



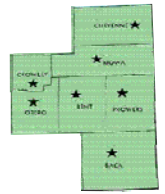
# Extension

**Your front door  
to research,  
information,  
and expertise of  
your land-grant  
university.**

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# Quarterly Report



## To: Board of County Commissioners

This quarterly report summarizes major educational programming in the first quarter of 2009 from Southeast Area *Extension*. The mission of CSU *Extension* is to provide information and education, and encourage the application of research-based knowledge in response to local, state, and national issues affecting individuals, youth, families, agricultural enterprises, and communities of Colorado.

We offer educational programs through these program areas:

- 4-H Youth Development
- Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Livestock Management
- Family & Consumer Science
- Cropping Systems

We are grateful for the continued support of the Counties. If you have any questions, suggestions or would like more specific information about these or other Extension programs, feel free to meet with any member of our staff.

## Meet the Agents



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## Introducing the New Agent



## Agriculture and Natural Resources



### New Agent in Prowers and Bent Counties

My name is Lacey Mann and I am the new Prowers/Bent 4-H/Youth Development Agent. I was raised in Huerfano County on my family's cow/calf ranch. I was active in 4-H for 10 years with projects in horses, breeding beef, rocketry, range management, leathercraft, shooting sports and junior leadership. It was during this time I discovered my desire to pursue a career in agriculture education. I have a bachelor's degree from Colorado State University in agriculture education with a concentration in extension. I also have a bachelor's degree from Kansas State University in agriculture communications and journalism. These two degrees have helped me to develop my communication skills and work toward educating all ages about the importance of agriculture and youth programs.

I have worked with Texas Farm Bureau's State Legislative Affairs office in Austin for the past four years. I served in many roles ranging from writer, editor, event coordinator and office support staff. I enjoyed working in state politics; however, I knew I could better serve working in a youth program. I am anxious to meet my area 4-H members, leaders, commissioners and fellow staff over the next few months. My door will always be open, so please feel free to come see me. Thank you for this opportunity.

### 35th Annual Bull Tests Conclude

April 14<sup>th</sup> will be the conclusion of the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Southeast Colorado Bull Test. This year we had 44 bulls in the test; 37 will be offered for sale. Breeds included Polled and Horned Herefords, Angus, Salers, Irish Blacks, and British Whites; entered from ten producers. Several years ago we instituted a Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD) testing protocol. This year, because of issues with Trichomoniasis in the Southeast Colorado beef herd, all of the bulls were tested for Trichomoniasis during their Breeding Soundness Examinations. As expected, since these are all virgin yearling bulls, they all tested negative, but it does give a baseline reference for the future.

In 2008, the Southeast Colorado Bull Test was the only bull test held in the State of Colorado. Other data reported to producers includes: average daily gain on test, weight per day of age, ultra-sound carcass data, frame scores, and pelvic area.

### Agronomy Happenings

The winter months are generally thought to be slow for agronomy activities in Colorado. While this may be the case for outdoor activities such as field work, the focus for producers and, therefore, CSU Extension shifts towards preparation for the upcoming growing season and topics of concern for area agriculture.

### Private Pesticide Applicator Trainings

One such topic of concern, which is always a focus of CSU Extension and the Colorado Department of Agriculture, is the safe handling of pesticides. Two Southeast Area pesticide education courses were conducted by Scott Brase in February and March to provide current licensing education, as well as continuing education credits for both private and

commercial pesticide applicators. Both courses were very well attended with nearly 50 area applicators completing the courses. All of the Southeast Area County Extension offices also provide pesticide licensing packets for producers who may choose to complete the licensing exam without attending the training courses. The goal for the Southeast Area Extension team is to make the licensing process as easy for the producer as possible while ensuring safety and compliance.

