, improving skill sets, and taking action on goals or objectives that result in positive outcomes for the learner.

I had the privilege of meeting with SDCFEL members in northeastern South Dakota a few weeks ago. While it was somewhat a trip down memory lane, the visit reinforced that learning is a lifelong opportunity. Some of the same individuals who had welcomed me to their learning community all those years ago were there to welcome me to their learning community today. They were still focused on a welcoming spirit, a commitment to inclusion and a thirst for learning together. More importantly, their deliberate intention of building a relationship once again left a lasting impression — this time on a rather seasoned professional.

I hope the 2016 Annual Report for SDSU Extension inspires you to build relationships by engaging in the lifelong gift of learning.

Karla Trautman – Interim Director

“No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship”

James Comer, MD, Yale University School of Medicine
Multi-State Network Strives To Enhance Water Stewardship

WATER – FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION, AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, WILDLIFE HABITAT, recreation or other uses – it’s an essential component that affects all facets of life. It indeed, touches everything.

It’s also a resource that deserves attention to ensure safe and sufficient water supplies are available for generations to come. And that’s the premise behind the North Central Region Water Network, which is an Extension-led partnership among land-grant colleges and universities across 12 Midwestern states, including South Dakota.

SDSU Extension has been involved with the North Central Region Water Network (NCRWN) since its inception in 2013. The network is designed to create a regional network of extension professionals who can share ideas, implement research, and develop outreach programs focused on enhancing efforts to improve water quality and quantity, according to Erin Cortus, an Associate Professor and SDSU Extension Environmental Quality Engineer.

Cortus explains, “Rather than states developing individual programs, the network helps foster sharing programs and resources across state lines.”

NORTH CENTRAL REGION WATER NETWORK MISSION:
An Extension-led partnership of land-grant colleges and universities working together to ensure safe and sufficient water supplies by increasing the scope and positive impact of multi-state water outreach and research efforts in the North Central Region of the United States.

Cortus has been SDSU Extension’s liaison to the NCRWN since 2015. Additional SDSU Extension colleagues involved with the network include David Kringen, SDSU Extension Water Resources Field Specialist; Laura Edwards, SDSU Extension State Climatologist; and Christine Wood, SDSU Extension 4-H Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) Field Specialist.
SDSU Extension faculty and staff have provided leadership within the NCRWN specifically in the areas of nutrient manure management and climate change and adaption. Additionally, SDSU Extension efforts have included involvement in programming focused on aquatic invasive species prevention and management, soil health, sustainable water supply, watershed management and youth water literacy and stewardship.

Cortus explains that the NCRWN has grant funds available to help some of the initiatives come to fruition. As one example, in the area of manure management, a national survey was conducted to gain insight into how individuals working in manure management get and share information. Additionally, workshops were held near Beresford, SD, and also at Carrington, ND, in June 2016 with a focus on “Land Use and Management Practices to Enhance Water Quality.”

With regard to climate change, a webinar series was developed as a tool to help expand the role of extension professionals in national drought monitoring. Webinar speakers discussed climate changes in the region and impacts on ag production and water resources. A second project is assembling a team of extension professionals as leaders in the region to serve on a regional climate team dedicated to developing local programs in states to further the idea of “climate-smart” agriculture.

To promote the multi-state collaboration, the NCRWN also hosts a conference every two years to bring extension professionals face-to-face to network and identify future needs. Cortus says that is a valuable opportunity for learning from one another.

All total, the NCRWN is helping take a proactive approach to a resource that affects everything — water.

Editor’s Note: In addition to South Dakota, the North Central Region Water Network includes involvement from extension colleagues in the following states: North Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana and Ohio. Learn more about the NCRWN at http://northcentralwater.org/

Pictured below: SDSU Extension’s Erin Cortus visits with producers about drought and water management during a field tour.

Pictured at right: Through the South Dakota 4-H program, youth across the state are getting hands-on experience learning about water through the Water Rocks! Curriculum.
To address youth water literacy and stewardship, SDSU Extension has also gotten involved in the North Central Region Water Network’s youth education summit titled “Water Rocks!”

Originally designed for Iowa teachers to incorporate into their curriculums, in November 2016 the program was expanded and training was offered for out-of-state individuals interested in incorporating the curriculum into other youth education programs. Three SDSU Extension 4-H Program Advisors attended that training with SDSU Extension 4-H Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) Field Specialist Christine Wood. Accompanying her were County 4-H Youth Program Advisors Nathan Skadsen (Minnehaha), Katherine Linnemansons (Lincoln), and Aminah Hassoun (Pine Ridge).

Additionally, Anne Lewis from the South Dakota Discovery Center attended the training with the group. In her role with the Discovery Center she helps guide educators to resources related to environmental sciences. Wood reports that from the training these 4-H Youth Program Advisors will incorporate the water curriculum into their future events, and Wood will work with Lewis in sharing curriculum components with South Dakota teachers this summer through the South Dakota Discovery Center teacher education program.

Wood says the curriculum is designed primarily for students in grades K-6, but has additional activities for middle and high school students. “Activities have to do with anything related to water, from climate and ecosystems to migration and agriculture,” she explains. As well, the curriculum helps youth learn how to be good citizens in conserving water. “Ultimately, the Water Rocks! Program aims to increase awareness of how what we do affects the water and environment around us,” says Wood.

Minnehaha County’s Skadsen has already begun sharing some of the activities he gained from attending the Water Rocks! Summit with youth as a presenter at the Sioux Falls Water Festival held in March 2017. Area fourth graders attend the day-long event to learn all about water.

Skadsen focused his presentation on watersheds and wanted students to gain the perspective that water touches our lives every day in everything we do. Skadsen says he hopes students realized, “We wouldn’t be here without water, and although in South Dakota we may have access to enough clean water right now, that doesn’t mean we always will.” Thus he concludes, “It’s an important resource to learn about and how to take care of our planet’s water.”
ON MAY 10, 2015, THE TOWN OF DELMONT, SD, located about 90 miles southwest of Sioux Falls was forever changed, when an EF-2 tornado tore through the town of 200 residents. In its wake, 84 buildings – including a fire hall and 100-year-old church – were damaged or destroyed. Nine people were injured and several livestock perished, but thankfully, there were no human fatalities.

After the immediate clean-up process, Lutheran Social Services coordinated formation of a Long-Term Recovery Committee which is part of their disaster recovery efforts offered to communities. The aim is to help residents come together and work through the process of rebuilding the community, encompassing everything from discussing depression and anxiety to exploring resiliency and future plans for the town.

SDSU Extension Community Vitality Program Director Kenny Sherin, who is based in the SDSU Extension Mitchell Regional Center attended that meeting. Sherin, who lives near Dimock, SD, just 17 miles from Delmont, explains that through SDSU Extension programs he had met Delmont community members prior to the tornado and was familiar with their community.

Upon the formation of a recovery committee for the community, Sherin says, “It felt like something SDSU Extension might be able to contribute to.”

While at the meeting, as the committee brainstormed ideas to help the community regain a sense of renewal, Sherin – who knew the Delmont community is home to several artists – suggested perhaps an art project could bring people together.

The committee took the suggestion to heart, and a new idea blossomed. They came up with the Cardinal Project. The project entailed residents and volunteers cutting bird shapes from wood, painting them in the red signature color of a cardinal, and hanging them in trees throughout the rural town as a symbol of renewal. The cardinal was chosen because of its symbolic meaning of birth, death and renewal, which is the message the Delmont committee wanted to convey to the world.

