

impact

University of Idaho Extension programs that are making a difference in Idaho.

UI Extension advances agriculture education profession

AT A GLANCE

Agricultural Extension professionals from across the country spent three days sharing research and outreach activities and developing professional skills during a conference in Sandpoint.

The Situation

Professional improvement is vital for agricultural educators as it directly enhances their ability to effectively support and inform farmers and agricultural stakeholders. Continuous education allows these professionals to stay updated with the latest research, technologies, and practices in agriculture, ensuring they can provide relevant and accurate information. Moreover, engaging in professional development fosters networking opportunities, enabling educators to exchange ideas and experiences with peers and experts in the field. This growth not only boosts their confidence and teaching ability but also contributes to improved agricultural practices, sustainability and productivity within the communities they serve.

Our Response

University of Idaho Extension faculty members of the Idaho Association of County Agricultural Agents hosted the Chad Reid Western Region National Association of County Agricultural Agents Annual Professional Improvement Conference from Sept. 23-25 at the University of Idaho Sandpoint Organic and Agriculture Center. The conference began with a welcome dinner and social event, followed by a full day of peer-reviewed oral and poster presentations. It concluded



Extension professionals share knowledge at the research poster presentation session at the conference. Photo by Jen Jensen.

with a day of field tours to local agriculture-focused businesses.

Program Outcomes

Forty-five participants from Idaho, Washington, Oregon, California, Arizona, Nevada, Montana, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma and Georgia participated in the conference. These attendees overwhelmingly reported learning knowledge and skills that will be important to their success as an agricultural educator. Twenty-three participants returned and respondents reported having ample opportunity to network and make professional connections. Participant respondents were unanimous in their satisfaction with the Sandpoint Organic and Agriculture Center with multiple large and small meeting rooms and an industrial

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quality kitchen as a suitable event venue for this conference.



Participants relax on the veranda at U of I's Sandpoint Organic and Agriculture Center after the day's presentations.

The Future

University of Idaho Extension is honored to have hosted agricultural educators from land-grant institutions across the country and having played a constructive role in their professional development. The success of this conference highlights what a treasure University of Idaho's Sandpoint Organic and Agriculture Center is as a retreat venue and conference destination.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

Special thanks must be given to Ben Wood with Wood's Hay and Grain, Patty and Fred Omodt with Shingle Mill Blueberry Farm & Area Forestry Educator, Chris Schnepf, for leading engaging tours of area agriculture for conference attendees.

Event Evaluation Summary

Will information learned be useful in your profession?	
Extremely Useful	9%
Very Useful	70%
Moderately Useful	18%
Slightly Useful	4%

Were you able to network and make connections with other agricultural educators?	
Definitely Yes	52%
Probably Yes	43%
Might or might not	4%

How satisfied were you with the event location and venue (1-4, 1=least satisfied, 4=most satisfied)?				
Level of Satisfaction	1	2	3	4
Location (Sandpoint)	0%	0%	9%	91%
Venue (Sandpoint Organic and Agriculture Center)	0%	0%	0%	100%

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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