

Session Information:

Presenter Biographies
and
Session Descriptions

Session A

Public Policy Plays a Key Role in Sustainable Agriculture

Biographical Information:

Sterling C. Brown

Vice President – Public Policy
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Sterling is the Vice-President of Public Policy for the Utah Farm Bureau Federation. His primary responsibilities include overseeing state legislative and regulatory affairs, local affairs and political education programs and providing staff assistance to policy development activities to assure maximum effectiveness in implementing organizational policies.

Sterling received both his Bachelors and Master's degrees in Agronomy from Brigham Young University. He has worked for the Farm Bureau for twelve years, first, as a Regional Manager in northern Utah, then, as Associate Director of Public Policy and as Vice President of Organization – overseeing leadership development, commodity activities and the Young Farmer and Rancher Program. He's married to Karin, from Woods Cross, Utah, and together they have five children.

Session Description:

The public's perception of agriculture is a red barn, a few chickens, pigs in the mud and an older man in overalls. This misconception often leads to conflict. Modern and sustainable agriculture production requires an understanding of water and property rights, air and water quality regulations, taxes, transportation, public land laws and more. Today's food and fiber producer is thrust into the animal rights debate and nuisance complaints. Past generations struggled to endure weather patterns and market trends. Today's farmer is coping with increased regulations and shortages in a reliable work force. Through it all, the American farmer is the most efficient and productive.

Farming in Uncertain Times

Biographical Information:

Brett Crosby

Custom Ag Solutions

bcrosby@casnow.com

Brett Crosby is the president and co-owner of Custom Ag Solutions (CAS). He earned a Master's in Business Administration from Brigham Young University, and has over 15 years of experience in economic research and consulting in the ag sector. A fifth-generation rancher, Crosby also owns and manages a cow-calf operation at home in Wyoming.

In 2004 Crosby co-founded CAS, which specializes in agricultural economic research and education, and has since completed dozens of projects in 43 different states. Under his direction, CAS partnered with Kansas State University to design and develop BeefBasis.com, a forecasting website for feeder cattle.

Having grown up on the family ranch that he now owns, Crosby has a broad range of experience with the business and production side of agriculture. This unique skill set enables him to understand the challenges that producers face and offer practical, common-sense analysis on an operational level. He has been featured in numerous trade publications, and is regularly featured on the business network CNBC, which has used him as a source in agricultural news segments since 2007.

Session Description:

Agriculture is constantly changing. Weather, consumer preferences, capital requirements, and technology are just a few of the many things that introduce change and uncertainty into farming and ranching. This discussion will focus on identifying areas of uncertainty and employing strategies that will help manage risk and enable producers to capitalize on opportunities that arise in uncertain times.

Session B

A Visit to First Frost Farm

Biographical Information:

Lynda A. (Penny) Trinca

First Frost Farms

Penny and her family operate First Frost Farm, a five acre organic farm in Nibley, selling fresh cool-season produce at the Cache Valley Gardeners' Market, The Park City Farmer's Market, the Salt Lake City Downtown Farmer's Market, Whole Foods Market, to local restaurants and individual patrons. They have been farming organically since 1987 and have been certified organic by the State of Utah since 2001. She is the current president of SAABRA, a nonprofit organization developed to support and promote the adoption of sustainable agriculture throughout Southern Idaho and Northern Utah. SAABRA sponsors the Cache Valley Gardeners' Market, and for six years operated the Bear River Kitchen Incubator, a shared-use community kitchen to help beginning food entrepreneurs. This facility has been turned over to the Cache Business Resource Center and Bridgerland Applied Technical College. She received an undergraduate degree in Environmental Science from the University of Arkansas and a Master of Science in Agricultural Systems from Utah State University.

Session Description:

In this session, Penny will talk about their organic farm operation. She will discuss some of the marketing avenues and other tools they have used to make First Frost Farm a successful agricultural endeavor.

The Changing Face of Agriculture

Biographical Information:

Brett Crosby

Custom Ag Solutions
bcrosby@casnow.com

Brett Crosby is the president and co-owner of Custom Ag Solutions (CAS). He earned a Master's in Business Administration from Brigham Young University, and has over 15 years of experience in economic research and consulting in the ag sector. A fifth-generation rancher, Crosby also owns and manages a cow-calf operation at home in Wyoming.