### Conservation Reserve Program Acreage Expiration

A joint venture involving CSU Extension Agent Scott Brase, USDA's Farm Service Agency, USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service, Colorado Division of Wildlife and the Colorado Land Board implemented and carried out an educational seminar regarding area producer's options on expiring Conservation Reserve Program acres. Within the next twenty four months 540,298 acres will be expiring in Baca, Prowers, Bent, Otero, and Kiowa counties. Producers were given options ranging from possible contract extensions, carbon sequestration programs, wildlife conservation programs, and requirements for returning the land to crop production. The program, which was held at Lamar Community College, was considered to be a success with over 150 producers in attendance.

### Winter Wheat Variety Trials

Time continues to be devoted to evaluation of winter wheat variety trials as well as monitoring insect and potential plant disease outbreaks throughout the Southeast Area region. Dry conditions continue to pose a significant challenge to area agriculture producers; however, much of the winter wheat crop still has the potential to do well in the event that moisture begins to fall.

### Mobile Animal Harvest Facility

In coordination with Southeast Colorado RC&D, Southeast Area and Southern Regional staff has applied for a Rural Business Enterprise Grant to study the feasibility of housing a Mobile Animal Harvest facility in Southeast Colorado. We should be notified soon if our proposal was accepted or not. This feasibility study will be phase one of a three phase project. Phase two will include developing a business plan and phase three will be to secure the equipment. Other partners in the grant include: the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, RC&D offices in East Central and Northeast Colorado, and the Karval Community Alliance.

Currently meetings are scheduled for May 14<sup>th</sup> in Kim and Springfield, May 15<sup>th</sup> in Lamar and Las Animas, June 8<sup>th</sup> in Ordway and Eads, and June 9<sup>th</sup> in Cheyenne Wells. We feel that this is an important project for Southeast Colorado, so have proceeded with plans for the meetings.

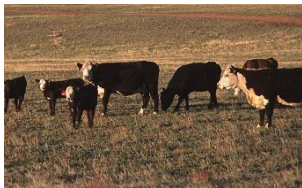
Marketing trends include the purchase and consumption of more localized products. One aspect of this is the supplying of local school district lunch programs with locally grown meat products. These mobile facilities, which have attained Federal Inspection approval, would be able to fulfill this market as well as other retail markets. The facility under consideration would handle beef, sheep, swine, and goat species.

*"The goal for the Southeast Area Extension team is to make the licensing process as easy for the producer as possible while ensuring safety and compliance."*





*“Local and regional papers utilized the topics and speakers for multiple articles over the subsequent weeks.”*



## 5th Annual Farm/Ranch/Water Symposium & Trade Show

The Fifth Annual Arkansas Valley Farm/Ranch/Water Symposium and Trade Show was another great Extension program! The Symposium was held February 5, 2009, in Rocky Ford, and a wide variety of topics were discussed that affect our local farmers and ranchers. Many positive comments were received from those in attendance. Associated with the Symposium was a Trade Show filled with local businesses and agencies here to serve the farming and ranching communities.

The topics receiving the most interest were bio-diesel production from oil seed crops, carbon sequestration and the 2008 Farm Bill. The Symposium also provided updates regarding animal feeding operations and water quality protection, irrigation efficiency rules, and a research report for the lysimeter at the Arkansas Valley Research Center, as well as a legislative update from John Stulp, Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture. Bruce Fickenscher, Area Range and Livestock Agent, presented information about country of origin labeling regulations for commodity producers. Conversations in the hallway between sessions confirmed the relevance of the topics and expertise of the speakers.

The Symposium also received considerable press coverage as local and regional papers utilized the topics and speakers for multiple articles over the subsequent weeks. Natalie Edmundson, Area Range and Livestock Agent and Symposium Chairperson, stated, “The Symposium is a great learning opportunity for our local producers and we look forward to improving this Valley tradition in the coming years.”

## Drought Affects Rangeland

Drought is a common occurrence in Southeast Colorado, and this winter has been dryer than usual. Most of this Area has received less than one-half the normal precipitation since November, and many locations are well below that mark. The U.S. Drought Monitor has all of Southeast Colorado listed as either “Abnormally Dry” or “Drought–Moderate.” The outlook for the next three months from the National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center predicts above normal temperatures with below normal precipitation.