Sherin says the outcome from the Cardinal Project really was significant for the community. “It became a rally point and a way for people to be involved,” he says.

Community artists designed a pattern for the wooden cardinal. High school shop classes at Tripp-Delmont School assisted with cutting out and painting the wooden birds, as did passionate volunteers. Community painting parties were also held to complete the project. Small grants were secured to help pay for supplies. In total, over 1,400 bright red cardinals were created and now adorn Delmont’s trees as the renewal process continues to take flight.

He notes that while monetary donations of more than $300,000 were received by the community to assist in rebuilding, the Cardinal Project was important because of the emotional support it provided.

“The Cardinal Project became a symbol for the community that fostered renewal and connection. It’s a project that brought the community together,” explains Sherin.

He notes that cleaning up the damage is an important first step when a community is struck by an unexpected tragedy, but after that step, a void often exists within the community that still needs to be addressed. For Delmont, the Cardinal Project helped “lift the spirits of the community,” Sherin adds.

With the SDSU Extension network serving communities across the state, Sherin is now dedicated to sharing this experience with others in South Dakota and across the nation. He states, “I believe community art projects are a good model that other communities that have experienced disasters could use to help the long-term recovery process. You don’t think of art in those times, but after the initial clean-up is done, art can be a project that brings a community together…They provide beauty in the midst of despair.”
A COMMUNITY CELEBRATION dinner; a business expo for area high school students; training for small business owners. These are just a few of the new ideas that stakeholders in Haakon, Jackson and eastern Pennington County have brought to fruition for their community members over the last year.

How did they make it happen? In collaboration with SDSU Extension, community members from Haakon, Jackson and eastern Pennington County became involved with the Strong Economies Together (SET) program, which is designed to assist rural communities in developing and implementing an economic development blueprint for their multi-county region.

SDSU Extension Community Vitality Field Specialist Peggy Schlechter explains that a unique aspect of the SET program is that it requires a minimum of three counties to work together to develop economic goals and plans for the region. As well, the SET program is focused on rural needs, thus, no major metro area can be within the region.

The SET effort is a partnership nationally between USDA Rural Development, the National Institute for Food and Agriculture, Extension Service and the Purdue Center for Regional Development.

In 2015, the Haakon, Jackson and eastern Pennington County group – now known as the Badlands/Bad River Economic Development Partnership – received $5,000 in seed funding to support economic development efforts identified in their initial plan. That was followed by a $10,000 grant. Both funding sources helped make many of the group’s ideas come to fruition. Those included the community celebration dinner held in September 2016 in Wall, SD, with keynote speaker Lieutenant Governor Matt Michels; a six-week series of trainings for small business owners; and a career fair and business expo held in Philip, SD in March 2017 to help high school students identify what career opportunities exist in the multi-county region.

Schlechter notes that countless hours of discussions and strategic plan development were invested by community volunteers to achieve these activities. She underscores that with the exception of one individual from Wall’s Economic Development Corporation, all participants have been volunteers.

To this, Schlechter adds, “The SET program is a great model and shows that bringing community volunteers together to share ideas and develop economic development plans can work. These volunteers are busy people, but they care about the future of the community and making opportunities available for their kids and grandkids. That has spurred their passion.”

The Badlands/Bad River Region was only the fourth SET program to receive national recognition for development of a High Quality Plan. Schlechter says this was an outstanding accomplishment given that SET has been launched in 28 states and over 60 regions. Additionally, the efforts in western South Dakota were featured as a SET program success story in a national webinar created by USDA Rural Development.

Regarding the next steps for the Badlands/Bad River Economic Development Partnership, Schlechter reports that the organization has recently received 501(c)(3) status, which will facilitate eligibility for additional grant funding for future projects.
ONE IN THREE SOUTH DAKOTANS suffer from chronic physical or mental health conditions. Additionally, in South Dakota, the top five leading causes of death between 2010 and 2014 were due to chronic health conditions. A chronic health condition is defined as any health condition lasting three months or more.

While chronic health diagnoses are rarely cured, research suggests if individuals learn to better manage and cope with their chronic health condition, their quality of life – and potentially their longevity – may be improved, shares Megan Jacobson, SDSU Extension Nutrition Field Specialist.

She adds, “With the prevalence of chronic physical and mental health conditions in South Dakota and throughout the country, we have an obligation to help connect people with resources to help improve their life.”

The overall goal of chronic disease self-management is to empower those living with chronic condition(s) and their caregivers with the tools, coaching, and support needed for them to successfully manage their condition, enhance their quality of life, improve health outcomes, and lower healthcare costs.

As well, once a chronic condition is managed, health care costs may go down. Specifically, a nationally randomized study in 2012 found that participants who attended chronic disease self-management workshops experienced a 32% reduction in emergency room visits.

Thus, the Better Choices, Better Health® program now available to South Dakotans by a partnership of SDSU Extension, the South Dakota Department of Health and the South Dakota Department of Human Services, aims to provide participants the tools to better understand and manage chronic health conditions.

“We’ve seen the Better Choices, Better Health program help improve self-efficacy and confidence to individuals with chronic health conditions and their caregivers. It really helps them manage their disease and improve their quality of life,” reports Jacobson.

She adds, “As a trained workshop facilitator, I have been able to see, first hand, the positive impact the BCBH program has had on South Dakotans. Participants understand that they are not alone in their struggles because even if they have different conditions, they may have some of the same symptoms. Those living with chronic conditions and their caregivers are able to share and help each other.”

The program is designed for individuals with chronic health conditions and/or their caregivers. Chronic health conditions may include, but are not limited to: arthritis, heart conditions, diabetes, depression, high blood pressure, breathing problems, chronic pain, anxiety, cancer, weight issues and fibromyalgia, for example.

The Better Choices, Better Health program is offered as six, weekly, two-and-one-half-hour workshop sessions with interactive group discussions. These local workshops are offered for free and are co-led by two community members who have completed the Better Choices, Better Health training. Many of the trained leaders are volunteers and have a chronic physical or mental health condition themselves.

The workshops are unique as they are not traditional patient education sessions, which would typically focus on disease specific information. Rather, they are designed to complement traditional patient education by helping individuals cope and manage their life after the diagnosis of a chronic health condition. Workshops focus on providing individuals with peer support and evidence-based skills proven to help manage chronic health conditions and live an active life.

wisdom gained

Participants share comments on what the Better Choices, Better Health workshops have meant to them

”This program has given me the confidence that I can have a future worth living. I have learned there are people like me, not living life to the fullest because of a chronic condition and that we can move forward. Great people teaching us to live again.”

”As someone who has lived with chronic illness for more than 40 years, the tools I learned in the workshop took me from surviving to thriving!”

”The greatest thing is problem solving. Lots of times we just get stuck. We learned tools to help us with goal setting and action planning — now we can figure it out! Seeing other people dealing with the same issues makes you realize you’re not alone.”

”I didn’t deserve to get this disease... but I got it. I have to accept it and use the skills I learn to manage my health.”
Jacobson explains that the workshop format is not focused on teaching participants about their specific chronic health condition, but rather the focus is on helping people with a chronic health condition and those who care for them, learn and adopt steps toward positive changes and a healthier life. Learning relaxation and meditation techniques methods are included in the workshop.

Additionally, Jacobson says one of the positive outcomes for participants attending a workshop is gaining and providing support to fellow participants because of shared experiences. Because the workshops are held in local communities, many participants often form a new support system after the six-week workshop concludes.