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Session Description:

Today's farmer is much different than the farmer of twenty years ago. Understand the changing size and composition of today's farming operations, and how farm size is likely to change over time. This discussion will provide an overview of economies of scale, specialization, niche markets, and risk management strategies to help you identify your strengths and weaknesses, and position yourself to remain competitive in a changing environment.

Session C

Artisan Cheese Making Basics

Biographical Information:

Dave Irish

Dairy Processing Specialist
Western Dairy Center
Utah State University
david.irish@usu.edu

David (Dave) Irish has twenty plus years of food processing experience. He has worked in operations, quality, sanitation, food safety, and plant management. He has a bachelor's degree in Food Science and master's degree in Food Safety and Microbiology, both from Utah State University. He currently works in the Western Dairy Center at USU as the Dairy Processing Specialist. He has a passion for food safety and quality. Dave also functions as a consultant to the food industry performing audits, trouble shooting and teaching and training. He is in his 5th year at USU and looks forward to many more.

Session Description:

Many farmers, ranchers and others are looking for ways to make their operation more sustainable. Artisan cheese making could have a role to play in sustainability. This presentation will discuss the opportunities, challenges and ideas of creating artisan cheese. Whether on the farm, which is call farmstead cheese, or in a manufacturing plant, artisan cheese could be your next exciting adventure.

Using Social Media as a Communication Tool for Being Advocates for Agriculture

Biographical Information:

Kelsey Hall

Assistant Professor

Agricultural Communication and Journalism

School of Applied Sciences, Technology and Education

Utah State University

Kelsey.hall@usu.edu

Dr. Kelsey Hall is an assistant professor of agricultural communication and journalism at Utah State University. She teaches undergraduates how to communicate with different audiences about agricultural and environmental issues using video, graphics, public relations, marketing, social media and the web. Hall's research focuses on the decision-making processes of consumers, farmers and media in regards to sustainable practices and the local food movement.

Session Description:

Learn to serve as agriculture advocates using Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogging, Pinterest, YouTube, and other social networks.

Session D

So You Want to Start Your Own Business?

Biographical Information:

Dr. Kynda Curtis

Associate Professor

Department of Applied Economics, USU

kynda.curtis@usu.edu

Dr. Kynda Curtis has been an Associate Professor and Extension Economist in the Department of Applied Economics at Utah State University since 2010. She holds a Ph.D. in Economics from Washington State University (2003), where is specialized in agricultural marketing and econometrics. She spent seven years at the University of Nevada, Reno before coming to Utah. In her Extension appointment she works with agricultural producers to assist them in developing new markets for their products and assessing the feasibility of new food and agricultural products and value-added processes.

Dr. Ruby Ward

Associate Professor

Department of Applied Economics, USU

ruby.ward@usu.edu

Dr. Ruby Ward was raised on a farm and ranch in South-eastern Idaho. After graduating from Ricks College, she received a BS in Agricultural Economics and Accounting from Utah State University. From Texas A&M University she received an MBA and a PhD in Agricultural Economics. Dr. Ward joined the faculty at Utah State University in 1998 and was tenured in 2005. Ward is currently an associate professor and extension specialist at Utah State University in the Department of Applied Economics. Her current assignment involves all three areas emphasized at a land grant University—teaching, research and extension. She teaches agricultural finance and community planning. Ward is the committee chair for the Diversified Agricultural Conference. Ward is the project leader for the Rural Tax Education website and Co-chair of the National Farm Income Tax Extension Committee. Ward works primarily in the area of rural development focusing on regional economics and agriculture entrepreneurship.

Session Description:

This session will examine the following questions faced by new agricultural businesses. Can you grow it? Do you have a market for it? Is it profitable? Market realities, resources, and funding sources, as well as tax, zoning and legal issues will be discussed.

