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SURVEY

2012 Report

Attendee Survey Results Women in Agriculture Conference 2009-2011

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Executive Summary

Women have always been an integral partner in the success of Nebraska agriculture. They have worked in roles that are often left undefined, yet vital to the health and well-being of their agricultural operation and to the agricultural community at large. As societal and economic changes have occurred, so have the roles of women producers within and beyond the farm or ranch operation.

Realizing the important role women have within the agricultural industry the University of Nebraska—Lincoln Extension Service, located within Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources started the Nebraska Women in Agriculture (WIA) conference in 1985 to assist women in their agricultural businesses. To evaluate the effectiveness of the program and to determine if conference participants are utilizing information and skills gained through the conference, an evaluative study was conducted of 565 individuals who participated in the 2009, 2010, or 2011 WIA conferences. Based on the survey responses, key findings emerged:

- Women self-identify as having multiple roles within their agricultural operation and industry. Nearly two-thirds (60%) of the respondents stated they were main partners and 13 percent stated they were single owners of their agricultural operation. Within the industry, 73 percent stated they were farmers, 32 percent ranchers and 20 percent service-providers. Only 6 percent of the respondents identified themselves as a value-added business owner.
- Women are interested in gaining more information about farm and ranch operations. Forty-nine percent of all survey respondents indicated they were attending the WIA conference to gain more information about overall farm and ranch operations. However, women older than 60 years are more likely than women age 40 or younger to rate this reason as most important (61% compared to 45%).
- WIA attendees are changing farm management practices. Since attending the conference, 36 percent of the Farmers and 38 percent of F/R Combined (individuals who indicated they have both a farming and ranching operation) have or are currently modifying their operations by using tools for marketing grain. Thirty-seven percent of Farmers and 54 percent of F/R Combined have or are currently modifying operations by using crop budgeting and enhancing their record keeping.
- WIA attendees are changing ranch management practices. Since attending the conference, Ranchers and F/R Combined have or are currently modifying their ranch management practices by implementing animal ID/tracking processes (39 and 28 percent); new grazing practices (39 and 34 percent) and adding new tools for marketing livestock (36 and 27 percent).

• WIA is helping to create positive economic impacts for women agriculturalists.

- Forty-one percent of Farmers reported that changes made to their operation led to moderate and high impacts in the area of increased farm or ranch profits and 51 percent stated that changes led to moderate to high impacts in the area of increased business effectiveness.
- o F/R Combined reported similar impacts, 45 percent for increased farm/ranch profitability and 57 percent in business effectiveness.
- o Ranchers reported the highest percentage of moderate to high impacts in the areas of increased use of agricultural networks and resources (33 percent) and effectiveness in business (34 percent).
- o Service Providers/Consultants reported the highest percentage of impacts in the areas of increased use of agricultural networks and resources (46 percent), effectiveness in business (37 percent) and improved family health (37 percent).

WIA is helping to create positive personal impacts for women agriculturalists.

- o Fifty-one percent of F/R Combined and 49 percent of Farmers reported moderate to high impacts from the enhancement of their roles in farm/ranch business management and production decision-making.
- o Farmers, Ranchers and F/R Combined (51, 39 and 52 percent) reported they experienced moderate to high impacts from changes made that led to the enhancement of their role in making farm/ranch business financial decisions.
- Nearly two-thirds (65 percent) of Service Providers/Consultants reported moderate to high impacts from changes made that improved their role within their organization and 55 percent from increasing their participation in agricultural organizations and networks.
- WIA attendees view WIA Conference as more than skills learned and technology applied. When asked what the greatest impact of the WIA conference was for respondents, 13 percent cited emotional support, 31 percent felt the networking with other women to be highly valuable and 12 percent felt the personal growth to be the greatest impact.

Introduction

Women have always been an integral partner in the success of Nebraska agriculture. They have worked in roles that are often left undefined, yet vital to the health and well-being of their agricultural operation and to the agricultural community at large. As societal and economic changes have occurred, so have the roles of women producers within and beyond the farm or ranch operation.

The 2007 United States Census of Agriculture data shows that there were 985,192 women operators of farms and ranches nationwide, representing 30.2 percent of all U.S. farm operators counted. This figure represents a 19 percent increase of all women operators, as compared to a 7 percent increase in overall farm operators since the 2002 agriculture census data. In addition, 306,209 of these women were classified as principal operators in the 2007 data, up nearly 30 percent from the 2002 data. Women who were principal operators in 2007 represented 14 percent of the nation's 2.2 million farms and work 64,264,566 acres of land.