Jacobson adds, “Providing a community based health care resource that focuses self-management of chronic physical and mental health conditions is key as the healthcare system sees changes in the future.”

The Better Choices, Better Health® SD program is an extension of Stanford University’s Evidence-Based Chronic Disease Self-Management Program that was launched over 30 years ago. The program has now been implemented in every state in the U.S. and internationally. The program began offering workshops across South Dakota in 2014, and to date over 65 community workshops have been held.

Better Choices, Better Health Lay Leader trainings are available for individuals interested in co-leading workshops and are offered throughout the state. There is a nominal fee for the training.

Visit the BCBH website for a list of scheduled trainings and workshops and to register online.

Learn more about the program at http://www.betterchoicesbetterhealthsd.org.

• “By attending the workshop, I realized that we all have problems. We all make mistakes. But we can make it. We can feel better. We can do this!”

• “The workshop taught me that I need to be better organized in my approach to living and actively participate in planning a healthy life.”
A WILLINGNESS TO LEARN AND A PASSION for sharing horticulture knowledge are two trademarks of individuals involved in the SDSU Extension Master Gardener program.

The program was initiated in the state in 1985, and to date, 860 South Dakota citizens are listed on the state’s roster who have completed the special training sessions and 50 hours of volunteer service required to earn the full-fledged designation as an SDSU Extension Master Gardener.

As a result, a network of horticulture experts are at the ready across the state to assist others with horticulture-related questions, projects, and educational programs.

“We have Master Gardeners in nearly all South Dakota communities. They are a vibrant, diverse group of people who are always anxious to learn and willing to teach. These Master Gardeners really help extend the outreach services of SDSU Extension,” explains David Graper, SDSU Extension Horticulture Specialist and Master Gardener Program Coordinator.

Indeed, one does not need to look far to find projects where SDSU Extension Master Gardeners are involved in sharing gardening and horticulture knowledge with others in their communities. (See sidebar for example projects.)

All total, Graper says, “Being a Master Gardener is about helping deliver meaningful community programs to improve the well-being of individuals and communities, to protect natural resources, and to help keep fresh fruits and vegetables on the table. It’s about working in tandem with SDSU Extension staff and other volunteers to make a difference in the places we live, learn, and work. You don’t have to be an expert in any particular area. You must simply participate in the training, have a desire to learn, and a willingness to serve.”

And the program is not just unique to South Dakota. Master Gardener training is offered across the country and around the

Making An Impact

Master Gardener Program Helps Individuals & Communities Flourish
world. Graper explains that the concept for the Master Gardener program dates back to 1972, when there was a high public demand for horticultural information from local extension offices in the state of Washington.

A pilot program provided interested individuals with specialized home garden horticulture training in exchange for providing volunteer assistance to extension service personnel in delivering individualized information to clients. The successful program in Washington provided a model, which was eventually replicated in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, nine Canadian provinces, and South Korea. It is estimated that there are nearly 100,000 active participants in the Master Gardener program nationwide.

For those interested in becoming an SDSU Extension Master Gardener, interested volunteers receive training in horticulture and environmental topics of special value to home gardeners. In exchange for their training, SDSU Extension Master Gardeners share their time and knowledge on approved projects within their communities – committing to at least 50 hours over a two-year period.

Training sessions are typically offered in communities across the state during the summer months. A total of eight days of class instruction is required. Graper says in the past online training was tried, but hasn’t been as successful as the face-to-face courses. Thus, in 2017 SDSU Extension is renewing its commitment to the series of classroom training sessions. This year training is being offered in Sioux Falls, Aberdeen, and Spearfish and will cover topics from basic botany and taxonomy to soils, turf and weed management, composting, tree and shrub care, pest management, vegetables, plant propagation and much more.

Graper explains that when trainees participate in sessions face-to-face they have opportunities to build relationships with other gardening enthusiasts, which often fosters idea sharing and formation of cohorts with whom to pursue community projects.

Additionally, Graper reports that the SDSU Extension Master Gardener program has just begun using a new online reporting system, which will better facilitate Master Gardener individuals in reporting their service hours and documenting the impacts that are being accomplished across South Dakota.

“The online system will also help SDSU Extension keep in better contact with Master Gardeners around the state, which will also help ensure community needs continue to be addressed,” concludes Graper.

For more information visit http://igrow.org/gardens/master-gardeners/.

The purpose of the SDSU Extension Master Gardener program is to provide current, research-based, consumer horticulture information and education to the citizens of South Dakota through SDSU Extension Master Gardener projects and services.

**SDSU EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER PROJECTS HAVE INCLUDED:**

» Answering the public’s gardening questions
» Providing educational programs for the public
» Increasing food security
» Creating safe greenspaces
» Facilitating gardening projects at schools, libraries, and other public community sites
» Beautification projects
» Garden therapy programs with seniors to maintain their physical and mental health
» School garden programs to promote science awareness among kids
» Display gardens to protect pollinators, combat invasive species, and encourage gardening
» Using gardening to teach life skills to the incarcerated
National Fellowship Award Gets South Dakotans Walking

Awarded a Walking College Fellowship, Ann Schwader, SDSU Extension Nutrition Field Specialist, is using the opportunity to expand and continue advocating for healthy nutrition and physical activity for people in rural South Dakota.

Schwader was one of 25 people across the nation to be chosen as an America Walks Walking College Fellow in 2016. America Walks is a national advocacy organization that promotes walking and walkable communities.

“It was a valuable opportunity,” Schwader says. “I’ve increased my knowledge of how to create and support environments that encourage healthy lifestyles throughout South Dakota. I’ve also learned how to advocate more effectively for walkable community policies and funding.”

The program included on-line study assignments, community activities, webinars and developing a walking action plan and culminated with Schwaders’ participation in the Pro Walk/Pro Bike/Pro Place Conference held in Vancouver, British Columbia last September with 1,000 city planners, transportation engineers, public health professionals, elected officials, community leaders and professional walking and bicycling advocates from all over the globe attending.

Prior to being awarded the fellowship, Schwader had developed a pilot rural walking program, “Burke Walks!” in collaboration with the Burke Wellness Coalition. The program provides safe, bi-monthly, theme-based two-mile community walks.

Schwader says the program was well received with individuals from surrounding communities asking for information on starting “walks” in their towns. “This was an inspiration for me to create ‘Everybody Walks! SD’ as my walking action plan — a requirement as a fellow.”

Her plan is a statewide effort to positively influence the health and well-being of participating residents living in rural South Dakota communities with populations of 3,500 or less. Schwader has planned training for interested communities.

Also resulting from Schwader’s fellow experience was an increased interest in pedestrian safety that directed her to apply for an Every Body Walk! 2016 Micro Grant, resulting in $1,500 in funding for Burke’s first pedestrian crosswalk to be put in place later this year.

Schwader has been chosen to present a poster at the 2017 National Walking Summit set for St. Paul, MN, in September.

Aging Gracefully Expo Explores Proactive Aging Options

Focused on proactive aging, the Aging Gracefully Expo (AGE) was launched in Rapid City and three surrounding communities on Sept. 24, 2016. The event reached out to an estimated 250 participants including volunteers, vendors, presenters or attendees.

People from Belle Fourche, Hot Springs and Philip participated via Dakota Digital Network, a statewide teleconference system. Attendees were introduced to educational ideas, enlightening discussions and seeds of hope and options for the aging experience.

“We have more choices today than ever before as we move through life,” says Leacey E. Brown, SDSU Extension Gerontology Field Specialist and event coordinator. “AGE connects us with new ways of living fully.”

