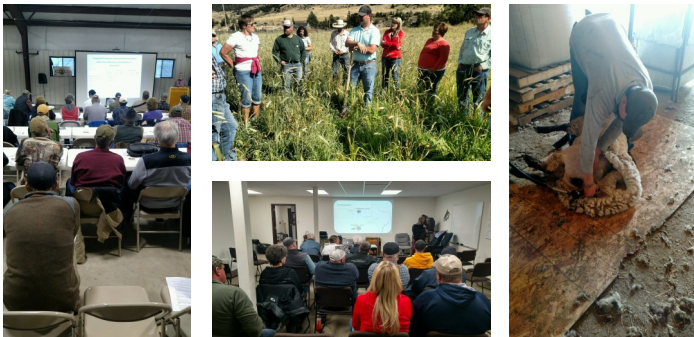




Livestock Education

MSU Extension in Sweet Grass County collaborated with the Crazy Mountain Stockgrowers Association and the Sweet Grass County Wool Marketing Association to present a livestock-focused educational series. The series began with a calving primer followed by a lecture on futures marketing, a lecture concerning the Veterinary Feed Directive, and a discussion about cover crops and soil health. Considering that many in Sweet Grass County still use sheep as a way to diversify their operations, a lecture was included on sheep mineral nutrition, wool quality and the textile industry.

The series wrapped up with a hands-on class on processing a beef carcass along with instruction on how to figure quality and yield grades. The series reached 147 producers. Producer reactions to the calving primer indicated that over 90% of the participants learned new techniques to save more calves during the stressful calving season. The wool seminar was met with great response from the producers, who marketed wool in Sweet Grass County with a 21% premium for the finer lines of wool this year.



All of the attendees of the classes presented in 2016 were grateful for the knowledge and ideas that they gained to benefit their livelihoods.

Healthy Habits for Youth

In an effort to promote health and healthy lifestyles with teenage youth, MSU Extension in Sweet Grass County introduced 18 high school boys and girls to weigh lifting and plyometrics instruction five days a week from 6-7 a.m. The students meet daily at the High School gym and spend three days a week lifting weights to improve core strength and two days a week they receive instruction on speed, agility and plyometrics. The students are tested once a month to track improvement in their speed, strength and agility. Over the past three years, 62% of the participants have continued with the morning fitness program and those that have continued to do so have shown a .42 improvement in their grade point average.

The weight room at SGHS is where the magic happens every morning.



Nitrate Levels Challenging in Sweet Grass County

Nitrate levels on grain hay during the 2016 growing season proved to be a real challenge for forage producers.. Extension staff tested samples supplied by local producers and found that nitrate levels were sporadic. The high test levels resulted in timely discussions concerning harvest management and utilization of these forage resources in safe ways.

Meet the County Agent

(Reprinted from the Crazy Mountain Stockgrowers Assoc. Newsletter)

As we look forward to the Sweet Grass County Fair 2016, there isn't a more deserving Stockgrowers member to recognize than Marc King, especially this time of year! Our CMSGA motto is "Preserving our way of life," and we think one of the best ways to do that is to support, encourage and bring up the next generation of ranching leaders to care for the land, the livestock and our way of life. Marc King does that better than anyone we know.

Marc has positively influenced and brought up an entire generation of Sweet Grass County students and leaders as a livestock judging coach and Extension agent. We know he teaches young people so much more than how to evaluate an animal and articulate their thoughts and decisions — although those are important traits, too. He teaches and leads by example with integrity, hard work and good humor. We know the future of agriculture in Sweet Grass County is in good hands when our young people and future leaders have been under Marc's guidance.

Of course, that's not even half of it — Marc has an open door policy to help ranchers in our community, to answer questions, share ideas, research and education. He organizes many of our Rancher Roundtable discussions in the winters with interesting, informative speakers and topics that help us grow and learn on our ranches.

Members of the Month are chosen by our board of directors to recognize Stockgrowers who are exemplary representatives of the CMSGA and the cattle industry. Please join us in saying 'thanks' to Marc for his work and dedication to ranching in Sweet Grass County!



Sweet Grass Co Extension Agent Marc King listens intently as a young 4-H member tells him about her market beef.

Life Skills and Learning Styles

Recognizing the fact that many youth, as well as adults, learn better in hands-on sessions, MSU Extension in Sweet Grass County has focused on using livestock judging as a way to teach time management, decision making, public speaking and critical thinking skills. Forty youth participate in practices on a weekly basis in which each of these skills is worked on and mastered. Besides the weekly practices, these students also get the opportunity to travel the country to compete.

In an effort to involve adults, the Extension faculty from Utah, Idaho, Colorado, Wyoming and Montana have developed the Intermountain Livestock Judges Training. In 2016, the training was held in Spanish Forks, Utah. The three day training resulted in 76 adults learning how to evaluate livestock, speak publicly on a microphone and manage a county fair.



Sweet Grass County's group of livestock judges on one of their many trips.



This livestock judge is taking the hands-on approach to evaluate his cattle class.

Innovative Livestock Technologies

Introducing youth and producers to emerging technologies within the livestock industry led to a collaborative effort between the MSU Extension in Sweet Grass County, Crazy Mountain Stockgrowers and GeneSeek. All of the heifers entered in the Sweet Grass County Fair were genetically tested using the GeneSeek program and the results were presented to youth as well as the general public during a presentation at the Sweet Grass County Fair. The youth were presented with printed copies detailing the genetic probabilities for several economically-important traits for their cattle. As a result of this effort, five ranches have begun testing their replacement females to assist them in selecting cattle that should help improve their marketable product, while at the same time improving their economic returns to the ranch.



A 4-H member genomically testing his replacement heifer prior to the Sweet Grass County Fair. He is collecting a hair sample from the tail switch and then will mail his sample to Geneseek to get his profile.



Dr. John Paterson shares the genetic testing data of the heifers entered in the Sweet Grass County Fair.

Sweet Grass County 4-H Clubs

Boulder River Bandits
Livestock Busters
Otter Creek
Pioneers
Porcupine Butte
Reed Point Riders
Timber Tech Robotics
Yellowstone Victorians

Sweet Grass County Enrollment 2015-2016

Total Leaders: 24
Total Members: 130
Total Cloverbuds: 19

Sweet Grass County Top Projects

Swine
Woodworking
Photography
Lamb
Sewing

Contact Us



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