In Nebraska, 2007 U.S. census data indicates there were 18,144 female operators of which 4,025 were classified as principal operators who work with 2,231,833 acres. The women represent 8.4 percent of all Nebraska principal operators. This was also an increase of 33.9 percent over 2002 agricultural data*.

*Operators are defined as a person who operates a farm, either doing the work or making day-to-day decisions. The operator may be the owner, a member of the owner's household, a hired manager, a tenant, a renter, or a sharecropper. Principal operators are defined as the person primarily responsible for the on-site, day-to-day operation of the farm or ranch business.

Realizing the important role women have within the agricultural industry, the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR) at the University of Nebraska— Lincoln started the Nebraska Women in Agriculture (WIA) conference in 1985 to assist women in their agricultural businesses. First established by the late Deb Rood, WIA recently celebrated 27 years of providing educational conferences. The 2012 WIA conference, hosted by IANR's Department of Agricultural Economics, had nearly 400 women participants. Most attendees were women from Nebraska with additional visitors from Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota, Iowa and California.

The WIA conference is committed to providing educational opportunities for all Nebraska women interested in any aspect of agriculture. The learning is accomplished

through conference keynote speakers, concurrent workshop sessions and networking with booth sponsors and other participants. Many women report that they take the information gained from the conference back to their farm or ranch and review it

"We are committed to providing opportunities for all Nebraskans to develop management skills in every facet of agriculture by providing leadership, learning support, and networking avenues."

Mission Statement,
Women in
Agriculture

with their partners. Together they evaluate and decide if they will implement any changes in their operation.

Each year, conference planners seek to provide educational topics that are timely, relevant and skill building. Workshop sessions may cover grain marketing, farm policy, government programs, crop and livestock management, computer records, financial planning, health, technology, employment and crop insurance. In addition, light humor, emotional well-being, and personal support is a mainstay theme throughout the conference to help isolated rural women reconnect with other women facing similar pressures and experiences.

Program Evaluation Need

Post evaluations of the WIA conferences are completed immediately following each conference. These evaluations have provided information on changes in participant knowledge and skills, along with intentions to change behaviors as a result of newly acquired knowledge and skills. Post evaluations have also provided feedback on workshop content, speakers, and suggested topics for the next conference.

Demographics and information about the scale of their agricultural operation is also gathered. Session planners use the information to modify and adjust workshop topics, align marketing and promotional efforts and recruit conference sponsors.

To further determine if the intentions indicated by participants were acted upon, an evaluative study was conducted of 565 individuals who participated in the 2009, 2010, or 2011 WIA conferences. The objectives of the evaluative study were three-fold:

1. To learn what motivated women to attend the conference. Was it to seek

- knowledge, to build farm or ranch skills or to build personal skills?
- 2. To determine if the women have used their knowledge and skills gained from the conference and applied the information or skills on the farm or ranch, or applied the information to their personal lives. If so, were there any subsequent impacts?
- 3. To enhance the conference educational experience, and other potential educational opportunities, by discovering individual preferences and suggestions for improvement.

Survey participants were asked a series of questions about their roles within the agricultural industry, the importance of reasons why they attended the conference or multiple conferences, what steps they took to improve or enhance their farm, ranch, or business operation and the results of these steps. They were also asked questions about their agricultural production and business operations as well as personal demographics. Survey participants were encouraged to provide qualitative responses to questions about impacts, suggestions and a final open space for general comments.

Methodology and Respondent Profile

The initial survey roster was developed by utilizing a registration list of past WIA conference attendees in the years 2009, 2010, and 2011. Removal of invalid addresses and duplicate entries provided researchers with 565 names of potential survey respondents. This included individual conference attendees within and beyond Nebraska, including some male attendees.

A self-administered questionnaire was mailed in January and February 2012 to the 565 conference attendees. The 14-page questionnaire was also available for completion in an electronic format administered through QualtricsTM online software. The UNL Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was granted prior to beginning the evaluative survey. All IRB protocols were followed and anonymity of participants was ensured.

A 48.5% response rate (274 responses) was achieved using a modified total design method (Dillman, 1978). The sequence of steps used follows:

- 1. The questionnaire was mailed with an informal letter signed by the project director requesting participation in the study.
- 2.A reminder postcard was sent to the entire sample approximately seven days after the questionnaire had been sent.
- 3. Those who had not yet responded within approximately 14 days of the original mailing were sent a replacement questionnaire.