Topics discussed by presenters included fire and fall safety, pre-planning, home modification, Department of Veterans Affair Services, financial abuse, and gadgets.

Vendors offered information about elder law, assistive technology, volunteer options, lifelong learning, financial options, home care, home health, housing, wellness, and other topics.

“Self-determination is at the core of what it means to be South Dakotan,” adds Brown. “While more than half of adults age 65 or older are disability free, aging increases our risk of developing a disease or disability. Maintaining our independence for our whole life requires proactive aging.”

Overall, AGE was well received according to evaluation results. “It confirmed the importance of creating community education opportunities to connect the people we serve with the information and resource they need to age on their own terms,” Brown adds.

Planning for 2017 AGE in South Dakota is underway. Speakers from South Dakota Consumer Protection and the South Dakota Alzheimer’s Association will be available to rural communities. SDSU Extension is actively seeking partners to bring AGE to rural communities across the state.

For more information, contact Brown at 605-394-1722 (Ext. 214) or email Leacey.Brown@sdstate.edu.
Salverson, Harty Honored For Dedication To Annie’s Project

Two SDSU Extension Cow/Calf Field Specialists have been recognized for their dedication to educating and supporting women involved in agriculture. Robin Salverson (left) and Adele Harty (right) were named as the 2016 winners of the Annie’s Project Women in Ag Educator Award presented in memory of Bob Wells.

This is the third year this prestigious award has been presented by the Annie’s Project – Education For Women (APEFW) board of directors. In past years, the award has gone to one individual, but the amazing work these women do year after year prompted the board to unanimously honor both Salverson and Harty.

Salverson’s passion for women’s programming is evidenced by the growth of APEFW courses and also the impact she has had on program participants. She has been described as the “catalyst fueling the spread of Annie’s Project courses in South Dakota.”

Harty lives the life of a woman in agriculture and uses her experience and personality to click with women from many backgrounds in the ag world. She makes Annie’s Project participants feel at ease and encourages them to network and seek out resources.

The award is given in memory of Bob Wells to honor an educator who exhibits Bob’s dedication and excellence in educational programing for farm and ranch women, his skill in teaching farm management, and his ability to provide leadership and vision.

O’Neill Receives National Award For Community Development

Kari O’Neill, SDSU Extension Community Vitality Field Specialist, was named the individual winner for the National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals 2016 Award for Excellence in Community Development Work as a result of her efforts in establishing the Dakota Fresh food hub in southeastern South Dakota. The award was presented at the national conference in Burlington, VT.

This award recognizes outstanding programs in any aspect of community development work that use collaboration with others to meet community development needs.

Supported by $185,000 in federal and state grants, O’Neill facilitated the creation of the producer-owned Dakota Fresh food hub, which made its first sales in May 2016. Dakota Fresh supplies items, including fresh green and herbs, meats, eggs, honey and many varieties of vegetables and fruits, to markets in Sioux Falls, Brookings, Yankton, and Sioux City, IA.

Dakota Fresh held its second annual meeting in February 2017, and all 18 current members retained their membership. The manager’s reports noted sales continuing throughout the winter months, with 10 regular customers. Sales increased more than 60% last summer, and the group looks forward to selling for an entire year in 2017.

About the success of Dakota Fresh, O’Neill says, “This business, made up of small farmers selling products together, shows the power of aggregating foods to offer to a larger market year-round. It’s been a pleasure watching their growth over the first year.”

Dakota Fresh has the capacity to accept six new producer members at this time.

Bob Thaler Recognized As Ag Ambassador

SDSU Extension Swine Specialist Bob Thaler was named 2015 Governor’s Ag Ambassador.

“I’m proud to recognize Dr. Thaler and his many years of dedication to agriculture in our state,” says Gov. Dennis Daugaard. “He has exemplified all the key achievements of Ag Ambassador. Dr. Thaler has influenced many young producers throughout his career in agricultural education and has contributed to the livestock industry through his extensive board participation.”

Thaler has been an SDSU professor and extension specialist for 27 years and played a critical role in raising funds for the SDSU Swine Education and Research Facility completed in 2016. He twice earned the “Dedicated and Distinguished Service Award” and the Pork All American from the SD Pork Producers and in 2017 received their “Friend of the Industry” Award. He has served multiple terms on the National Pork Board’s Swine Educators Executive Committee. Thaler has also taught multiple classes at SDSU helping prepare future farmers and ranchers, and was recognized as the College of Agriculture & Biological Sciences Teacher of the Year twice. In 2016, the SD Soybean Research & Promotion Council presented him with their Excellence in Agriculture Award.

Thaler was also recently awarded SDSU’s 2016 Faculty Award for Global Engagement for his work in developing study abroad programs. In 2011, the College of Ag & Bio had only one study abroad program when Thaler initiated a new program to China. The China program has now provided more than 100 undergraduate and graduate students with the opportunity to see first-hand how agriculture is practiced in that country. In 2015, Thaler created a second study abroad program to Vietnam and Cambodia.
Across South Dakota SDSU Extension programs are reaching many of the state’s youngest citizens – youth. Traditional 4-H program activities such as sewing, photography and showing livestock still exist, but additionally, unique program efforts are also being initiated to ensure outreach to the broader youth community.

Highlights of successful youth programs hosted by SDSU Extension in 2016 helped reach Latino children, Native American students, children with disabilities, and tech savvy students teaching technology to senior citizens.

“A goal of the 4-H program is to help all youth reach their fullest potential, and we are continually striving to offer programming opportunities that are relevant and welcoming to all South Dakota youth,” says Donna Bittiker, State 4-H Program Director. She adds, “We recognize that every youth is unique in their interests and goals. A strength of the 4-H program is the ability to engage youth in intentional and meaningful ways creating opportunities for youth to explore through hands-on experiential learning based on their personal wants and needs.”

Following are summaries from the unique youth program opportunities that are helping shape South Dakota’s future adults.

### OUTREACH TO YOUTH

Programs Foster Engagement With Diverse Youth Audiences

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**Semillas Program Aims To Help Latino Youth Embrace Their Heritage**

A PROGRAM TITLED SEMILLAS – the Spanish word for seeds – was hosted on the SDSU campus and was designed to help Latino children of dairy workers within the region embrace their heritage and gain a sense of community.

Coordinated by Dairy and Food Science Department Assistant Professor and SDSU Extension Dairy Specialist Maristela Rovai, she explains that the one-day session aimed to help children understand the important role their parents have in the state’s dairy industry, while also sharing messages about community, heritage and exploring opportunities for higher education.

Activities included making piñatas, making ice cream in a bag, cooking classes on learning how to make chocolate, touring the dairy plant, the South Dakota Agricultural Heritage Museum and SDSU campus, as well as listening to speakers.

SDSU Extension coordinated and sponsored the program along with support from the from the SDSU Extension 4-H Youth Development Program, the SD Department of Education and Alltech. One speaker was Sonia Reyes-Snyder,
Connecting Native American Youth To Culture & Agricultural Opportunities

SEVENTEEN NATIVE AMERICAN YOUTH attended a "Linking Native American Youth to Ag Careers" conference conducted and hosted through a partnership with Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation, The Indian University of North America, and SDSU Extension 4-H Youth Development. Held in October 2016 in conjunction with Native American Day, the event was designed to connect Native American youth to their roots.

“Our nation’s first farmers, hunters and gatherers were Native Americans. Today, many Native American youth are no longer connected to the land through agriculture,” explains Ron Frederick, SDSU Extension 4-H Youth Program Advisor - Rosebud. “Through this conference we wanted to link Native American youth back to their roots in the land, the language and the culture.”

