Department of Agriculture

DISPATCH

NEWS FOR ALUMNI & FRIENDS

Fort Hays State University Volume 17 Fall 2002

From the Chair -- Dr. John Greathouse

One of the greatest assets to an academic program is a strong base of alumni and friends. These individuals provide a tremendous network of support through different avenues — as financial contributors, recruiters, cooperators, employers, and as advisory members, to name a few. The department is fortunate to have an array of alumni and friends to whom we are indebted for their contributions and service commitments. This support is critical as we strive to maintain progressive programs, and to develop initiatives that ultimately will enhance the educational experience of our students.

The department has focused on several opportunities, over the past few years, to broaden student subject-matter exposure in preparation for careers in a dynamic agricultural industry. Many of these initiatives have been quite successful in their application and actually have created additional opportunities for program advancement. Others have been filed for later consideration, or even discarded, because of obstacles encountered during various stages of development.

One of the department's initiatives, placed in the file several years ago, was a plan to reintroduce the livestock judging program and strengthen the animal evaluation curriculum. Persistent campaign efforts on the part of students, alumni, and other supporters, led to the successful creation of a departmental position that became a reality as of this year. Responsibilities of the position, Livestock Judging Team Coach/Agriculture Program Specialist, include instruction, recruiting, and program marketing, in addition to team coaching and the coordination of campus judging events. We are very fortunate to have filled the position with Kolby Burch, who brings extensive livestock judging experience to our program.

The department also has been working on a curricular review initiative that will be submitted for administrative approval this fall. One of the proposed changes is creation of a Beef Cattle Management option within the Agriculture major. This particular option has been designed to provide academic exposure and experience that will prepare students for a diversity of careers in the beef cattle industry. Additional curricular changes being proposed include a modification in core coursework requirements for both Agriculture and Agribusiness majors, and a combination of coursework from the existing crop science and soil science options to develop a single agronomy option. Coursework in the general agriculture option also has been revised.

The successes we are experiencing with our initiatives brings a contagious atmosphere of enthusiasm into our program. It is truly an exciting time for the department!

Ron (left) and Fern (center) Royer were recognized, this past spring, for their many years of support given to the department and University Farm operation. The Royers, owners of Ochs, Inc. (Otis) were presented an appreciation plaque by Dr. Greathouse during the annual John Deere Days event held at their dealership.

From the Dean -- Dr. Tony Fernandez

I have just returned from the FHSU/ Monsanto Field Day attended by farmers, industry representatives, government officials and Fort Hays State University faculty and staff. Senator Pat Roberts addressed the gathering and spoke about the current farm bill and other matters. Department of Agriculture faculty hosted the event and tours of our farm were fare for the day. I mention this event because it points to the strong connection our college enjoys with the agricultural community. It also is an event very representative of a department on the move. Allow me to briefly mention only two recent initiatives.

After several years of concerted effort, the Fort Hays State University agriculture program was given a significant boost when a new position was created for the livestock judging program. This could not have been accomplished without the help and support of the western Kansas agricultural community. Recently Mr. Kolby Burch filled this position and we expect great things from this Iowa State University graduate.

In addition, the Department of Agriculture continues to develop its undergraduate curriculum. Dr. Greathouse, the faculty, and industry personnel are working hard to develop a strong new curriculum in Beef Cattle Management. I expect their efforts will come to fruition shortly, placing Fort Hays State University as the Kansas leader in this important area of agricultural education.

In these and many other ways the Department of Agriculture continues to play a strong role in servicing the needs of Western Kansas agriculture.

The College of Health and Life Sciences is, therefore, justifiably proud of the Department, its leadership, faculty, and alumni.

Inside This Issue

Al Graf Scholarship 2
Classes in Action 2
Student Honors 3
Fall Field Day 4
Judging Team News 5
Student Club News 5-8
Department News 8

Scholarship established for long-time dairy employee at FHSU -- Stephanie Romberger, University Relations

A new scholarship created in the honor of a long-time Fort Hays State University dairy employee was awarded for the first time during the 2002-2003 academic year at FHSU.

The university dairy was established in 1914 when a herd of Ayrshire cows belonging to a nearby farmer was used to teach practical aspects of dairy and creamery practice. Through the years the dairy has become an occupation and home to many but none more so than Albert Graf.

Graf began his career at the Fort Hays State dairy as a part-time helper in 1939, and on April 1, 1942, he became the manager. More than 40 years later, on April 17, 1982, Graf retired but still remains involved today.

