

2022 Annual Conference Breakout Session Descriptions

Tuesday, October 17, 2022

Breakout Session # 1 – Choose One

Whistle While You Work

Presenter: Roubie Younkin

Extension professionals face career challenges that drain energy and make their mission hard. This workshop will focus on identifying individual “kryptonite,” celebrating strengths, and using this information to lighten the load while following a pathway to success.

Best Practices for Engaging with Media

Presenters: John Hawley and Mat Walter

Attendees will review MSU and Extension procedures and recommendations for engaging with media. Topics discussed during this presentation include responding to external media requests, steps for publishing statewide news via the MSU News Service, Extension's unique role(s) in media, and tips for working with media. Presenters will provide attendees with opportunities to practice engaging with media in mock scenarios.

A plan to address housing challenges through partnerships

Presenters: Tara Mastel and NeighborWorks Montana

NeighborWorks Montana and Tara Mastel will share a program plan and resources for how you can address housing challenges in your community. NeighborWorks Montana has technical expertise and existing housing programs but needs help connecting with communities around the state. MSU Extension has local connections and the ability to bring community members together, but we are not experts in housing. The presenters will outline how agents can collaborate with NeighborWorks to address housing challenges negatively impacting communities across the state.

Montana Drought and Climate Project Results: Making Extreme Weather Information More Useful for Montana Farmers and Ranchers

Presenters: Jeff Mosley and Montana Climate Office

Researchers with the Montana Drought and Climate Project will share what they learned from farmers and ranchers across the state, including drought and extreme weather impacts, the practices farmers and ranchers use to minimize harm from extreme weather, and what farmers and ranchers shared about how to make climate information more useful. The Montana Drought and Climate Project is a USDA-funded project with the Montana Climate Office, focused on improving the usefulness of climate information for Montana farmers and ranchers. This will be an interactive session with a short presentation on findings from focus groups, interviews, and a survey with 900 Montana producers, followed by a discussion.

Educating Agricultural Professionals About Sustainable Agritourism Options and The Montana Agritourism Fellowship Program

Presenters: Kim Woodring & Shannon Arnold

Kim Woodring will present her master's degree presentation on Educating Agricultural Professionals About Sustainable Agritourism Options. Kim hosted a webinar workshop series on Zoom with agritourism professionals directed to farmers and ranchers looking to get started in the agritourism industry. After each webinar, she surveyed participants to see how their awareness of agritourism changed. In conjunction with the agritourism webinar series, Kim and Dr. Shannon Arnold applied for a Western SARE grant to create an agritourism fellowship program for the state of Montana. We will be selecting fellows to visit local agritourism businesses and learn how to get started in the industry and network with current industry members.

Breakout Session # 2 – Choose One

So you are a new Montanan: Do you know who gets your property if you die?

Presenter: Marsha Goetting

If you are a new arrival you may not know how Montana law impacts who receives your property when you die. Even if you have been a Montanan for years, you may not know what tools the legislature has provided so you can avoid the cost of probate and leave more financial resources to your heirs. If you have kids, do you have a written will to nominate a guardian or conservator? This session is for agents and specialists who need to realize, estate planning is for every Montanan.

Reach People with Engaging Messaging and Eye Catching Graphics

Presenters: Erika Malo/Ann Maroso

This session will focus on graphic design, messaging, and social media. Participants will learn simple graphic design best practices and how to use graphics and corresponding messaging to engage with audiences. Walk away with straightforward steps to market your next program and create awareness of your office.

Making Time for Leadership - A Panel Discussion with Agents facilitating Big Sky, Big Leadership

Presenters: Katie Weaver, Mandie Reed, Julie Riley, Allison Kosto, Mary Rumph

Incorporating leadership programming into already very full schedules is a challenge. Participants will hear why the presenters launched a leadership program, what they are doing, how it's going, and the impacts they are starting to see. Big Sky, Big Leadership is MSU EXTENSION's framework for community-based leadership. It is designed so there is a high degree of flexibility and local input. Each program looks different, as each one is developed locally to meet to local needs.

Identifying and Resolving Common Abiotic Issues in Landscape Plants

Presenter: Abi Saeed

This presentation will focus on diagnosing common abiotic issues that occur in landscape plants in Montana, how to identify them, and steps to resolve them. It will be geared towards agents with Ag, Hort, and Natural Resources responsibilities, and will include information on solutions, common recommendations, next steps for the identification process, and how to advise clients and community members regarding common issues. Participants will receive handouts and a component of the presentation includes reviewing photo examples of actual cases from Montana, and a short hands-on exercise to test participants' skills in differentiating between biotic and abiotic issues.

Time on Task: Learn a variety of task and time management techniques and pick which will be tried and true for you!

Presenters: Katrin Finch, Jenn Swanson, and Jane Wolery

From pencil and paper to OneNote, the instructors will take you through the time management strategies and varieties of technology they use. Wolery will show a weekly planner method she has used for decades to capture tasks, appointments, and goals to get things done as well as a newer simple binder method she wishes she'd been using for years, but just started last year. Learn a few easy tech tips, including using phone and calendaring apps. As well, see Wolery's file management system in Outlook and a few tips that will help you when it's time to prepare reports.

Do you go to conferences or take training and wish you could consolidate all the slides, notes, and other materials in a way that is easy to reference? Swanson will take you through her methods of using OneNote, with ideas from the perspective of a new Extension professional and from that of a seasoned college professor. Follow along as she shows how she uses technology to stay organized. She will also share client tracking systems she has used.