The conference exposed youth to opportunities within the diverse world of agricultural careers through on-site group tours and a college classroom atmosphere. There was also an opportunity to ride to the top of the mountain and experience the Crazy Horse Memorial carving up close and personal, led by Monique Ziolkowski, director of the project along with other Crazy Horse Memorial staff.

Youth from the Rosebud and Pine Ridge Indian Reservations had the opportunity to experience dorm life; learned about what can be produced and provided from the land; and learned more about their cultural heritage through a presentation by Lakota history professor, Duane Hollow Horn Bear. Hollow Horn Bear told the Lakota Creation story and explained why the Black Hills remain sacred to the Lakota people.

Other speakers and chaperones included Brad Keizer, 4-H Youth Program Advisor for Custer and Fall River Counties; Aminah Hassoun, 4-H Youth Program Advisor, Pine Ridge Extension Office; Jason Schoch, and Rachel Lindvall, SDSU Extension field staff; Deanna Eagle Feather; Rosebud Extension Volunteer; Ann Wilson Frederick, Executive Director from the Rosebud Sioux Tribal Land Enterprises; Dr. Laurie Becvar, President & COO from Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation; and Dawnita Forell, Forell Bus Service.

The Linking Native American Youth to Ag Careers Conference was funded through a grant from the North Central Extension Risk Management Education program. This grant, submitted by Rachel Lindvall on behalf of SDSU Extension’s three Federally Recognized Tribal Extension Programs focused on Linking Native American youth to potential agricultural futures.

Above: Students attending SDSU Extension’s inaugural Semillas program learned how to make chocolate. The Semillas program was designed to help Latino youth embrace culture and community.

still can have a special place in your heart for both nationalities. You can be an American and proud of your ethnic heritage.”

The first Semillas event was held in August 2016 and attracted nearly two dozen Latino youth. A second Semillas event was held on campus in December 2016 with a continued focus on embracing culture and diversity. The December event also involved students in learning about nutritional choices, hygiene and a cooking class making pizza.

“Pizza was chosen due to its unity in diversity; pizza made with several different ingredients makes a delicious dish as with several nationalities we can make a great country,” Rovai explains.

Several speakers and chaperones were involved with both Semillas programs, including staff from several SDSU Departments and from the SD Department of Education, South Dakota 4-H, and Alltech.

Additionally, SDSU Journalism students were involved with the second Semillas program as part of their semester project and included an extensive work on video interviews before and during the event with participants, design of a webpage, brochure and flyers to recruit kids.

Rovai anticipates coordinating future Semillas events along with 4-H and other institutions, and hopes to strive for participants beyond the Latino community.
THROUGH A UNIQUE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM coordinated by SDSU Extension a role reversal is occurring among youth and adults. The students are teaching the older generation.

“Young people are taking time to share their smart phone and iPad technology expertise with adults 50 to 60 years their senior, and the adults are getting the hang of it,” explains Leacey E. Brown, SDSU Extension Gerontology Field Specialist.

The program, called TeachSD, is an intergenerational technology program created by SDSU Extension and launched as a pilot project in Spearfish in May 2015. TeachSD stands for “Teens Enhancing Adult Capacity At Home.”

Over the past year, SDSU Extension has worked to involve more young people to become TeachSD Technology Trainers to bring the program to more South Dakota communities. Technology Trainers may be part of youth groups from churches or clubs. Potential trainers must attend the TeachSD orientation offered by SDSU Extension.

Brown said that the adult students often came with questions about cell phones, iPads, laptops, and social media. “After an hour-long session working one-on-one with a teenage teacher, many participants acknowledged they had a better understanding of using Facebook, texting and the features of their smart phone,” she explained. “The goal of the program is to help adults become more comfortable with technology which may help them maintain their independence and bolster their ability to communicate with their family and friends via technology.”

Brown adds that bringing generations together to share their talents and resources benefits the whole community. She notes, “Young people who spend time with older people build stronger ties to the community. TeachSD is one avenue to strengthen the ties of young people to rural communities.”
A Look At Land Use
Report Documents Status Of Eastern South Dakota Native Grasslands

IN 2016, SDSU EXTENSION released a new land use report, Quantifying Undisturbed (Native) Lands in Eastern South Dakota: 2013, which takes a comprehensive look at all historic and current land use in eastern South Dakota in regard to native or virgin sod that potentially remains.

“This project was initiated in response to the continued conversion of grasslands for cropping and other uses and the multiple reports that have been published in recent years focused on land use,” explains Peter Bauman, SDSU Extension Range Field Specialist.

Bauman coordinated the project over the last two and a half years, working in partnership with a variety of non-government, state, and federal agencies. The report is based on a comprehensive look at the Eastern South Dakota landscape that incorporated the use of field and tract-level historic Farm Service Agency (FSA) cropland history, coupled with high resolution aerial photographs provided through the USDA National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP).

For the report, all historic land use data was evaluated on a section-by-section basis. In total, technicians evaluated approximately 22.6 million acres, or about 35,000 square miles of land in the 44 counties east of the Missouri River.

“What had been missing from previous reports is a specific look at the impacts to truly native habitats — those habitats that had never been cropped or otherwise converted from their natural state,” Bauman says.

He explains that the term ‘native’ can have several interpretations, with some persons assuming a former crop field planted to native grasses should be qualified as native. However, the SDSU Extension study relied on an ecological definition of the term, quantifying lands as potentially native only if there was no evidence of historic soil disturbance from farming, development, or other human causes. If historic soil disturbance was confirmed, those acres were removed. For example, a gravel pit, cattle feedlot, golf course, or small town would all be removed, as would a grass hayfield, CRP, or other habitat on a previously farmed field, regardless of how long ago the farming occurred.

Bauman says the results of the report are meant to inform all land managers as to the status of this irreplaceable natural resource. “We can shift acres into and out of programs like CRP and other similar programs, but we cannot re-create truly native grasslands,” Bauman notes.

The new SDSU Extension data will be used to set a comparative benchmark that has previously been lacking. Bauman says this data will now allow future analysis to determine actual rates of loss of native grasslands.

FACTS & FINDINGS
Among the report’s findings about South Dakota Native Grasslands:

» Overall, the study identified 5,488,025 acres of Eastern South Dakota land that is still potentially native grassland and woodland habitats, representing about 24% of the entire Eastern South Dakota landscape. About 200,000 of these acres may have had a tillage history, but there was not enough historical evidence for a clear determination.

» Conversely, nearly 73% of Eastern South Dakota land has been manipulated from its native state at some point. About 15 million acres, or close to 66%, of Eastern South Dakota land has a recorded tillage history, with an additional approximately 7% of the land having been disturbed for other human uses. The remaining 3% was determined to be comprised of large water bodies over 40 acres in size.

» Of the approximately 5.5 million acres of native lands remaining in Eastern South Dakota, over 5.4 million acres are native grasslands, with about 100,000 acres categorized as woodlands. Because of the sensitive nature of these native plant communities, SDSU Extension also gathered information on the overall level of permanent protection afforded to these lands under various types of conservation ownerships or programs. It was determined that only 962,734 acres of native lands (about 17.5%) had any type of permanent protection from future conversion to cropland or other uses. In total, the amount of land in Eastern South Dakota that is both native and under some level of permanent protection, represents only 4.3% of the 22.6 million-acre Eastern South Dakota landscape.