In honor of Graf's dedication and work the Kansas Dairy Commission and Dennis Metz, FHSU alumnus, teamed up to create the Albert Graf Scholarship.

"I appreciate the dedication of the scholarship and all of the help I received from the students, university and everyone. I couldn't have done it alone," said Graf.

The $1,000 scholarship was awarded to Shelly Howland. Howland is a sophomore from Atchison who is majoring in animal science.

The Graf Scholarship is awarded on the basis that recipients must be agriculture or agribusiness majors who are classified as sophomores, juniors or seniors. Students must be Kansas residents who have an interest and/or experience in the dairy field and who show academic promise.

"The Kansas Dairy Commission created the Al Graf Scholarship to remember the significant contributions that Al has made to the dairy industry, to the university and to the lives of many FHSU students," said Metz.

The Kansas Dairy Commission's goal behind creating the scholarship for FHSU was not only to recognize Graf but also to help any student who may be interested in the dairying industry, said Metz. The commission also wanted to recognize and show gratitude to FHSU for its years of service in supplying dairy cattle for the state fair, he said.

"We are quite pleased that Mr. Metz and the Kansas Dairy Commission have created this scholarship within the FHSU Department of Agriculture," said Dr. John Greathouse, chair of the department. "It will provide important financial support for students who have a strong interest in the Kansas dairy industry. Furthermore, it will serve as a continual reminder of the positive impact that Al Graf has had on the lives of so many students who have passed, and continue to pass, through this institution."

Dennis Metz, FHSU Alumni (left) and Al Graf (right) present Shelly Howland the Al Graf Scholarship.

Classes in Action -- Dr. Brent Spaulding

Departmental faculty have always stressed the importance of applying class material to actual on-farm situations in an effort to make the material more relevant for students. The University Farm is becoming an increasingly important player in this effort for all of the academic programs offered by the department, including the Agribusiness program.

Five years ago the department introduced AGRI 456 Agricultural Resource Valuation to provide students exposure to real estate appraisal and related principles and concepts. One of the requirements of the course is to have students work in teams to complete a mock appraisal of a parcel of agricultural land located on the University Farm (see pictures below). This parcel ultimately becomes the focal point for in-class discussions, and is used for several of the class assignments that make up the appraisal project.

The course is taught each spring with the assistance of Mr. Kirk Green, a professional rural appraiser with High Plains Farm Credit. Mr. Green has helped by identifying properties in the area, that have recently sold, to use as comparable sales for the appraisal project. He also has accompanied the class on the field trip where he helps the students understand the application of classroom principles as they relate to land valuation.

This course helps students learn the basic principles and procedures of real estate appraisal. It also allows them to develop a much better understanding and appreciation for the land and other related resources that are so important to agriculture in western Kansas.

Kirk Green (center) addresses the class about the appraisal project.

Agriculture Scholarships

Almost $95,000 in scholarships was awarded to freshmen, transfers, and continuing students majoring in agriculture.

Scholarship recipients were selected on the basis of academic achievement and interest in agriculture.

Congratulations to each scholarship recipient, and a special thank you to the scholarship sponsors.

Ark River Bend Chapter, Soil & Water Conservation Society (SWCS) Scholarship Fund
Carl Heincker - Wichita

Guy L. Bemis
Jennifer Poore - Woodston

Paul W. Boxberger
Lonnie Hornung - Dodge City

Farm Credit
Travis Latham - Winona

Herbert L. Fought Fund
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Derek Hermreck - Garnett
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Shawna Howell - Garden City
Mark Howerton - Lyons
Jonathan Joy - Cuba
Travis Latham - Winona
Adam Lay - Alta Vista
Tyler Lyle - Natoma
Denise Manhart - Grainfield
Brian Mans - Osborne
Melissa McGuire - Cheney
Brian Nickel - Hillsboro
Brent Olson - Oberlin
Jennifer Poore - Woodston
Monica Rein - Cimarron
Erin Rogers - Selden
Travis Ruppert - McCook, NE
Audrey Scheideman - Marion, IN
Jarett Schmeidler - Hays
Toby Snyder - Wilmore
Nathan Staab - Hays
Bryce Vance - Dighton
Timothy Weber - Garden Plain
Carissa Williams - Valley Center
Amorette Windholz - Victoria
Cayle Zweygardt - Wichita