CSU Extension is encouraging producers to plan now. Area Range and Livestock Extension Agents Bruce Fickenscher and Natalie Edmundson have gathered resources to assist producers in their decision making process. Edmundson was a guest on KBLJ radio to discuss options available to producers if it remains dry. “Early decisions are important and provide an opportunity to base decision on logic rather than emotion or lack of options,” states Edmundson.

Native rangeland is accustomed to drought, but producers need to understand how plants respond to it. The ability of perennial plants to recover after drought is dependent upon the condition before and during the drought. Overgrazing will only increase the length of time for recovery when the rain does come. Rest from grazing maintains plant vigor, so producers should consider implementing a rotational grazing system and setting an appropriate stocking rate. This also provides benefits for livestock as they are moved to fresh pastures with better feed and are not as likely to eat poisonous plants. Producers should plan now for this year’s drought, and the next drought that is certain to come.

## “...There’s nothing quite so lovely, as a tree.”

Walt Whitman inspired generations as to the beauty and importance of trees in our landscapes and lives, but it is Colorado State Forest Service and CSU Extension that get the trees to the people of the Southeast Area.

The Forest Service raises over 40 varieties of trees and shrubs for sale through a program which Extension participates each year. The tree and shrub sales are for landowners with two or more acres and the trees must be used for windbreaks, wildlife, prevention of soil erosion, noise barriers, reforestation, or Christmas trees. The trees are sold as seedlings as either bare root or small potted plants. No landscape sales are allowed. Sales of this nature would compete with local nurseries.

Extension Offices work with the Forest Service to order these trees and shrubs for local landowners. The Extension Offices usually work with their local Conservation Districts as many of these plantings can be cost shared by these local offices, making large scale projects not only worthwhile, but cost effective as well.

Workshops on windbreaks were held in the Southeast Area this winter. These meetings helped landowners in their tree selection, proper care of seedlings, available varieties, varieties to avoid in our area and water systems.

Several counties also sent out letters to previous buyers, others sent out local news releases about the program, and we also added tree information to our Southeast Area website with information about ordering trees and proper tree care.

Our efforts were a success and we all sold over 13,000 trees in the Southeast Area. That means better control of our strong winds for improved soil moisture and less erosion on farmlands and rangelands, better habitat for our wildlife and the ability to enjoy the peace and quiet of our great rural settings. And, oh yes,~ there is that beauty “thing” too.

## Silage Study

CSU Extension personnel in Eastern Colorado were awarded a Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) grant to study differences in the nutritional value of livestock feed within individual silage piles. Personnel involved in the study included Michael Fisher- Golden Plains Livestock agent, John Deering- Golden Plains Agriculture and Business Management Specialist, Bruce Fickenschler-Southeast Area Range and Livestock agent, and Dr. John Wagner-Director of the Southeast Colorado Beef Research Center.

Silage samples were taken from the top surface, three feet down the face, and six feet down the face. Samples were then sent to a laboratory for nutritional analysis; Dr. Wagner tested the samples for particle size and compacted volume. Other data recorded, if available from each location, included if there was a cover or not, what type of implement was used for packing, the physical dimensions of the pile, if a kernel processor was used, if an inoculants or preservatives were used, and the estimated fair market value of the final product.

Data will be compiled and professionally printed in a brochure type fact sheet. Distribution will be to livestock producers and especially feedlot operators. One interesting preliminary result is that the majority of the locations tested in the Southeast were not covered and a majority of the locations in the Northeast were covered.



*“One interesting preliminary result is that the majority of the locations tested in the Southeast were not covered and a majority of the locations in the Northeast were covered.”*

## 4-H



*Brooke Matthew  
conducting the Leader  
Training in Crowley  
County*

### **District Retreat**

In an attempt to offer more opportunities for our area youth, the Southeast Area encouraged youth between the ages of 14 and 18 to attend the South Central District Retreat. The retreat was held at Silver Cliff Ranch, near Nathrop, Colorado. This was the first year that District VI 4-H has promoted and had anyone interested in attending. Even though it was a small group and the beds were a little rough the retreat was great. Youth attended workshops on science, college preparation, and survival skills. They did group activities to get better acquainted with one another, swam in the hot springs pool, and danced the night away. Three college scholarships were given out, two to Adams State and one as a door prize to any senior attending.