» Counties near the Missouri River have a higher density of native grasslands than those in the rich farm country in the southeast part of the state. The SDSU Extension report contains charts and maps for each county as well as a thorough description of methods utilized in the inventory. To view the complete report visit iGrow.org and search the term “eastern South Dakota land use.” Maps, charts, and other data can be accessed at openprairie.sdstate.edu with the same search term as above.

Editor’s Note: The eastern South Dakota report is part of a continuing statewide evaluation on the status of native habitats by SDSU and has received funding support by federal, state, and non-government organizations.
WHERE THERE ARE CROPS – there are also most likely insects, pests and weeds that need to be addressed. For South Dakota producers, SDSU Extension has developed a number of resources to assist with this effort, including information shared via iGrow.org; field day events that bring producers and SDSU Extension specialists face-to-face; research to help identify best management practices; and pesticide certification programs to ensure safe handling and applications.

A team of SDSU Extension faculty and staff work together to contribute practical management articles that are available to the public via the “Agronomy” tab on iGrow.org. The multi-disciplinary group meets weekly to discuss current growing conditions and determine what recommendations should be published.

Articles typically focus on scouting and management recommendations for major pests affecting crops and stored grains, weed management and herbicide applications, plant diseases and their management, and urban entomology topics — from wasps and house pests to garden and flower insects.

Educational resources and timely production recommendations are featured in the SDSU Extension Pest & Crop newsletter, which is delivered to subscribers weekly via email during the growing season. The newsletter is designed to provide growers, producers, crop consultants, and others involved in crop production with timely news pertinent to management of pests, diseases, and weeds in South Dakota. (Those interested in subscribing can do so at this link: http://igrow.org/agronomy/profit-tips/pest-crop-newsletter/.)

Assisting with pesticide education and recertification training to commercial and private applicators is another important effort of SDSU Extension. The South Dakota Department of Agriculture (SDDA) is the lead agency administering the pesticide certification program that
is required by the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), and SDSU Extension partners with SDDA to provide trainings and recertification annually across the state.

Amanda Bachmann, SDSU Extension Pesticide Education and Urban Entomology Field Specialist, coordinates this effort with SDDA and shares that day-long sessions are offered in 10 different locations throughout South Dakota for commercial applicators, while about 50 meetings are hosted across the state for private applicators.

Bachmann notes, “Pesticide application is an important program that reaches a large number of stakeholders, and it allows SDSU Extension to have direct contact with farmers, ranchers and pesticide applicators to learn more about what pest concerns are being seen in the field.”

Annually about 3,000 commercial pesticide applicators are recertified and 2,000 to 2,500 private pesticide applicators are certified or recertified. Commercial applicators must recertify every two years, while private applicators recertify every five years.

Bachmann underscores that this program is vitally important to ensure applicators stay abreast of the safest way to manage and apply pesticides, while keeping the environment safe as well.

Another opportunity for South Dakota producers to learn from SDSU Extension and the SD Agricultural Experiment Station is via the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Field School held annually in July. The two-day workshop features a variety of crop-related sessions. Workshop participants can earn Certified Crop Advisor continuing education credits.

The 2016 event was held at the Volga Research Farm and included workshops on diagnosing crop injury associated with herbicide applications and carryover in corn, soybean, and other crops; sources of inoculum for various diseases and the role of weather in driving plant disease epidemics; scouting techniques for key insect pests and identification of common insect pests; and identifying soil properties that lead to higher productivity. Cover crops, climate trends and cost of production calculations were also topics that were presented.

Editor’s Note: SDSU Extension and the South Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station will host the next Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Field School on July 19-20, 2017 at the SDSU Southeast Research Farm near Beresford.

Researching Beneficial Bugs, Too

Not all insects are classified as pests. Bees and other pollinators can be beneficial to crops, points out SDSU Extension Field Crop Entomologist Adam Varenhorst.

As an example, he shares that there is evidence that both honey bees and native wild bees can improve pollination in sunflowers, which results in improved yield.

While bees and other pollinators are often seen on sunflower heads during flowering, flowering also marks a time when insecticides are applied to protect sunflower yields from insect pests such as the red sunflower seed weevil, banded sunflower moth, sunflower moth, and other pests that may be present in the field.

To better understand the importance of pollinators to South Dakota sunflowers — and potentially circumvent negative impacts to pollinators from insecticide applications — SDSU Extension and SDSU faculty are currently conducting research to evaluate timing of insecticide applications. Varenhorst says the goal is to be able to determine an appropriate application recommendation to enhance yield with minimal impact to pollinators.

Initial research on two field trials was conducted in 2016 to identify which pollinator species are visiting the sunflowers and what their impact on yield was for oilseed and confection sunflowers. This research will be expanded in 2017. The research is supported through a grant from the South Dakota Oilseeds Council and a Specialty Crop Block Grant from the South Dakota Department of Agriculture.
THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY ACROSS SOUTH DAKOTA – and the nation – is fraught with change and challenges. Two continual topics of concern tend to be generational transition planning for family-owned farms and ranches, as well as volatility in market prices for ag commodities. Without proper planning, both concerns can undermine the viability and long-term success of farm and ranch businesses.

To assist ag producers and ag lenders in addressing and proactively preparing for those concerns, SDSU Extension state and field specialists collaborate with industry partners to offer several programs across the state each year. Two examples held annually include the Ag CEO Ag Lender Conference and the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Symposium.

Both events are designed to provide knowledge and resources to participants to aid farm or ranch planning and decisions, and both events have garnered positive feedback from participants.

The fifth annual Beginning Farmer and Rancher Symposium was held November 16, 2016, on South Dakota State University’s campus, with the theme “Farming with family - Will Your Plan Work?”

The event targets 18 to 22 year-olds planning to return to the family farm or ranch, or who are considering production agriculture as a future career. SDSU Extension Livestock Business Management Field Specialist Heather Gessner, who coordinates the symposium, explains its importance by saying, “As the number of multi-generational farming operations grow in the state, effective planning and communication within the family is increasingly important. To avoid conflict in the future all family members must have an understanding of how and when the transition of labor and management duties will occur.”

The featured speaker at the 2016 symposium was John Baker, an attorney with the Iowa Concern Hotline who has worked with multi-generational farm families for more than 30 years. The symposium also hosted two panel discussions. One featured bankers and industry professionals sharing what they have seen work for farm families – and what to avoid. The second panel discussion featured beginning farmers who have returned to their family’s operation sharing the “ups and downs” from their experiences.

Ultimately, Gessner says the goal of the symposium is to help the next generation learn about the topics they need to consider and discuss with the senior generation in their family operation, as well as lenders – and initiate those important conversations and transition planning steps.

“Attending the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Symposium greatly benefited me. I plan to return to our family farm after graduation. Many of the topics that were brought up are important for my family and I to discuss.”

Student attending the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Symposium hosted by SDSU Extension
The half-day symposium is attended by SDSU College of Agriculture & Biological Sciences students, as well as students from two South Dakota technical education schools.

In 2016, three specialized Ag CEO Ag Lender conferences were hosted by SDSU Extension staff and South Dakota State University faculty to provide ag lenders with education and tools specific to South Dakota agriculture, and preparing them to share the information with their producer clients.

Topics addressed included South Dakota land values, cash rent trends, calf backgrounding costs, beef feedlot issues, crop costs, South Dakota farm’s financial trends, grain market analysis and outlook, macroeconomic analysis, and livestock market outlooks and analysis. The one-day conferences were held in Pierre, Watertown and Sioux Falls.

