Stutsman County Narrative

FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Design Your Succession Plan – Harstad, Rittenbach
In February, we offered this three-day program geared towards farm and ranch families who are looking to get started with the transition of the farm or ranch onto the next generation. Ten participants (five families) attended our pilot of this lesson. They were provided with useful information and materials to take home that will help them get started with the transition process and get all of their information organized for when they are ready to speak with professionals (lenders, financial advisors, attorneys, etc.).

CROP MANAGEMENT

Winter Ag Expo – Harstad, Rittenbach
Harstad helped to line up seminar speakers again for this year’s Winter Ag Expo. Some of the seminars included Extended Cattle Grazing with Cover Crops by Fara Brummer, NDSU Extension Livestock Specialist, Soybean Research Update by Greg Endres, NDSU Extension Area Agronomist, Hemp Production in North Dakota by Rachel Spilde from the ND Department of Ag and CRP Conservation by Judy Nohrenberg the Stutsman County FSA director. Rittenbach gave a seminar titled “Who Gets Grandma’s Yellow Pie Plate or Grandpa’s Gun” to talk about how to will non-titled property. Harstad also gave two seminars, one about weed resistance management and another one about common corn and soybean diseases.

In addition to seminars, Harstad organized the 4th annual Ag in the Classroom event. This year there were about 225 elementary students who went through the event. The students rotated through eight different booths to learn about agriculture and where their food comes from.

Ag and Energy Chamber of Commerce Committee – Harstad
I continue to serve on the Ag and Energy Chamber of Commerce committee. This quarter we hosted Ag Luncheon on March 15th at the Farmer’s Union conference room. Lee Briese, a Centrol Crop Consultant, was the keynote speaker and he talked about how saline areas affect a farmer’s bottom line.
Best of the Best Meeting – Harstad
This year I was asked to speak about weed resistance management with Greg Endres, NDSU Extension Area Agronomist, and Tom Peters, NDSU Extension Sugar-beet Agronomist at the Best of the Best meetings in both Grand Forks and Moorhead. Endres talked about weed identification and I talked about knowing and rotating your herbicide sites-of-action. Peters had a great display of weeds showing the different effect of glyphosate, glufosinate, 2,4-D and dicamba on weeds. The display illustrated although 2,4-D and dicamba tolerant soybeans will be a good tool to help control difficult weeds in the future, we still will need to be implementing weed resistance management strategies with these new technologies. We spoke to about 550 producers between the Grand Forks and Moorhead meeting locations. Several producers came up to me after our talk to ask questions which is an indication that producers are concerned about weed resistance management.

Weed Resistance Management In-Service – Harstad
Greg Endres, NDSU Extension Agronomist, organized a weed resistance management in-service training for Extension staff and about 25 people attended. I was asked to speak about herbicide sites-of-action. I talked about the importance of knowing and rotating herbicide sites-of-action. We went through an interactive exercise using the NDSU Weed Control guide to show we are starting to run out of chemical options in certain weed control situations. I received positive feedback from the Extension agents who attended and some of them indicated that they thought my talk would be a good exercise to use during private pesticide training.

Private Pesticide Training – Harstad, Rittenbach, Gohner
This year we conducted two trainings at the Extension office and 47 people attended. Jeremiah Lien from the Department of Agriculture talked about rules and regulations, Christina Rittenbach talked about managing stress and Alicia Harstad talked about weed identification, herbicide resistance management and handling and applying pesticides safely. Shirley Gohner handled all the registrations and printed all the certification cards.

Stutsman County Crop and Livestock Improvement Board meeting – Harstad
The Stutsman County Crop and Livestock Improvement board met in February. Several business items were discussed including the county seed increase program, Outstanding County Agriculturists nomination, and re-organization of the board members.

Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) Certification and Board – Harstad
I am a Certified Crop Adviser and in order to keep the certification I need to complete 40 hours of continuing education every two years. This year I attended the Wild World of Weeds, Soil and Water Workshop and Advanced Crop Advisers Workshop to receive continuing education credits as well as to keep up to date on agronomic issues. I also serve on the ND CCA board as the secretary and am a member of the exam and continuing education committee.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

4-H Activities - Barnes
Activities that the kids can be involved with are year round. January was filled with livestock and Hippology judging practices. The judging season starts the last weekend in January and continues every week until March. One of our own, Victoria Christensen, competed at the Western National Roundup in the Illustrated Talk competition in early January. She had won at last year’s state equine event and placed 6th at nationals in a tough round of competitors. We hosted a Living Exhibits Learning Event in January to acquaint 4-Hers, leaders and parents about four events that are not widely known, but VERY helpful in life: Clothing Revue, Consumer Choices, Communication Arts and Project Expo. It was an informative morning and we had about 30 in attendance. The livestock judging team - coached by Jenny Vandehoven and Austin Dockter, started their season the last weekend in January with a trip to Rapid City to the Black Hills Stock Show where the senior team won! For almost every weekend after that, until the state meet on March 5th at the Winter Show, there was a competition.
As a team and individually, they did great! The Hippology team had almost the same schedule. Linda Levin led the team, and several times our senior members (only two) teamed up with another county and did very well at the meets. Individually, everyone did great and were all happy with their improvement over last year. The state event was on April 2 & 3 in Fargo, and our two senior quiz bowl members joined with two other counties (there needs to be four to make a team) and won! This qualifies them for the national event that will be in Denver, Colorado next January at the Western National Roundup. We also had our dog project members who will be working towards exhibiting in the obedience and showmanship classes at the fair have some practice (without dogs) sessions to learn the basics.