### **Leader Training**

This year the Southeast Area conducted mandatory leader trainings. A total of 166 leaders attended various trainings throughout the area. Leaders were trained in a variety of subjects including food safety, navigating extension websites, organizational aids, and 4-H policy. Leaders were also treated to various concoctions of chili prepared by the extension agents. Southeast Area Extension would like to extend a big “thank you” to all the leaders who attended. It is their time, commitment, and leadership abilities that makes 4-H programming possible for the children of our area.

### **Members Attend Leadership Development Conference (LDC)**

On the weekend of January 24-26, 2009, 21 4-H'ers, two leaders, and three agents from District VI including, Otero, Crowley, Baca, Prowers, Kiowa and Cheyenne counties, traveled to Denver to attend the Colorado State 4-H Leadership Development Conference held at the Renaissance Hotel.

They started the weekend off with a banquet, which consisted of delicious food, award presentations, and a wonderful speaker, Governor Bill Ritter. He spoke about leadership, but also about the future of not only Colorado but also of the United States. The banquet was followed by a dance where members got to relax, meet new friends, and dance the night away.

Sunday we attended many different workshops that were put on by the State 4-H Officer team. We learned about leadership on many different levels and created a 4-H Magazine. We had a “Team Olympics” where the different teams were able to compete while also using their leadership qualities, and were learning how to work with others. There was a very touching presentation that was put on by the Speak Out For Military Kids, which told their stories of their families and the war in Iraq. Our community service project was to fill bags, which had been made by the United Methodist Women, with school supplies. The bags then go anywhere in the world when a school is destroyed due to war or natural disaster.

Members attended the Nuggets vs. Jazz basketball game at the Pepsi Center on Sunday night. Several kids from our District were able to be a part of the “Nuggets fan tunnel” and got to “high five” the players as they came out after half time. They earned this privilege because their team was either first or second in the magazine cover design contest.

Before driving home in the snow Monday, members attended 4-H Day at the State Capital. We had two question and answer sessions, one of which was with Representative Wes McKinley and the other with Representative Cory Gardner's aide. We then attended a session in the Senate where the 4-H members were recognized for their leadership, and were asked to stand and say the 4-H pledge while several members of the Senate also joined in.

### IFYE Delegate Visits Southeast Colorado

The week of February 9<sup>th</sup>, the Southeast Area was very fortunate to have Jared Sheldon, a delegate of the International 4-H Youth Exchange (IFYE) program, visit area schools and make a presentation about his six month experience in Norway and Sweden. Jared was raised in Southeast Colorado in Branson.

During the presentation, Jared explained the cultures of both foreign countries and told very interesting and exciting stories about his travel. Jared also brought small items and souvenirs from both countries to share with the groups. After the presentation, the students were asked to fill out an evaluation. In many of these evaluations, kids said that the presentation was "very interesting" and "cool". Based on the evaluations, many kids were inspired to get involved in 4-H and the IFYE program.

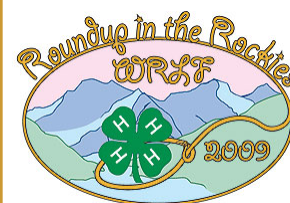
Each year the International 4-H Youth Exchange, in cooperation with the Colorado Four-H International Programs, sends two or three delegates from Colorado to countries around to world for three to six months. Counties include: Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Latin America, Australia, Asia, and Africa. Representatives live and work with several host families during their stay. They have the opportunity and are expected to participate in day to day family life as well as interact with host organizations, which are often times similar to 4-H. Representatives may pursue special interests through self-study and many arrange for academic credit through their university. International 4-H Youth Exchange program enhance the 4-H program through international, cross-cultural experiences that enable young people to improve their leadership and communication skills, while increasing their international awareness and understanding.