SDSU Extension Crops Business Management Field Specialist Jack Davis shares that the conference, which has been offered the last few years, was born in response to lender’s requests for more ag information. Davis notes, “Ag lenders value up-to-date and timely market, financial, and production information. Having this knowledge helps them better assist clients regardless of the situation. Acquiring this knowledge takes time and effort, but the pay-off is having a solid working relationship with clients.”

The lender conference event is designed to provide ag lender participants a “farm level look” at ag trends, costs, prices and profit margins. Participants also have the opportunity to learn more about the online decision tools available from SDSU Extension Economics to share with clients in developing crop and livestock budgets.

In 2016, 85 individuals participated in the Ag CEO Ag Lender conferences hosted by SDSU Extension, including agricultural lenders, crop input suppliers, and rural real estate agricultural appraisers. The agricultural loan asset volume of those attending was greater than $15 billion.

Looking ahead, a Beginning Farmer & Rancher Symposium is again being planned by SDSU Extension for 2017, as are the Ag CEO Ag Lender one-day conferences. Additionally, at the request of the Director of the South Dakota Division of Banking a one day seminar for bank examiners is being developed by SDSU Extension for 2017.

CONSUMERS OFTEN HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT selection of different meat cuts at the grocery store, cooking times and temperatures, as well as food safety and handling. The BBQ Bootcamp program offered through SDSU Extension is designed to provide answers to those questions.

Funded through collaboration with the South Dakota Beef Industry Council, South Dakota Pork Producers Council and SDSU Extension, the program was initiated in 2011, and to date 28 Bootcamps have been held across South Dakota reaching over 900 consumers, reports SDSU Associate Professor and SDSU Extension Meat Science Specialist Amanda Blair.

Blair explains that the BBQ Bootcamp program has three main objectives:
» To provide consumers with the knowledge and ability to select, prepare, and carve meats at home.
» To educate consumers on the healthful benefits of meat products.
» To enhance consumers’ knowledge of food safety and handling to increase consumer satisfaction and demand for meat products.

The format for each Bootcamp typically includes five demonstration stations, including meat selection and cuts; smoking and cookery methods; food safety and degree of doneness; spices, rubs and marinades; and nutrition of meat products. Following completion of the stations and hands-on instruction, a large meal is served allowing participants to sample the beef, pork and poultry products cooked during the demonstrations.

Each participant receives a take-home booklet of information including recommended cooking temperatures, food safety and handling guidelines, recipes, and basics of smoking and barbequing, as well as a meat thermometer.

Of the importance of the BBQ Bootcamp program, Blair notes, “In recent years, there has been a lot of negative information surrounding meat products. Many times this information is incorrect and misleading, leaving the consumer grasping for answers.” She notes that through the Bootcamp program, consumers receive science-based information and have the opportunity to ask questions from meat scientists.

To request a BBQ Bootcamp program to be held at an event or for an organization contact Amanda.Blair@sdstate.edu.
RING THE STICK, ROCK IN FIST, Run and Scream – these may not be familiar playground games to most children, but a unique program is helping teach these traditional Native American games to youth and adults across South Dakota. The effort is aimed to help encourage physical activity for health and wellness, while also enhancing cultural awareness among participants.

Prairey Walkling, SDSU Extension Community Development Field Specialist based in Rapid City, explains that about one in three youth in South Dakota are overweight or obese, with the state’s Native American population having even higher rates of obesity concerns, which often leads to higher incidence of diabetes and chronic disease.

To address these health concerns, SDSU Extension has leveraged Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) funding focused on programs designed to promote health and wellness from a community’s perspective. As a result, 11 wellness coalitions were formed in high-risk communities across the state. The long-term goal of the coalitions is to focus on policy, systems, and environmental changes in their communities. Many of the coalition efforts have included establishing community gardens to increase fruit and vegetable access for all community members, along with holding workshops sharing nutrition information and recipes to prepare these healthier foods.

But within the Lakota Homes/North Rapid Wellness Coalition in North Rapid City, a community conversation led to a unique idea. SDSU Extension presented the Lakota Homes Wellness Coalition with a menu of intervention strategies focused on physical activity, and Native Games was one of the choices. Walkling explains that through the process of having monthly meetings with stakeholders from the Lakota Homes/ North Rapid community, the idea to teach traditional Native American games as a means of promoting physical activity and wellness was identified.

Thus, in August 2016, SDSU Extension and several partnering organizations hosted a training focused on Traditional Native American Games led by the International Traditional Games Society (ITGS) in Rapid City. The ITGS was founded in 1998 by tribal college presidents and cultural directors from Montana and Southern Alberta, Canada, to help preserve the cultural significance of these games for future generations.

During the two-and-a-half day training, participants experienced games of chance
and intuition as well as games of physical skill. Walkling shares that the unique games “promote mental, physical, social, and spiritual health,” while also offering Native American youth, adults, and elders a way to find restored cultural identity. Historically, the games were used among Native Americans to teach survival skills and encourage unity in the clan, band, and tribe.

Participants were taught the historical significance of the games, plus how to responsibly harvest materials and craft the game pieces. Participants were also able to hand-carve, stitch, and paint game pieces for more than 20 games and learn more about the neuroscience of play, according to Walkling.

Those completing the training became certified to teach the traditional games to others in their home communities. Representatives from local Wellness Coalitions including Lakota Homes/ North Rapid, Parmelee, Crow Creek, Lower Brule and McLaughlin attended the training, as did three officers from the Rapid City Police Department and Travis Schubauer, a physical education teacher from General Beadle Elementary in Rapid City.

As a result of his participation, Schubauer helped organize a Kindergarten Family Day in October 2016 during which about 100 kindergartners and their parents made “Ring the Stick” games. Representatives from Black Hills National Forest Service gathered and donated chokecherry and willow branches for this event, and SDSU Extension provided sinew. Schubauer also plans on teaching lacrosse in his P.E. classes during the school year.

Additionally, the Rapid City Police Department’s participation has prompted several outreach efforts utilizing the games, which is helping build better rapport with the Native American community.

Walkling says, “They’ve been great champions of the games.” She shares that the officers have used the traditional Native American games in outreach efforts at several Rapid City elementary schools on early-release Wednesdays. When working with the youth, the officers demonstrate and play several traditional games including lacrosse, Ring the Stick, and Run and Scream. As a closing, the officers organize a Rock in Fist tournament, in which the winning student and a student who shows fortitude (a Lakota virtue) by not giving up are equally honored. Lastly, the officers discuss the history and meaning of the games with students and answer questions.

To further community outreach, Rapid City Police Department, along with other local organizations, are planning a Native American Games Community Event to be held in May 2017 at College Park in Rapid City.

Moreover, SDSU Extension is helping take the Native American Games training to more communities across South Dakota. A second training was hosted in Mitchell in November 2016; a third training will be held in Mission in July 2017. This third training will be led by two South Dakota instructors, Jeremy Red Eagle of Sisseton and Mike Marshall of Rosebud, who are specifically well-versed in Lakota/Dakota traditional games. As a request from Native American Games trainees, a statewide Traditional Native American Games Coalition has been created, and is facilitated by Walkling and Hope Kleine, with SDSU Extension. This coalition is comprised of local wellness coalition members and other community members who have attended the trainings.

All total, Walkling says the idea that was born out of an extension presentation has resulted in a statewide effort to promote traditional Native American games as a means of increasing physical activity, while also enhancing cultural awareness.

