The Western SARE State Professional Development Coordinators were hosted by Utah state PDP coordinator, Bob Newhall, and the rest of the Western SARE staff at Utah State University in Logan, Utah June 28th through the 30th.

The meeting began with a welcome reception on Monday evening at 7:00 p.m. Attendees were given their name tags and information packets for Tuesday’s tour and Wednesday’s business meeting.

Tuesday June 29th was the Tour Day. Busses left promptly at 8:45 a.m. Tour stops included:

- BEHAVE demonstration and discussion with Beth Burritt Outreach Director at the USU Agricultural Experiment Station.
- Green Canyon Soil Pits demonstration and discussion with Janis Boettinger and John Lawley.
- USU Organic Student Farm discussion and tour led by Jennifer Reeve.
- USU Agricultural Experiment Station Evans Farm – USDA-ARS-FRRL discussion and tour led by Blair Waldron.
- First Frost Farm discussion and tour led by Bill and Penny Trinca.
- Predator Research Station tour and discussion led by Eric Gese.

The tour concluded late Tuesday afternoon and, followed by a brief relaxation period, the group was hosted at dinner by the Western SARE host institution.

The formal business meeting began promptly at 8:15 a.m. on Wednesday the 30th. Introductions were made by all those present including:

- Jim Freeburn, WSARE PDP Coordinator
- Al Kurki, WSARE PDP Assistant Coordinator
- Bob Newhall, Utah
- Mike Smith, Wyoming
- Ted Radovich, Hawai’i
- Nick Andrews, Oregon
- Rob Hedberg, National SARE Coordinator
- Michele Hebert, Alaska
- Cinda Williams, Idaho
- Stephanie Walker, New Mexico
- Don Vargo, American Samoa
- Bonnie Bobb, WSARE Administrative Council
- Jackson Phillip, Micronesia
- Stacie Clary, WSARE Communications Specialist
- Larry Cundall, WSARE Administrative Council
- Dennis Lamm, Colorado
- Allan Sabaldica, Northern Marianas Islands
- Brian Tuck, Oregon
- Rick Gibson, Arizona
- Andy Clark, National SARE Outreach Office
- John Burton, Nevada
- Phil Rasmussen, WSARE Coordinator
- Kelly Greenwald, WSARE PDP Administrative Assistant

Special Guests were:

- Dr. Noelle Cockett, USU Dean of the College of Agriculture
- Dr. Teryl Roper, USU Department Head Plant, Soils and Climate Department
- Dr. Chuck Carpenter, USU Department Head Nutrition, Dietetics and Food Sciences Department
The group was given a wonderful welcome, including impressive insight into agriculture and Western SARE, by Dr. Cockett. Dr. Roper welcomed the coordinators to Utah and gave a brief construction update on the new USU College of Agriculture building. Dr. Carpenter indicated his interest in Western SARE and considered his attendance to be a learning opportunity.

Dr. Phil Rasmussen gave the Western Regional SARE report. Please see following insert.
Phil also updated the group on the Grantsmanship Workshop to be held at Washington State University in Pullman, Washington on September 8, 2010. There are plans being made for a WSARE systems research team building and project planning workshop to be held the following day on September 9th. Details are still being finalized. Western SARE will be sponsoring ~ 100 attendees.
Rob Hedberg, National SARE Director, updated the group on the activities at the National SARE office in Washington, D.C.

Rob also mentioned that the USDA is developing a new strategic plan and one of their top issues is Sustaining Rural Communities.

Ted Radovich gave a short state report from his activities in Hawai‘i. Like many other states they are experiencing many personnel changes, driven mostly by funding issues. He and his colleagues are focusing their efforts to address producer concerns. One of their major efforts this year was the Integrated Crop and Livestock Management Workshop held in June.
They had over 55 participants with many of those being NRCS representatives. Hawai’i also devotes a large effort towards internet and web based communication. Please feel free to check out their web site at: www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/sustainag. The sustainable ag newsletter is Hanai’Ai. Thanks Ted, for all of the great effort on behalf of WSARE!