Jared has been sharing his experience all throughout Colorado for the past month and was able to share his experience with the following schools in the Southeast Area: La Junta Middle School, Crowley County Middle School, Jefferson Middle School in Rocky Ford, Kit Carson School, Cheyenne Wells School, Plainview School, Eads School, McClave Elementary, Las Animas Elementary, Alta Vista, Home School Association, Vilas High School, Pritchett School, and Walsh School. Jared also attended the Bent County Clever Clovers 4-H Club Meeting to share his experience.

### WRLF

Colorado 4-H hosted the Western Regional 4-H Leaders Forum in February. The Forum is on a 13 year rotational schedule. Several leaders from the Southeast Area helped with planning, but only one was able to attend due to work conflicts. 4-H Youth Development administrative meetings were held in conjunction with the Forum. Extension Agents Kaye Kasza, Deb Lester, Lacey Mann, Brooke Matthew, and Jeramy McNeely attended. Kaye presented one of the leader workshops about the 4-H Child Development curriculum. Approximately 400 leaders and agents from 13 western states attended the forum.

*"International 4-H Youth Exchange program enhance the 4-H program through international, cross-cultural experiences that enable young people to improve their leadership and communication skills, while increasing their international awareness and understanding."*



*“Institute participants learned assessment tools to help youth become self sufficient and find their purpose while providing a safe environment.”*

## 4-H Institute

Deborah Lester, Jeramy McNeely and Lacey Mann participated in the 2009 Western 4-H Institute held in fabulous Las Vegas, Nevada February 9-13. This hands-on, fast paced institute gave each agent the opportunity to network with fellow agents from 13 states and 1 Canadian province. They also learned valuable youth, volunteer and program development strategies.

The institute is held every three years and is organized by different 4-H agents from across the Western Region. It is designed for agents with less than five years experience. The information presented was geared to give new 4-H and youth development staff marketing tools including gathering, analyzing and implementing plans of work for members, volunteers and other county program stakeholders. The programming was all encompassing from developing programming suitable to each county's needs including recruiting and retaining members and volunteers and enhancing community awareness. Members also addressed the importance of continued learning long after the youth graduate from the program and become leaders and involved in the community.

Youth programs must be a vibrant and educational opportunity for members and leaders. Institute participants learned assessment tools to help youth become self sufficient and find their purpose while providing a safe environment. Each Southeast Area delegate gained a new appreciation for program development and delivery and looks forward to implementing the ideas learned at the institute.

## Beef Weigh-in

Each year our respective counties weigh-in beef animals early in the year. The reason we do this is to help our young people better understand the feeding process in production agriculture.

We usually weigh-in and ear tag the beef animals approximately 150 days from our county fair dates. This means that they will have 150 days to feed and raise the animal to a proper market weight.

Industry standards for market beef animals indicate that the animal should weigh 1000-1500 pounds, have a fat cover of .2 to .8 of an inch at the 10/12<sup>th</sup> rib, be 12-20 months of age, and have a rib-eye area of 12-14 square inches. The animal should gain 2.4 pounds per day.

So if we weigh our beef animals on February 21 and the fair starts on July 29, that's 158 days. If our steer weighs 800 pounds on February 21 and we want him to weigh 1200 pounds on July 29, we simply divide the 400 pounds needed to gain by 158 days and the math tells us that he needs to gain 2.53 pounds per day to be in acceptable showing and selling weight.

This year, the Southeast Area will also retinal scan each of the market calves going to State Fair. 4-H animals are the property of each 4-H'er and we must be able to positively identify each animal. This is especially important with new regulations on Country of Origin Labeling.

