LET'S COMMUNICATE
Agriculture Communication Newsletter
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Videoconference Equipment Update

Rumors have been flying about the Ag Consortium’s videoconference equipment, so here are some answers.

Q: Is it true that some of Polycoms won’t be able to be used this fall?
A: No. Of the 34 Ag Consortium sites, 22 have models that will no longer be supported by the Polycom company after September 2010. This does NOT mean that the equipment will no longer work come September. However, it does mean that if something breaks, Polycom will not be able to sell parts or fix the device. The equipment will continue to be connected to the state network.

Q: What are the replacement plans for these systems?
A: The State Board of Agriculture Research and Education and State Board of Higher Education have approved a request to the Legislature for one-time funding to replace most of these machines. If passed, the funds would become available July 1, 2011.

Q: What if we want to try to fund a replacement system before July 2011?
A: Ironically, videoconference system prices have gone up as they’ve moved to high definition. A Polycom codec, LCD TV, mounting system, installation and three-year support contract with software upgrades now costs about $15,000. However, Ag Com is researching other options and brands.

Q: Is our Polycom on the replacement list?
A: Replacements won’t be finalized until funding is known, but it’s 128, SP, FX and EX machines that lose support this fall. Sites with those machines will be contacted soon.

Q: Should we depend on the equipment working after September?
A: The Polycom equipment is similar to computers – it still works beyond the recommended life cycle, but there comes a time when it’s simply not efficient to fix it if there are problems. If a unit malfunctions, we’ll deal with it then.
Q: Isn’t Wimba webconferencing replacing Polycom videoconferencing anyway?
A: Wimba use has grown tremendously, especially for internal professional development and meetings, but videoconferencing provides better quality for presentations to groups.

Q: Where can I learn more about videoconferencing?
A: http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/agcomm/videoconf/videoconferencing.html. Contact master scheduler Linda McCaw at linda.mccaw@ndsu.edu or (701) 231-7881 with questions.

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More Print and Copy Services Now Available

At the new www.ndsu.edu/printandcopy, Print and Copy Services customers can learn about services available and prices for common jobs.

Digital Storefront on the website allows customers to submit camera-ready work online. Click on any Digital Storefront link and register in the right column before using the system for the first time. Click on copying and printing projects to order brochures, tests, postcards, booklets, letters and other projects. Digital Storefront allows for the selection of paper size, color and weight; front only or double-sided; or corner stapled, saddle-stitched, coil bound or perfect bound. For best quality, submit files as PDFs or let Digital Storefront convert them for you.

Department and fund numbers are required to submit a project online. Staff are working on options for Ag users who don’t have NDSU fund numbers.

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Purchase Your Own Custom Retractable Banner

Ag Com now has retractable banner stands you can purchase for your own office. Why pay more through sign shops and over the Internet when you can purchase durable metal canister retractable banner stands through Ag Communication? A retractable banner stand with custom-made vinyl banner and nylon carry case is $200. Banner design and set-up labor time is extra. Also available are vinyl table runners, which can be ordered with Extension, AES or NDSU logos as well as personalized with your county, REC, department or other name for $60. Set-up time is extra.

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Technology Tidbits

For Web pages in the Ag content management system and many others, click on the NDSU logo in the upper left corner for a quick link to the NDSU home page.

Target e-mail messages to the intended audience. NDSU-all-ag@listserv.nodak.edu truly goes to everyone in the Ag Experiment Station, Extension Service and College of Agriculture, Food
Systems and Natural Resources. Use the list of e-mail lists on the Ag Info Center at http://www.ext.nodak.edu:3000/home/signin to target your messages to the appropriate audiences.

Also, don’t share these e-mail lists with people outside the organization. Technically very few of them are closed lists, but they’re designed for internal use.

And if you’re forwarding an e-mail, delete other people’s e-mail addresses and information that isn’t necessary. Take the time to simplify the message for receivers.

Always put descriptive words in the subject line. Give your receiver more clue than just “question” or “upcoming event” or “need your help.”