Our leaders’ council meeting and committee meetings were all held. A new set of by-laws was voted in to simplify and clarify what the county 4-H will follow.

Prepping for the fair has been consuming a lot of time. Sponsorship letters were sent out in early February and we have gotten such great support. I am very impressed with this community and the support they give our 4-Hers. The premium book was also reviewed and prepared. It will go to print the first part of April.

**Tech Savvy – Rittenbach**

I helped organize and present at the annual Tech Savvy event held on the University of Jamestown campus. This event is for middle school girls in and around the Jamestown area. Tech Savvy is designed to introduce STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) topics to girls by women who are in a STEM field for their career. Because STEM careers seem to have a primarily male population, the event aims to encourage girls to take an interest in those topics and also get an idea of the many different career opportunities that are available in those fields.

**North Dakota 4-H Ambassador Winter Retreat – Harstad**

I continue to serve as an adviser for the North Dakota 4-H Ambassadors. They held their winter retreat near Pisek, North Dakota in January. During retreats, Ambassadors conduct a business meeting, plan for upcoming events, complete a service learning project, receive leadership development training and of course have fun making new friends! They completed two different community service projects which included helping with repair projects at the Park River Bible Camp and helping at the Park River Good Samaritan nursing home by cleaning and spending time with the residents. After service learning, I led leadership development activities to teach the Ambassadors about communication, teamwork and setting goals.

**HUMAN DEVELOPMENT & FAMILY SCIENCE**

**Basic Beginnings – Rittenbach**

This is a parenting curriculum I began with a small group of teen mothers at the high school. With this curriculum, I am teaching the mothers about the basics of parenting and how they can do the best for the children during this period of their lives.

**NUTRITION, FOOD SAFETY & HEALTH**

**Stutsman Co. Social Services - Morehouse**

Social Services continues to be a strong partner and I work with individuals one-on-one on various topics on nutrition, food safety and food purchasing. The recent SNAP statistics reported in Stutsman County there are 875 households participating in the SNAP program.

**Displays – Morehouse**

Various displays are being set up monthly at the following agencies: Social Services and Central Valley Health District. These sites are those that EPNEP/ FNP target-audience frequent and it is a way to provide clientele with educational resources on nutrition, food safety and food purchasing.
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program – Morehouse
This past quarter I have been working very closely with the Jamestown School food service director, school staff, students and parents on providing the nutrition education piece which is critical to the program’s success. I provide the parent connection materials for the FFVP website, including the monthly Food Wise newsletter.

Nourishing Boomers and Beyond – Rittenbach
During the first quarter of the year, I continued with the monthly Nourishing Boomers and Beyond lessons: Nourish Your Muscles, Nourish Your Heart, and Finding the Truth about Accurate Health and Nutrition Information. In addition to monthly classes, I use Facebook, Pinterest and the newspaper to promote the classes and the information. There are also monthly newsletters that go out to those signed up for them. Each month there are new people interested in the program series.

Manage Stress for Better Health – Rittenbach
This lesson is a part of the Nourishing Boomers and Beyond program, but I found it fitting to use it in other settings as well. The local TOPS group invited me to speak at one of their meetings on this topic. I also presented this lesson during the pesticide recertification trainings held at our office. Stress is something everyone can experience, and it can become overwhelming at times. These audiences were given tools and resources to help them identify their stressors and work towards managing them.

Teens Serving Food Safely – Rittenbach
This quarter I began this five-week curriculum with two high school child care classes at the Career and Technology Center. As a part of this class, students help to run a preschool at the CTC, and they are responsible for providing food to the preschoolers. The lessons I am teaching are about foodborne illness and the steps they can take to prevent harmful microorganisms from growing and spreading.

Schools – Morehouse
This past quarter I have been in various schools in Stutsman County providing nutrition education in classrooms that have 50% or greater eligible free/reduced meal counts. I provided 57 teaching sessions in four public school systems including Jamestown Public Schools (Lincoln, Roosevelt and Washington) and Medina School.

Cooking 101 with Medina Sixth Graders – Morehouse
Cooking 101 is a program that provides grocery shopping, menu planning, and basic cooking lessons with hands-on, applicable activities to practice the new knowledge. Since many of the rural schools do not have FACS programs for their students, this series is an opportunity for those students to have an introduction to learning these life skills. Students were able to learn cooking skills by bringing a portable kitchen into the classroom.