Ruff Gentry Fund
Erin Herrmann - Ford

Albert Graff
Shelly Howland - Atchison

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Mark Howerton - Lyons

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Lonnie Hornung - Dodge City
Tim Weber - Garden Plain

Kansas Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers
Jarett Schmeidler - Hays

Kelly Lenz/WIBW/Machine Shed Restaurant
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Kathy Patton/Kansas Ag Network/ Machine Shed Restaurant
Denise Manhart - Grainfield

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Matthew Benoit - Damar
Rusty Klitzke - Ransom
Charles McCormick - Timken
Garett Rolland - Hays
Clayton Schmeidler - Hays

Servi-Tech
Brandon Baugh - Dodge City

Charles and Lura Stutzman Memorial
Bryce Vance - Dighton

Carl and Caroline Wheeler Book Award
Brian Nickel - Hillsboro

Dean's Honor Roll

To qualify for the Dean's Honor Roll at FHSU a student must complete 12 or more credit hours with a GPA for that academic term of at least 3.6.

Congratulations to the following agriculture and agribusiness majors for obtaining such an honor.

Fall 2001

Brandi Allen - Topeka
Rich Baskerville - Washington
Brian Bauck - Leoti
Johann Buck - Plainville
Elsa Burianek - Boulder, CO
Bryan Church - South Haven
Lance Gagelman - Great Bend
Jenny Hall - Alton
Ross Heiman - Baileyville
Carl Heincker - Wichita
Jonathan Joy - Cuba
Betsy Lewis - Stockton
Denise Manhart - Grainfield
Steven Marcy - Leoti
Adam Otte - Downs
Monica Rein - Cimarron
Ryan Schultz - St. Francis
Bradley Shank - Hanston
Bryce Vance - Dighton
Shelly Vandiver - Atchinson
Tim Weber - Garden Plain
Anne Weilert - Hays
Heather Wendell - Dickens
Amy Zweygardt - St. Francis

Spring 2002

Brandon Baugh - Dodge City
David Befort - Hays
Johann Buck - Plainville
Elsa Burianek - Boulder, CO
Kristi Darnall - Palco
Jackie Dupes - Salina
Erin Herrmann - Ford
Ross Heiman - Baileyville
Carl Heincker - Wichita
Jonathan Joy - Cuba
Travis Latham - Winona
Tyler Lyle - Natoma
Denise Manhart - Grainfield
Andy Maupin - North Platte, NE
Daniel Miller - Topeka
Cynthia Myers - McPherson
Monica Rein - Cimarron
Jarett Schmeidler - Hays
Tim Smith - North Platte, NE
Bryce Vance - Dighton
Anne Weilert - Hays
Heather Wendell - Dickens

Field day at Fort Hays State University Farm -- Dr. Bob Stephenson

On August 27, 2002 Fort Hays State University (FHSU) and Monsanto Chemical Company held a field day at the FHSU University Farm. In 2000, Monsanto and FHSU teamed up to form one of 41 Center's of Excellence across the US. The primary purpose of this partnership was to utilize large-scale research areas to demonstrate sound agronomic systems and to showcase the economics of conservation tillage. The goal isn't to select one cropping system as "the best" choice for this region, but rather to help find solutions to many challenges that face the ever changing science of crop production.

Overall, we are encouraged by the results and information that we have gained over the past years. We are starting to see significant benefits to crop diversity and direct seeding practices. Our goal is to demonstrate practical agronomic systems in a no-till environment that will fit into our region. We have been able to reach dryland yields of 85-90 bu/acre corn and 40-42 bu/acre soybeans in addition to our more traditional grain sorghum (85-95 bu/acre) and wheat (25-55 bu/acre) crops. The added soil moisture and organic matter has started to soften the soil and reduce evaporation, thus reducing water loss and providing more efficient soil moisture use by the crops. We will continue the study for at least another two years at the same location as we evaluate cropping scenarios.

The field day events included: 1) discussion on crop production systems (rotations and intensities) under no-till conditions, 2) residue management demonstration (rainfall simulator) - soil pit and soil health, 3) strip tillage, 4) corn rootworm damage assessment, 5) a demonstration on John Deere's guidance system and auto steer, and 6) an address by US Senator Pat Roberts. Case/IH and John Deere also had equipment on display.

The field day was a big success and plans are to continue our efforts in 2003, expanding the event and providing producers with additional information and field demonstrations.

Senator Pat Roberts (left) visits with Dr. Edward Hammond, FHSU President (right) and Dr. Tony Fernandez, Dean of the College of Health and Life Sciences during the field day.