Especially with summer activities, please enter all Agriculture and University Extension events that are beyond county specific into the Ag calendar. Login at http://www.ext.nodak.edu:3000/home/signin and follow the simple instructions. Three groups scheduled events on the same September date before any of them put it on the calendar. The calendar can both avoid conflicts like this and help market your programs.

Roger Egeberg continues to transition Intranet materials to the new site so the calendar, e-mail lists, file transfer and Feedlist are at the new http://www.ext.nodak.edu:3000/home/signin. Extension impact reports, program planning and quarterly program reports are still at http://info.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/.

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**Write the Right Word**

Despite common usage, “comprise” and “compose” are not synonymous.

“Comprise” indicates the relationship of the larger to the smaller, not the other way around. Think of “comprise” as meaning to embrace or take in. For example: “North Dakota comprises 53 counties.” “The herd comprises 100 Holsteins.”

Another way to put it is the whole comprises the parts, while the whole is composed of its parts. The parts compose the whole and are comprised in it.

Thus, you never, ever should say something is “comprised of.” Instead, you’d say: “North Dakota is composed of 53 counties.” “The herd is composed of 100 Holsteins.” “One hundred Holsteins make up the herd.”

“Include” is not a synonym for “comprise,” either. One other note on “include”: Use it only when what follows it is part of a total. For example, do not say “The producer planted four crops, including wheat, corn, soybeans and sugar beets.” The correct usage of “include” would be: “The producer planted four crops, including wheat and corn.”
Publications Update from the Distribution Center

*FE577  Making Ends Meet in North Dakota by Debra Pankow and Marina Serdiouk  
This revised four-page publication calculates a cost-of-living budget and touches on the opportunities in ND’s economy.

*WQ1341  Drinking Water Quality: Testing and Interpreting Your Results by Roxanne Johnson and Tom Scherer  
This eight-page 2010 Edition of the It’s All In Your Water series answers these questions: What should your water be tested for? What samples do I need? Where should I have it tested, and how do I interpret the results? How do I correct the problem?

*FN1475  Now Serving: Lean Pork! By David Newman and Julie Garden-Robinson  
Today’s pork is very lean and healthful to eat, providing a host of vitamins and minerals, and can be served as the basis of a wide variety of tasty meals. This four-page publication provides tips on choosing the right cuts and preparation. Safety tips and recipes also are included.

*E1477  2009 Dry Bean Grower Survey of Pest Problems and Pesticide Use in Minnesota and North Dakota by JJ Knodel, PB Beauzay, JL Luecke, DW Franzen, HJ Kandel, SG Markell, JM Osorno and RK Zollinger
This 20-page publication is the 20th annual survey of varieties grown, pest problems, pesticide use and grower practices of the Northarvest Bean Growers Association.

*NM 1478  Composting Animal Manures: A guide to the process and management of animal manure compost by Chris Augustin and Shafiqur Rahman
Composting and utilizing compost are advantageous tools in nutrient management plans that reduce the potential to pollute and benefit crops. This eight-page full-color publication details the compost benefits, site selection, composting manure process, aeration methods and nutrient management of compost.

The following publication has been pulled from inventory and from our Web listing:

*H938  Juneberry

June eXtension Professional Development Opportunities


Ag Com Staff Win N.D. Professional Communicators Awards

*Ellen Crawford - first in external annual report; second in single news release; third in news reporting in a publication for general or specialized circulation
*Becky Koch - firsts in non-newspaper news photography, educational Web site development, public service video, manuals and handbooks, and audiovisual (PowerPoint); and honorable
mention in non-newspaper sports photography
*Koch and Crawford together - first for a public service campaign on which they and others collaborated

Let's Communicate

Past issues of Let's Communicate are at www.ag.ndsu.edu/agcomm/letscomm/letscomm.htm. If you have questions or comments, or would like to submit information or make a suggestion for Let's Communicate, please contact me.

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