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## **EXTENSION UPDATE**

May - June 2011

### **ADMINISTRATION**

The first internal search for an Extension Southern Regional Director and a Western Regional Director has been concluded. Bill Nobles (formerly Archuleta County Extension Director) has accepted the position of Extension Southern Regional Director effective July 1, 2011. The search for a Western Regional Director was not successful. A second internal search was initiated for a Western Regional Director with a deadline for application materials on July 14.

Dan Fernandez, Dolores County Extension Director, retired from his position effective July 1, 2011. Interviews to fill his position were conducted on June 27 and 28. Dan and Tom gave C.J. Mucklow, Interim Western Regional Director, a tour of the Research and Demonstration Orchard at the Southwestern Colorado Research Center (Ag Experiment Station) in Yellow Jacket following the interviews in Dove Creek on June 28. Tom will be assuming leadership of the Orchard Project following Dan's retirement.

Lou Swanson, Vice President for Engagement and Director of Extension at CSU, gave an update at the Western Regional meeting. He presented that CSU Extension will tentatively face a 5% budget cut for FY2012 (beginning July 1, 2011) based on current assessments.

### **COMMUNITY / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The partnership with CSU Extension and the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) for the Governor's Bottom-Up Economic Development Plan continued with a synthesis meeting of Region 9 comments held in Cortez on May 5. This was followed with State representatives meeting with tribal representatives to discuss Native American concerns. Tom participated in the tribal meeting since he is Montezuma County's representative for the Colorado Commission on Indian Affairs. The synthesis meeting was followed up with conference calls on May 13 and 19.

Tom attended the quarterly meeting of the Colorado Commission on Indian Affairs held in Towaoc on June 3. Commission members participated in the annual Bear Dance held in Towaoc. The Bear Dance is the traditional celebration of Spring for the Ute Nation. Tom was then introduced at the meeting and gave a brief summary of his interests. Subjects of the meeting included education, health, economics, transportation, hunting and water rights, as well as cultural preservation.

Tom represents agricultural interests as a non-voting member of the Montezuma Community Economic Development Association. One of the major topics of the meeting on May 18 was the importance of agriculture and water in Montezuma County and the development of an

agriculture program at the Southwest Colorado Community College (division of Pueblo Community College).

Tom has been appointed to the Southwest Colorado Community College (SCCC) Advisory Board effective June 1. The quarterly meeting on June 16 introduced the Advisory Board to the diverse programs and departments of SCCC and Pueblo Community College. Other topics covered were new programs and developments, budgets, and enrollment challenges. Tom will be assisting SCCC in investigating the feasibility of an agriculture program at the college.

Tom is a member of the newly formed Food Policy Council of Montezuma County. Food Policy Councils have been formed nation-wide to bring together stakeholders from diverse food-related sectors to examine how a food system is operating and to develop suggestions on how to improve it. Live Well Montezuma has secured a grant that will help develop the Food Policy Council for 1-2 years. The first meeting was held on May 17 and introduced the concept of a Food Policy Council and its relevance to Montezuma County. The second meeting was June 14 and focused on possible goals and directions for the Council. Next meeting will be July 12.

### **AGRICULTURE / HORTICULTURE**

Colorado Master Gardeners continue to be involved in several projects throughout the community: for example, The Plant Select Demonstration Garden (and other gardens) at the Anasazi Heritage Center, the Research and Demonstration Orchard at the Southwestern Colorado Research Center in Yellow Jacket, an information booth at the Cortez Farmers' Market, a school garden for the Dolores Elementary School, and the Native Plant Gardens at the newly renovated Four Corners Monument. Various other community gardening projects are planned or in process. Volunteers attended the annual Plant Select meeting at the Denver Botanic Gardens on June 8 and brought back plant materials to be planted at the Anasazi Heritage Center.

Various tasks continued for the season at the Research and Demonstration Orchard, Southwestern Colorado Research Center in Yellow Jacket. An initial cover spray for insect and disease control, along with a foliar application of zinc, was done early in May. The orchard was mowed and the irrigation system was set up, charged, and started on May 18. Four Colorado Master Gardener volunteers worked on pruning the vineyard during May and June. The apple and pear crops have mostly survived the late freezes and there will be a minor plum crop for the first time this year. Codling moth monitoring traps and mating disruptors have been installed. Tom took over leadership of the orchard following Dan's retirement on June 30.

The Cortez Farmers' Market had their opening day on Saturday, June 4, 8:00 a.m. Initial customer traffic was light, but improved greatly toward the end of June. Over 50 vendors have purchased licenses for the 2011 season.

A Native Plant Master course was held at the Anasazi Heritage Center on May 14, 21, and 28 with an optional field trip to Hawkins Preserve on May 20. Despite the registration of only two participants, the volunteer instructors wished to continue with the course. The participants were very appreciative of the educational experience and evaluations were outstanding.

Tom and Dan Fernandez participated in the "Ag Markets and More" radio show on KSJD, a local public radio station in Cortez. It is a weekly radio show that discusses various agriculture and horticulture topics of the Four Corners region. Tom took over the show as the main guest

speaker following Dan's retirement and will alternate as guest with Dan's replacement when they are hired. KSJD has a listening audience of 7,500.

Tom is cooperating with Janet Hardin, Research Associate in Department of Bioagricultural Sciences and Pest Management at Colorado State University, in a Grape Commodity Survey of grape vineyard pests in Montezuma County. The purpose of the survey is to identify and diagnose exotic and invasive pests of grape vineyards. By identifying pests early, eradication methods can be less expensive and more efficient. Three vineyards are being surveyed in diverse locations in Montezuma County. One is south of Cortez near the State line and Ute Mountain Ute Tribal land, another is in McElmo canyon, and the third is in the northern part of the county southwest of Pleasant View. Insect pest traps have been set out and will be checked monthly.

Tom taught the Pest Management class for the Backyard Food Production program in La Plata County on the evening of June 14. Over 30 students attended and evaluations were highly positive and enthusiastic for Tom's presentation.

#### **FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE (FCS)**

Participants from previous "*Strong Women Stay Young*" sessions will continue to meet throughout Spring thanks to the Senior Center. This session will continue with the help of Strong Women volunteer Jeanne Bensmiller. The senior center has also agreed to allow these classes to continue as long as there is a state trained volunteer available to manage the classes. Participants will review their personal records to ensure the instructors have current contact and medical information. They will also be required to sign a form indicating that they have reviewed and made any changes, as well as sign a liability release form. Jan will continue to participate in the class as her schedule allows.

Clients with food safety and other Family and Consumer Science (FCS) questions are referred to Wendy Rice, FCS Extension Agent in La Plata County. Clients are also encouraged to pick up and read CSU fact sheets.

#### **4-H/YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

Jake Cruzan, a seven-year member in Montezuma County 4-H (currently enrolled in the Wranglers 4-H club), is selected to attend Rodeo China in Beijing this October. Rodeo China is an historic event that will introduce the people of China to the culture of the American West through the art and science of rodeo. Youth selected for this project will directly teach rodeo events and livestock handling to approximately 3,000 Chinese youth. Only 20 4-H members were selected from more than 120 applicants from 38 counties across Colorado. Congratulations Jake!!

Tonya Yates, Montezuma County 4-H Program Coordinator, took two 4-H members to the annual 4-H State Conference at CSU in Ft. Collins from June 21-24. The theme this year was "Taking Action." Participants in the conference attend 4-H related workshops, contests, State Council meetings, and have fun! Unfortunately, two additional 4-H members who had planned to attend were not able to. Maybe next year!

Respectfully Submitted by: Tom Hooten  
Interim County Extension Director