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Ms. Stephanie Eckroat - Dairy Manager
Mr. Steve Englehardt - Crop/Shop Manager
Dr. Jean Gleichsner - Crops and Soils
Dr. John Greathouse - Animal Science
Mr. Mark Murphy - Swine/Sheep Manager
Dr. Neil Patrick - Agribusiness
Mr. Gary Rolland - Beef Manager
Ms. Melissa Rudell - Office Manager
Ms. Ann Ryan - University Farm Bookkeeper
Dr. Brent Spaulding - Agribusiness
Dr. Robert Stephenson - Crops and Soils
Mr. Harland Werth - Asst. Crop/Shop Manager

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Livestock Judging Team

The FHSU Livestock Judging Team is again active in the Agriculture Department with the recent addition of a new coach, Mr. Kolby Burch. Kolby grew up on a cattle and sheep ranch operation in central Wyoming. He attended Casper Junior College and went on to receive his B.S. in Agriculture Education from Iowa State University. While at Casper he was part of a National Champion Junior College Judging Team, and was a Reserve National Champion Team member at Iowa State. Individually Burch won both Denver and Louisville at the senior college level.

Coach Burch has been recruiting students to build a new and competitive team. They have been working out this fall and competing in several practice contests. Team members assisted with taking reasons at the department's Junior College Livestock Judging Contest this fall that included schools from KS, CO, OK, NE and WY. They also assisted with the Northwest FFA Dairy Judging Contest sponsored by the Block & Bridle Club and will also put on the District Livestock Contest.

This spring the team plans to attend the Express Ranches Contest in Yukon, OK; the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Mock Contest; the Denver National Western; the Sioux Empire Farm Show in Sioux Falls, SD; the Dixie National Stock Show in Jackson, MS; and the Houston Stock Show.

2002-2003 Livestock Judging Team — Bottom (L to R): Lacy Davis (Haswell, CO); Eric Betschart (Ulysses); and Tressie Bryant (Penokee). **Top (L to R):** Levi Mitzner (Larned); Brandon Gibson (Hiawatha); Jerod Horchen (Ransom); Bo Ringer (Concordia); and Mr. Kolby Burch, Coach.

Crops Judging Team

This past year the Fort Hays State University Crops Judging Team hosted the American Society of Agronomy (ASA) Regional Crops Contest. Teams from CO, OK and KS competed in the event. Team members included Brooks Brenn (Hays), Carl (Bryce) Klitzke (Ransom), and Erin Herrmann (Ford). In the spring these individuals competed in the Kansas Association of Colleges & Teachers of Agriculture (KACTA) Contest at Hutchinson, KS.

In 2002-2003 there was one returning member (Bryce) along with new members: Cody Graham (Hays) and Adam Jesse (Benkelman). This fall the team competed in the ASA Regional Crops Judging Contest at Manhattan, KS and the ASA National Crops Judging Contest in Kansas City, KS. The Hays High School FFA Crops Judging Team spent time working with the team in preparation for their national crops contest.

The team has been helped by donations from Collingwood Grain Inc. (Hutchinson) and Crop Quest Inc. (Dodge City), as well as Endowment donations from former students and past members.

Agronomy Club

The FHSU Agronomy Club is a newly recognized club on campus (fall 2001). The club is for students majoring, or having an interest, in crops, soils and/or other related disciplines.

The club attended the American Society of Agronomy (ASA) meetings October 2001 in Charlotte, NC. They joined forces with K-State and placed second in the ASA Quiz Bowl Competition. They toured cotton and tobacco production facilities in the area and made new acquaintances.

The club helped with the ASA Crops Judging Contest in the fall, and sponsored two nights of speakers in the spring (career and job opportunity presentations by: Collingwood Grain Inc., Servi-Tech Inc., Seamen Crop Consulting, K-State Research Center, and John Deere Inc.).

In March club members went to Colorado State University for the Regional ASA meetings, and helped locally with the ProjectSERV AmeriCorps National Youth Service Day.

2002-2003 Agronomy Club Officers — Bottom (L to R): Brian Nickel (Hillsboro), Secretary; and Brandon Baugh (Dodge City), President. **Top (L to R):** Matt Deyle (Imperial, NE), Public Relations Director; Darin Gronewoller (Beloit), Vice-President; Dr. Bob Stephenson, Advisor; and Eric Weeks (Brownell), Treasurer.