Cooking 101, series teacher’s response: “Lu showed the kids some healthy recipes that they can easily do at home. Many of these kids are responsible for their own meal! I learned how to make quesadillas, how to clean and cut peppers, and how to cut onions without crying! I loved this class!”

Go Wild with Fruits & Veggies – Morehouse
I had the opportunity to present the Go Wild program this year to third graders at Washington School. During the five weekly lessons, students learned facts about nutrition, food safety and the importance of physical activity.

Student responses:

• We learned about new fruits and vegetables.
• I learned about new ways to keep healthy.
• I liked that I learned that you shouldn’t eat pizza that was left out all night.

Exploring MyPlate with Food, Fun and Reading – Morehouse
I had the opportunity to present the Exploring MyPlate program to kindergarten and first grade. During the four or five-week lessons, students learned about the different food groups on MyPlate, why we eat foods to keep healthy, and about the importance of physical activity. They tasted some simple snacks that they can make.
This year I’ve incorporated the Parents LEAD Organization conversation starter cards and teach the students how to use these cards during family mealtimes.

Parent’s response:
My daughter was so excited to bring home the conversation starter cards. She insisted that they need to be on the table during mealtime and before we begin to eat we pull a card. Then each member of the family responds to the card and we discuss this during our meals. Thank you for providing a resource that has helped our family to have discussions. We had many meals before where we would eat in silence and complete the meal within ten minutes. Now we are taking time to talk with each other, enjoying our meal and the foods we are eating and sharing. I am also learning things about my children that I never knew.

Banking on Strong Bones – Morehouse
Banking on Strong Bones five-week series is designed to increase knowledge of nutrition and fitness topics, with an emphasis on maintaining bone health. Research has shown that children, especially teenagers, are falling short of their calcium needs, putting this generation at risk for osteoporosis later in life.

Teacher’s response:
“My students liked the exciting activities in this program and the lure of Molly Moo Mart! I enjoyed the recipes, some were pretty wacky – like peanut butter milk. When asked about changes, I think it is a pretty well-oiled machine – no changes!”

On the Move Junior – Morehouse
On the Move – Junior is a five-lesson series designed to increase student knowledge of dairy foods, fruits, vegetables, whole grains and proteins through story books and activities. As a result of this curriculum, the teachers noticed students making healthier eating choices at lunch, eating more fruits and vegetables at lunch, bringing healthier snacks, asking questions about food, and trying new foods.

Teacher’s response:
"They enjoyed the lessons, but their favorite part was the healthy snacks. They keep saying 'Lu makes the best healthy snacks!' Thanks for everything!"

Legacy Center/Senior Citizens and Extension Office – Morehouse
Even though my focus this quarter has been on working with schools, I was still able to provide seven teaching sessions for the adult audiences. The teaching sessions this past quarter included the topics Explore the World of Snacks, Hot Tips about Food Storage, Grocery Shopping Made Easy, Exploring My-Plate series, and Nutrition Facts Label.

HORTICULTURE AND FORESTRY

Kids, Compost, Crops and Consumption Project – Harstad
The Kids, Compost, Crops and Consumption project is a collaboration between Mary Berg, Extension Livestock Environmental Management specialist, Nikki Johnson, Extension Community Health and Nutrition Specialist, Todd Weinmann, Cass County Horticulture Extension Agent, Kelcey Hoffman, Cass County Agriculture Extension Agent and me. Our project focuses on teaching elementary students about the food cycle so they can better understand where their food comes from and how to garden. The goal is to hopefully increase their vegetable consumption at home by giving them the tools they need to grow their own vegetables. Each of us have been taking turns going into the schools once a month during the school year to teach a lesson about the food cycle. At the end of the school year we plan to give the students their own small square foot garden to take home and grow vegetables in.

Our team applied to participate in the first ever eXtension i-Three Corps which is a professional development opportunity for Extension professionals from across the nation to learn how to better Extension programs that focus on issues, innovation and impact. We were selected to be one of the teams to participate this year and had the opportunity to attend the eXtension i-Three Corps conference in San Antonio, Texas in March.
During the conference we were able to connect with other Extension professionals that are working on similar projects, learn about project design and learn more about program evaluation.

We have been piloting this program in one school in Fargo this year. It is our plan to package the teaching material for this program so that Extension staff across North Dakota can use it.

**Open Pollination Presentation – Harstad**

The Jamestown Community Gardens, Stutsman County Master Gardeners, Alpha Opportunities and the Stutsman County Library teamed up to start the first seed library in North Dakota. I was asked to give a presentation about open pollinated plants for the seed library’s ribbon cutting at the Stutsman County library. Within ten days of an article being published in The Jamestown Sun about the seed library, 80 people had already stopped by to pick up seeds. The seed library is comprised of carry-over seed that was donated by seed companies. The seeds are packaged so each package includes enough of that seed for a ten foot row for that vegetable and anyone is welcome to take as many seed packets as they wish. The goal of the seed library is to increase gardening in the community.