**Al Kurki** presented results of the Extension Educator Survey:

*Initial summary of results of 2009-2010 Western region extension educator survey, June 25, 2010*

**Al Kurki, Western SARE PDP**

Extension educators’ *top priorities for more* information were:

- Ecologically-based weed, insect and disease management,
- Water use efficiency in irrigation
- Energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies for farms and ranches,
- Value-added processing
- Alternative marketing approaches.

*What agents know about sustainable ag practices, systems and policies* has changed very little in the past five years with three exceptions -- crop or livestock systems planning, community-based food systems, and farm or ranch land protection. All these categories increased by 5% or more. Knowledge across most categories trended upwards.

The same tends to hold true with *educational programming* – there was virtually no change in number of educators who at least did some sustainable ag programming with farmers or ranchers – 84%. The big differences were substantial increases in educational programming for sustainable and organic farming groups, and minority and underserved farmers and ranchers up 12% and 14%, respectively.

While the breadth of programming by agents did not substantially increase, the depth of it certainly did. More agents conducted six or more programs in sustainable ag per year, and more agents helped producers with developing farm-ranch specific sustainable ag practices or systems.

*Over 60% of extension educators report that they observed improvements in soil quality on farms and ranches that used sustainable agriculture practices.* Over half stated they observed increased operational efficiencies and improved quality of life for farmers and ranchers using sustainable practices.

*The number of agents reporting a high level of farmer or rancher interest in sustainable agriculture increased by 7% to one in five.* Half of all agents reported a high level of interest on their part, a 7% increase as well.

*Seven of 10 extension agents have read a SARE publication.* Four of 10 never have been to www.sare.org; two thirds of those who have used that site find the information source on sustainable ag practices the most useful, followed by grant application information. SARE is not their top source for sustainable ag information.

**Questions for state PDP Coordinators for a short discussion in Logan:**

*Are there any state level factors that you think might affect levels of knowledge and action on the part of extension educators -- one way or the other -- such as turnover in staff, budget cuts, flat SARE funding, etc.?*

*Are you willing to answer by e-mail other questions that may emerge as we more closely examine the regional extension survey data?*

In response to Al’s discussion question regarding the state level factors affecting the knowledge and action of the extension educators, the group had the following feedback:

- Do they feel like what they are already doing is “sustainable agriculture”?
- There has been a lot of turnover since the previous survey resulting in a high number of new agents.
- Who were the agents that took the survey? Did crops specialists answer the livestock questions?
• Can the post subregionals and survey lead to targeted grants with state coordinators?
  o Extension agent concerns don’t match subregional concerns.
• Sustainable agriculture is science and thinking. We have been working through lots of resistance over the years.
• Are we pushing them out of their comfort zones now?
• Getting agents to attend trainings is extremely hard — even if they say they need training.
• Should the in-service training be made mandatory?

In response to the question regarding willingness to answer more questions, the state coordinators are willing to help Al answer more questions that may emerge as he examines the survey data.

Al also spoke briefly regarding the National SARE on-line reporting system. Hopefully we will be able to review this system before the state coordinators are asked to submit reports via the system.

**Al Kurki and Phil Rasmussen** spoke about the subregional results and priorities. Phil’s handout is pasted below.
Western SARE "Ship" Charts New Directions — V. Philip Rasmussen, Regional Coordinator

My previous reports often referred to the Western SARE Subregional Conferences (listening sessions) held across the vast Western Region over the last three years. Members of Western SARE's board of directors (the administrative council) visited every major subregion in the far reaches of the West for conferences in Tumon, Guam; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Cheyenne, Wyoming; Spokane, Washington; Kona, Hawaii; Visalia, California; and Fairbanks, Alaska. Representatives from every state and territory in the region attended, sending clear signals to Western SARE:

1. Fund more whole-systems (life-cycle analysis) projects.
2. Find a way to fund longer-term projects (longer than 5 years).
3. Emphasize projects related to local foods, soil quality, on-farm energy efficiency/sufficiency and water efficiency and respond to the variability of climate.
4. Find ways to better address the new generation of young farmers and ranchers (through K-12, 4-H, and other programs).
5. Continue to encourage more and better farmer and rancher participation in its grants, and enhance the Producer and Professional Partnerships grants programs.
6. Enhance outreach programs (as illustrated by the subregional conferences) and possibly partner with local organizations to increase the overall knowledge of SARE in both underserved audiences and Western agriculture as a whole.

In the first six months...

Western SARE has taken steps to immediately address site-specific needs. Approximately $50,000 has been awarded, via competitive grants, in every subregion, reinforcing the Administrative Council's support of each major subregion by funding competitive grants that addresses their unique needs. These projects are:

**Guam**

Manu Dugulib, GU, *Replacing Feed Imports with Local Feed Resources in the Western Pacific* - $47,207 - Tropical Agriculture

**Albuquerque**

Dennis Lamm, CO, *Farm to Fork: Connecting Our Youth with Sustainable Agriculture* - $48,988 - Youth Education

**Hawaii**

Glenn Teves, HI, *Sustaining Molokai's Native Hawaiian Family Farms* - $47,270 - Education

**Cheyenne**


**Spokane**

Mnd Powell, OR, *Expanding Small-Scale Grain Production in Southwestern Oregon*, $24,040 - Education and Agronomy

**Visalia**
Western SARE’s immediate priority is to address the concerns that arose from the various subregional conferences. We listened and now we have to act on the stakeholders’ feedback. Since the region is so large and diverse, it will take some serious and creative thinking to approach this in an appropriate manner. State coordinator responses to this were:

- CFP’s may include extra points for addressing subregional priorities. (R&E CFP already includes this)
- NV, CO, and CA have already begun to obtain funding for mobile processing units.
- USDA “Know Your Farmer” program is working on the small scale processing initiative.
- Coordinators feel that our grant program really needs to focus on the subregional priorities.
- Applicants and reviewers need to be made aware of the unique needs of the regions.
- Michele Hebert suggested a teleconference among subregional coordinators to discuss how to go forward.

At 12:15 p.m. the group broke for lunch.
The coordinators reconvened at 1:00 p.m. Bob Newhall showed a brief video of an extension TV clip, produced with assistance from WSARE, regarding backyard gardening tips. It was a quality production and a great way to reach interested individuals in a very rural county.

State coordinators were very interested in the questions on the evaluation form that Bob used for the tour on Tuesday. Bob informed the group that these are the questions that NSARE wants to have answered after training events. The evaluation form is below.

2010-2011 Utah Extension - Western SARE/IPM Funded Activity:

Your Name: ______________________

Your Primary Role: Circle only one
Extension  Farmer  Researcher  State/Federal Agency  Other

Overall the Activity was:
Excellent  Good  Fair  Poor

The Activity

Improved my awareness of the topics covered  Yes  No  NA
Gave me new knowledge  Yes  No  NA
Assisted me in gaining new skills  Yes  No  NA
Modified my opinions and/or attitudes  Yes  No  NA
Will improve advice I give to others  Yes  No  NA

In the next year I am likely to use some aspect of this activity

In my farm/ranch/home operation  Yes  No  NA
In an educational program that I will plan or participate in  Yes  No  NA
As a resource I will make available to producers  Yes  No  NA
As a professional development tool for my peers  Yes  No  NA

Please describe how you will use some aspect of this activity for an educational purpose:

How many people do you estimate you will share some aspect of this activity with in the next 12 months? ______
Andy Clark from the SARE National Outreach Office (NOO) gave a report and led a discussion on his office’s activities. The SARE Outreach Office operates out of the University of Maryland with five employees. Sean McGovern works out of Ohio. Their office is guided by a steering committee which is comprised of approximately three people from each region with some “at large” members.