I Really Want That New John Deere

Biographical Information:

Rob Lee

Researcher

Department of Applied Economics

Utah State University

robert.lee@usu.edu

Robert Lee was born and raised on a dairy farm and is currently a partner in Sagamore Farms, a dairy and crop farm, in Paradise Utah. They milk about 80 cows and run 500 acres. They also custom cut and bale several hundred acres. Rob graduated from Utah State University with a degree in Agri-business and had so much fun he went back and earned a Master's of Business Administration. He has been teaching Applied Economics courses and assisting with the greenbelt tax research for the past four years.

Session Description:

This session will focus on using partial and enterprise budgets to evaluate capital purchases.

Session E

Farm Transition Strategies

Biographical Information:

Dr. Kynda Curtis

Associate Professor

Department of Applied Economics

Utah State University

kynda.curtis@usu.edu

Dr. Kynda Curtis has been an Associate Professor and Extension Economist in the Department of Applied Economics at Utah State University since 2010. She holds a Ph.D. in Economics from Washington State University (2003), where is specialized in agricultural marketing and econometrics. She spent seven years at the University of Nevada, Reno before coming to Utah. In her Extension appointment she works with agricultural producers to assist them in developing new markets for their products and assessing the feasibility of new food and agricultural products and value-added processes.

Session Description:

This session will discuss strategies for transitioning current farms or sections of farms to new enterprises, as well as other land and equipment sharing and leasing options.

Developing a Financial Plan for Your Business

Biographical Information:

Dr. Ruby Ward

Associate Professor

Department of Applied Economics, USU

ruby.ward@usu.edu

Dr. Ruby Ward was raised on a farm and ranch in South-eastern Idaho. After graduating from Ricks College, she received a BS in Agricultural Economics and Accounting from Utah State University. From Texas A&M University she received an MBA and a PhD in Agricultural Economics. Dr. Ward joined the faculty at Utah State University in 1998 and was tenured in 2005. Ward is currently an associate professor and extension specialist at Utah State University in the Department of Applied Economics. Her current assignment involves all three areas emphasized at a land grant University—teaching, research and extension. She teaches agricultural finance and community planning. Ward is the committee chair for the Diversified Agricultural Conference. Ward is the project leader for the Rural Tax Education website and Co-chair of the National Farm Income Tax Extension Committee. Ward works primarily in the area of rural development focusing on regional economics and agriculture entrepreneurship.

Session Description:

This session will show how to begin developing a financial plan (part of a business plan) for your farm or idea. It will also illustrate a few simple budgeting techniques to use.

Session F

Internship Experiences

Biographical Information:

Alyssa Chambliss

Agricultural Education

Alyssa was born and raised in the small, rural town of Hinckley, Utah in Millard County. Most of her high school career was spent serving in her high school's FFA Chapter at Delta High and volunteering in various other school organizations. After graduating in 2010, Alyssa moved to Logan to begin her college education at Utah State University where she is working on a degree in agricultural education with a minor in animal science.

Internship:

This past summer, Alyssa worked as an agricultural education intern for the Millard County School District. During the internship, she was responsible for a segment of the District's summer agricultural education program for high school students.

Stephanie Redford

Ornamental Horticulture

Stephanie Redford is 20 years old and is a junior majoring in Ornamental Horticulture. She grew up in Cache Valley with her two brothers and one sister and never really thought about going anywhere else. She enjoys music and has played in the marching band in high school and at Utah State. She is a first generation college student and thinks it couldn't be better. She never really knew what she wanted to do or planned on going to college until her senior year in high school. Her greenhouse teacher encouraged her to join the FFA. She did not too willingly and ended up winning state in the nursery landscape competition. She found out that she was not only good at Horticulture but it was something she enjoyed and wanted to pursue. That is what ended up leading her to Utah State.

Internship:

Stephanie works for a family owned business called Tolt Hill Farms. They work with sheep, chickens, alpaca, and have a large range of fruit trees. They are working to expand and are willing to try new things within this business. They hired Stephanie to work on all their gardening and take care of the many trees they have on their property. She has also helped to build a small hot house to try and grow some fruits and vegetables all year round. Her experience working here has been one that she has enjoyed and had the opportunity to do research on some things that she never would have thought about. This experience has helped her to realize there are so many different things to try within her major. It has opened her mind to the possibilities that can come from trying and experimenting with things people have never tried before. It is one that has also shown her how to be self-sustaining and to work hard.