Retinol scans provide a positive identification in that no two are alike. They are like our fingerprints. Retinol scans take a picture of the optic nerve that is located in the back of the beef animal's eye. We simply shine a bright light into the eye (like your eye doctor does for an eye exam) and take a picture of the optical nerve. It looks like a big oak tree in the winter. Sheep and goats have an optic nerve that look more like a bush in winter.

In 2009 we had over 150 steers and market heifers weighed-in for the seven county fairs. It's a great beginning and the start of our great county fairs.

## Health Fair

About 200 third and fourth graders from Lamar learned how germs are spread and the importance of cleanliness from Kaye Kasza at the Lamar School 9 Health Fair. The students played a game of catch using a 4-H football that had been lightly coated with plasticized simulated germs. A black light makes the 'germs' visible and students see how easily germs are passed. The importance of hand washing was then discussed. In addition to reaching the students, it was a great opportunity to network with Prowers County professionals in the health field.

## Better Kid Care

On a Saturday in January a Better Kid Care program was presented by Jean Justice in Lamar for 36 child care providers. The workshop was "What Does "Time" Mean to Children?" This was the same program provided in Bent and Otero Counties in October of 2008.

For Otero, Bent and Crowley County child care providers another Better Kid Care program was provided in January. This was "I Want! I Want!! I Want!!!: Building Good Consumers." Children are constantly bombarded by TV and the Internet with advertising for high-sugar, high-fat foods, toys and clothing. The ads are cleverly created to make sure children will want to own whatever is being sold.

Adults often unknowingly aid advertisers, who reap payoffs in billions of dollars of annual spending by child consumers. This workshop examined advertising and consumer culture and offer ways to reduce its negative effects on young children."

The Better Kid Care Program allows area Day Care Providers to earn need continuing education hours in order to keep their license current.

## Bent County's Biggest Loser

One hundred thirty-four Bent County residents are increasing activity, learning nutrition and improving their health through The Biggest Loser contest being conducted by CSU Extension, Bent County Public Health and Bent County Health Care Center. Kaye Kasza is responsible for weekly wellness lessons focusing on nutrition, or increasing activity. The lessons are posted on the Bent County website. Participants complete a short quiz on the lesson that encourages application of the information. The thirteen week program will conclude in May.

## Family & Consumer Science





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## A note from the Area Director—Jean E. Justice

We started the 2009 year with our final new addition to the Southeast Area Staff. After reading Lacey's introduction, I'm sure you will all agree we have another excellent new agent in our midst.

During January and February, I enjoyed making the rounds to each of the counties to meet new and continuing members of the Boards of County Commissioners. Thank you for your gracious hospitality. As you know Colorado State University and all of Higher Education in Colorado is facing difficult economic times. We realize our counties are also facing hard times, so we are particularly appreciative of the county support at times like this.

We also had the first meeting of the newly organized "Southeast Area Extension Advisory Committee." The committee is comprised of three representatives from each of the seven counties in the Southeast Area. I am very excited about this committee and the quality of the membership. I feel certain we will have some excellent ideas and great support for Extension coming from this committee. If you are wondering who your County representatives are please feel free to call your local agent or myself. Your input is always appreciated. After all we are here to serve you and your communities.



**Dining with  
Diabetes**

## Dining with Diabetes

In January, Jean Justice once again provided the Dining with Diabetes series in Rocky Ford. Participants were from Ordway, La Junta and Rocky Ford. For those with diabetes, selecting and preparing foods that are low in sugar and fat can be a real challenge.

This four-week series features several cooking demonstrations, and provides a primer on:

- How diabetes affects overall health
- The fundamentals of making healthy food choices
- Using helpful tools such as a food guide pyramid for diabetes and the "Plate Method".

This class is especially helpful for those who are newly diagnosed with diabetes or for those having trouble putting their dietary recommendations to work. The Dining with Diabetes series helps the participant assess their dinner plate for potential disaster. They learn simple changes they can make to improve their diet.

Because there is such a high incidence of Diabetes in the Arkansas Valley, and because the Center for Disease Control now considers diabetes an epidemic, we feel this program is very pertinent to our communities.