His questions to the group were: “What are the PDP Coordinators’ information needs that the SARE Outreach Office can address? How can they help you do your job better?” Andy gave each coordinator a “catalog” of all of the Outreach Office print publications. His office aims to get the results of SARE grants into the “field”, with their primary audience being ag educators and ag professionals.

The National Outreach Office has four primary activities:
- Conference support.
- Adding value to products of SARE grants.
- Aiming to get SARE into mainstream media. I.e. BEEF, Farm Journal magazines.
- Maintaining print publications.

What can the NOO develop to help the state coordinators? Coordinator responses were:
- Write feature stories on successful grants and put the information through local media channels. (Should this be part of Stacie Clary’s duties?)
- Develop more beginning farmer/rancher information (esp. IPM)
- Offer a discount for buying a “library” of all NOO publications.
- Offer assistance in getting the “library” into all county NRCS and extension offices.
- Make all publications available on CD.
- What are the current NOO efforts?
  - Ecological weed management
  - Conservation tillage in the SE
- Work on publications as a result of the subregionals.
- What is going on with fact sheets?
  - “Ag Innovations” – The NOO is still working on this. It is a difficult process that involves a lot of work. Getting information from the field is a big problem.
  - Maybe Andy could let state coordinators know if the holdup involves certain people/projects and the coordinators can urge cooperation.
- Can the NOO target, specifically, fact sheets that would be applicable to the islands?
  - Posters for schools.
- General communication posters for extension offices
  - “Elements of Sustainable Agriculture” poster.
- Sustainable agriculture curriculum for high school would be nice.
- Other priority areas:
  - Irrigation
  - Plant pathology
- Put a form on the website for submission of publication ideas.
- The state coordinators also asked about the on-line courses. Number two is up on the web. It involves direct marketing.

Andy urged all of the state coordinators to complete the two on-line surveys regarding the communications office products. Links are:
- [http://www.sare.org/about/newproductidea.htm](http://www.sare.org/about/newproductidea.htm)

Stacie Clary introduced herself as the new WSARE Communications Specialist. She gave the coordinators a brief description of her professional background.

Stacie’s priorities are identifying our audience helping the state coordinators. State coordinator responses were:
- Have a need for short, on-going bites of information that can be used regularly.
- Help with individual state SARE websites.
- In addition to fact sheets, develop U tube and Facebook posts.
• Build a requirement into the CFP’s for a required, formatted final “product” that can be used for publication.
• Periodic emails to state coordinators to let them know what all is available on-line.
• Feature stories to western media as mentioned in discussion with Andy Clark.

How many coordinators would like to have access to WSARE region peer reviewed information? All of the state coordinators were in favor of this. It was noted that the Western Rural Development Center may be able to help with something like this. It was also noted that “peer refereed” would be better than “peer reviewed”.

Jim Freeburn queried the group about a possible targeted grant for subregional professional development. With the money that may come into the program we could possibly fund subregional PDP training using the priority areas indicated by the subregional results or extension educator survey. Coordinator feedback:
• Could 3 or 4 states work together for subregional training?
• Are the state coordinators too busy to “apply for a grant”?
• “Incremental funds” for states working together to provide training.
• Could state coordinators just put the money into their state budgets?
• Need to take care that there is something for everyone at all times.
• It cannot be strategic planning, it has to be training.

Jim handed out meeting evaluation forms, and the group began a discussion on next year’s meeting location. A motion was made to have Idaho host in 2011 and New Mexico host in 2012. This was approved by Cinda and Stephanie. First choice of dates was July 11 – 15, 2011 in Boise, Idaho. Second choice of dates was August 1 – 5, 2011. The PDP office will work with Cinda and keep the state coordinators informed when dates are confirmed.

Included in the meeting packet was the 2010-2011 Rotating Review Schedule. Please look for your name, check your schedules and if there are any immediate conflicts notify Jim Freeburn or Bob Newhall as soon as possible.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.