Editor’s Note: The Native American Games Training event was sponsored by SDSU Extension with funding support from Great Plains Tribal Chairmen’s Health Board, Partnership Rapid City, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1416 Grant, and USDA Food and Nutrition Services Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) funding from the SD Department of Human Services, Office of Economic Assistance.
Elizabeth Marso

Current Role: School Nutrition Director for Pierre School District

Years Attended SDSU: Began in fall 2007 and graduated in 2011 with a Nutrition & Dietetics degree and a minor in Chemistry

Early Influence: A Pierre native, Marso credits her parents Colleen Winter ('78) and Wayne Winter ('75) with influencing her interest in nutrition and health – as well as her path to SDSU. She explains that while growing up her mom was always in the kitchen trying new recipes, which Marso says “integrated me into the world of food.” Additionally, her dad fostered her interest in being outdoors and active. “I recognized that food and exercise are very much linked, and that fueled my interest for a career on that path.” As well, since both of her parents are SDSU alumni, Marso says, “I grew up as a Jackrabbit. When I looked at going to college, I had an open mind, but SDSU felt like it fit.”

SDSU Experience: As a student at SDSU, Marso says she initially didn’t declare her major, and enjoyed a first semester class that allowed for exploring various careers. But by her second semester she was ready to pursue the nutrition path. She notes that opportunities to work on campus in foodservice, and be involved in the Dietetics and Health Sciences Club added to her experiences outside of class. While it has been six years since she graduated, Marso says, “I still feel very connected to SDSU through my connections with SDSU Extension. And, there’s nothing better than meeting another Jackrabbit.”

Favorite Courses: Marso says she found value in all of her SDSU courses and felt “all of my instructors had a passion for what they were teaching.” She was particularly intrigued by courses in human nutrition, advanced human nutrition and metabolism, and medical nutrition therapy because they explained the process of food being broken down in the body, as well as the exercise link to that process. As well, Marso says courses in quantity food production and food science were “fun” because they allowed opportunities to work in an industrial kitchen. Marso says a course in community nutrition, taught by Suzanne Stluka who is current Food & Families Program Director for SDSU Extension, helped “open her eyes to different career areas of nutrition” – including the role she has today.

SDSU Extension Opportunities: While at SDSU, Marso had the opportunity to work as an undergraduate research assistant, which introduced her to SDSU Extension. A research project allowed her to present a nutrition curriculum geared toward elementary students, and then collect data on the program’s effectiveness. Marso shares that it was a great opportunity and experience, and her research was later published in the Journal of Extension. From that introduction, Marso has continued to work with SDSU Extension in her current career and she calls the tools and resources they offer invaluable.

Fun With Food: In her role as a school nutrition director, which she began in 2015, Marso says she recognizes school nutrition programs don’t always have the best reputation. But she says she came into her role with a “clean slate,” and has strived to gather feedback and student input while making menu updates within the guidelines of federal regulations. “The community has been supportive, and it’s been fun to see the school environment be excited about school lunch,” she says. Through a Smarter Lunchroom grant available from SDSU Extension, Marso also hosted a “Foodtography” activity among students last spring to help enhance the lunchroom environment as well. Student entered snapshots and digitally enhanced images of fruits and vegetables several were selected to be enlarged and framed to adorn the walls of the lunchroom. Marso notes that the students did a great job with the project and it was a great way for foodservice to integrate with the education department.

What’s Next: Marso says that initial SDSU Extension grant has prompted more ideas for enhancing their cafeteria environment. She says, “We are budgeting for more changes ahead – the SDSU Extension grant inspired that.” Marso has also received a PowerChef grant from SDSU Extension which will bring an eight-week afterschool nutrition program to middle school students in the Pierre School District and allow them to experiment with different recipes. Marso says she also looks forward to continuing her involvement in the School Nutrition Association of South Dakota, as well as finding opportunities to be involved with community food organizations.
Fun Facts

$2.6M in grant and contract awards in FY16
Commercial and private applicator training sessions reached over 3,000 individuals in 2016
Recipient of $706,907 USDA Beginning Farmer Rancher Development Program Grant
$332,492 value of 16,387 Master Gardener volunteer hours

1,650 youth Yoga for Kids participants learned a new way to increase their physical activity in the first two years of the program
12 community-based wellness coalitions formed targeting the reduction of obesity for children, youth and their families
Club enrollment: 9,441
Total Youth Participation: 36,793
Adult & Youth Volunteers: 3,838

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SDSU Extension faculty and staff are listed below, categorized by area of expertise. Visit http://iGrow.org/about/our-experts to access titles, contact information and their most recent published content.

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<td>Karla Trautman</td>
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The land is your legacy. SDSU understands that because it’s our legacy too.

“The university’s mission as an 1862 land-grant institution remains the same,” said Dr. Barry H. Dunn, SDSU’s 20th president. “To be a beacon of opportunity, providing access to higher education, championing the creation of knowledge and understanding, and continuously expanding the university’s reach. It starts with the land.”

Dunn ranched the land his family established on the Rosebud Sioux Indian Reservation. He taught in the College of Agriculture and Biological Sciences, eventually serving as Dean for six years before his selection as SDSU’s president.

The Jackrabbits Land Legacy is designed to allow donors to make gifts of land, crops, machinery and other property to benefit SDSU.

Alumni and friends have already taken the steps to gift their ownership of land. Jack Morhor of Sheridan, Wyoming, a 1959 political science major, has arranged for a 130-acre almond orchard in California to be gifted to SDSU in the future. The gift will supplement the scholarship program he already supports. “I want to give back to SDSU because it provides a good education to students who, like me, are willing to work hard,” Mohror said.

Tom and Marilyn Gannon of Sioux Falls have a passion for music and are ardent supporters of the expansion of the university’s Performing Arts Center. The Gannons are gifting 950 acres of farmland to impact the music program going forward.

The Jackrabbits Land Legacy allows for flexibility on the timing of the gift and future uses of the land. The SDSU Foundation’s Gift Planning team is available to answer questions, including the prospective donor’s goals, ways to make an impact and preferred financial goals and desired tax benefits.

To learn more, go to www.sdstatefoundation.org/jackrabbitslandlegacy.
Reflecting On Progress

MY PHOTO IS ACCOMPANIED in this issue with another photo of a man that few of you knew, but I knew well.

Rusty Brassfield was my grandfather. Rusty was, first and foremost, a farmer. When he retired from farming and moved into town in 1974, he spent his remaining years – you guessed it – farming for other people. He lived and breathed agriculture; leaving it behind was of no interest to him.

He did have a favorite retirement hobby, though: Driving around the countryside, checking on everyone’s crops. He knew nothing else.

If Grandpa could come back for just one day, he would want to see his friends and loved ones, of course. But I know he would also want to carve out a decent block of time to go back to the farm. If he could see the technologies being used and the precision of today’s agricultural practices, he would be at a loss for words.

Grandpa died in 1983 in a farming accident. That doesn’t seem like that long ago, but the average land near his home near Bronson, IA at that time went for about $1,000 an acre. (It’s more than $7,000 an acre today). The average corn crop was about 110 bushels an acre. (Today, 200 bushel corn is not all that uncommon). The average sow weaned 15 pigs per year. (Many sows double that figure today).

The knowledge gained and shared from within our land-grant universities has played a huge role in these improvements.

All that being said, many of the things I learned from Grandpa still hold true. You learn more listening than you do talking, hard work is at the core of most successful endeavors, and never trust a guy who doesn’t carry a pair of pliers with him.

What happens here changes lives for the better, in so many ways. Thanks to each of you for caring about and supporting SDSU.

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