Do you wish you had a way to keep track of clients in a quick, easy-to-use format? Finch will show you how she uses Qualtrics to manage clients and classes. She has structured a Qualtrics survey so that she can quickly enter data from individual client consultations, which is helpful for reference, reports, retention, promotion, and tenure. She will also demonstrate how she uses Qualtrics to complete class registrations with an autogenerated response email and calendar invite for participants. If the presenters manage their time, they will invite participants to quickly share one of their favorite time or task management techniques!

Breakout Session # 3 – Choose One

Grab and Go Extension

Presenters: Josie Evenson and Wendy Becker

This workshop will be a mix of categories. Have you ever been in the middle of multiple projects and then you are asked to do a lesson, workshop, or give a talk? In this workshop, we will provide a variety of grab-n-go materials that will help if you are ever in that situation. Topics will be applicable to all agents and presenters will provide copies of our grab-n-go ideas!

Improve your Writing through Storytelling

Presenter: Sara Adlington

This session will be interactive to improve your writing and create a better story. Explore how to include context in reporting impacts and why it matters, as well as how to craft a better, complete short story about a program. Bring a draft of your writing to use during the session (reporting one impact or an upcoming program).

What Does Community Development work look like?

Presenter: Tara Mastel

What does community development work look like in other counties? How can you integrate community development work with existing Ag, 4-H, or FCS programming? How can you fit CD work into an already full plate? These questions and more will be discussed by CD associate specialists Katie Weaver and Tara Mastel and other agents doing CD work across the state.

Forage Nitrate Evaluation - Implementing New Technology for More Accurate Risk Measurement

Presenter: Mike Schuldt

The implementation of the water strip test that was developed in the 1980's in Georgia has improved our ability to evaluate Nitrate risk for growers at the county office. This method replaces the acid test that has been utilized for many years and only gives the answer of yes/no there is nitrate present. Through work completed by former MSU Extension Forage Specialist Emily Glunk, we learned that the acid test was not as reliable as the water strip test method. The water strip test method can provide a measure of risk analysis that the acid test was not able to do. The water strip test continues to provide a means to analyze nitrate risk, however, with advances in technology, we can do better. Work published in Crop Science (Vol. 44 Issue 1) in 2004 shows the results of researchers who looked at winter wheat forage grown in Oklahoma to evaluate quick test methods, comparing to results obtained through standard laboratory analysis. Methods evaluated included field test enzyme linked kits, handheld ion specific electrode meters and a test strip reflectance meter. This workshop will provide a review of the published research and provide information leading to the applicability of technologies at the county extension office level. We will also provide an overview of the findings of actual use of the Nitrate specific Horiba handheld meter during the 2022 growing season. Actual use of this technology will be demonstrated to the group. The goal of this workshop is to identify possible solutions for improving our ability and accuracy for evaluating forage nitrate risk at the county level.

Using Strategic Planning in the 4-H Program

Presenter: Allison Kosto

Do you feel like your 4-H program is stuck in a rut? Do you see major issues in your program but don't know where to start? Do you have differences of opinion on what your 4-H program should look like? If any of these scenarios sound familiar, then using strategic planning to set goals and priorities for your 4-H program may be a valuable tool. This session will share a strategic planning process used to drive and unify goals and priorities for 4-H in Broadwater County. Using a strategic planning process has been a valuable tool to create common goals in a growing 4-H program in Broadwater County and led to documentable outcomes and impacts. This session will showcase specific tools and techniques that can be replicated in counties across the state.

Breakout Session # 4 – Choose One

DEI In Depth Panel Discussion

Presenters: Jackie Rumph and Patrick Mangan

Jackie and Patrick will lead a basics of Safe Zone training and then host a panel discussion on a LGBTQIA+ topic. The Safe Zone Basics training will provide participants with an entry level discussion and correct language from which to engage in conversations about gender identity and sexual orientation in the LGBTQIA+ community. This training will be a shortened version of the full Safe Spaces training MSU and MSU EXTENSION offer to employees and community members.

Retention, Promotion, and Tenure - Overview for Agents

Presenters: Larry Brence and Carrie Ashe

This session is designed for agents who are or will soon be engaged in the promotion and tenure process. Material covered includes a discussion of the current role and scope documents, important dates and deadlines, and guidelines for preparing a successful dossier.

Understanding County Government and Extension's Role

Presenter: Dan Clark

Would you like to know more about county government, its structure, and Extension's role in meeting its purpose? Join us for an interactive session exploring county organizational structure, purpose, and partnerships with local MSU Extension field faculty. Social media hashtags: *#countyextension #countybudget #partnerships #meetinglocalneeds #addingvalue #countycommission #countyorgchart #departmenthead #betternotmissit*

Proximal and Remote Sensing Applications for Montana's Food-Water-Energy (FEW) Nexus

Presenters: Gaurav Jha and Dr. Shirin Ghatrehsamani

The session will begin with a brief interactive discussion on site-specific agriculture. We will use proximal, rapid, and in-situ sensors for hands on activity over soil and plant matrix. This will emphasize an interpretation of big data sets that every farm generates. We will briefly talk about Uncrewed Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and satellite imagery to collect multispectral and thermal images. The concluding 30 minutes will focus on establishing a knowledge graph and areas of need the precision agriculture team can focus on.

Putting Positive Youth Development and the Thriving Model into Practice

Presenters: Todd Kesner, Allyssa Peak, Kellie Kahtani

The theories of Positive Youth Development are wrapped into the research conducted to create the 4-H Thriving Model. While educational theory is important for youth development professionals to know and understand, we often struggle with practical implementation in our programs. In this workshop, we will work to make the jump from theory to application by identifying simple and effective methods and activities that put youth on a thriving trajectory. Together we will build a plan we can take back home to our 4-H council, clubs, projects, committees, and other 4-H settings that volunteers can readily adopt for impactful programming.



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