Table 1 shows demographic data from the evaluative study. The average age of conference participants was 53 years. Eighty-seven percent were married and nearly 47 percent had obtained an educational level of a bachelor's degree or higher. Thirty-seven percent of the women respondents were 50 years or younger and 28 percent were older than 60 years.

When asked to self-identify their role(s) within the agricultural industry, 73 percent of the respondents indicated they were farmers and 32 percent were ranchers. The respondents were basically split between those who have attended three or less conferences and those who have attended four or more conferences. In comparison to the 2012 post WIA conference evaluation, the majority of attendees had attended at least three conferences with one person

having attended every conference since 1985. For statistical purposes, the results of this survey cannot be generalized to all Nebraska women agriculturalists, but to only those who participate in the WIA conferences.

Table 1: Demographic Results	of WIA Survey
Respondents	
	Responses
Years attended conference:	
Three or fewer	49%
Four or more	51%
Agricultural Role (multiple	
roles):	
Farmer	73%
Rancher	32%
Consultant	4%
Value-added business	
owner	6%
Service provider	20%
Other (primarily landlords)	10%
Farm/Ranch Role (multiple	
roles):	
Single owner	13%
Main partner	60%
Farm/ranch employee	10%
Business manager	15%
Consultant	6%
Other	19%
Not involved in farm/ranch	9%
Age:	
40 or younger	21%
41-50	16%
51-60	34%
Over 60	28%
Gender:	
Female	99%
Male	1%
Education:	
High school diploma (or	
equiv.)	12%
Some college, no degree	21%
Associate degree	20%
Bachelor degree	36%
Graduate or prof. degree	11%
Marital Status:	
Married	87%
Never married	4%
Divorced/separated	2%
Widowed/widower	7%

Survey Results

Previously, WIA planners gathered information from conference attendees through post conference evaluations and used the information to help with planning efforts for the following year. For this report, researchers wanted to know why individuals were attending the WIA conference, how their newly acquired knowledge and skills were used, and subsequent impacts on their farms, ranches and business operations.

Topics of Importance

Women in Ag attendees are very loyal and supportive of the conference, as evidenced by the number of years many participants have attended. Twenty-nine percent of the respondents attended at least ten conferences and 10 percent had attended more than 20 times. The results show that for some topics, the reasons the respondents attended the conference, does vary by age.

A list of topics developed from prior conference sessions was divided into three categories – to know more about the topic, to improve my farm/ranch skills, and to enhance my personal skills. Individuals were asked to rank each topic as to the level of importance for why they attended the conference. Table 2 provides the mean average for each topic, based on a five point scale, where responses were (1) not important and (5) most important.

Gaining information about overall farm and ranch operations was rated as the most important reason for attending by 49 percent of all individuals. However, women older than 60 years are more likely than women age 40 or younger to rate this reason as most important (61% compared to 45%). Although estate planning was a lower rated topic by all attendees, a little more than half (56%) of the women older than 60 years

Table 2: Why Respondents	Mean
Attended Conference	(5 pt scale)
To know more about: (n=267)	
Overall farm and ranch	
operations	4.2
Agricultural production practices	3.9
Health and well-being	3.6
Regulatory and policy issues	3.7
Estate planning options	3.7
New business opportunities	3.1
Marketing traditional and	
alternative crops	3.6
Other (n=42)	4.5
To improve my farm/ranch skills	
in: (n=258)	
Financial management	4.3
Production records	3.9
Organization or overall	
operations	4.0
Computers, including use of	
software programs	3.9
Other (n=12)	4.5
To enhance my personal skills in:	
(n=262)	
Communicating/advocating for	
agriculture	3.8
Balancing farm and ranch life	3.6
Networking with others	3.9
Renewing commitment to	
farm/ranch	3.7
Other (n=12)	3.8

rated it as most important compared to 13 percent of women under 40 years of age. The lowest rated topic overall, new business opportunities, was more important to women younger than 40 years (23%) compared to women older than 60 years (13%). Women age 51 to 60 were more likely than younger women to rate the importance of learning new computer and software skills as being the most important reason they attended the conference. Overall most important to the respondents was gaining knowledge and skills around farm and ranch operations, including how to improve financial management practices. Respondents rated personal skills development in communications/ advocacy and networking as slightly less important reasons for

attending the WIA conference. The complete rankings are provided in Appendix Table 1.

Change in Practices

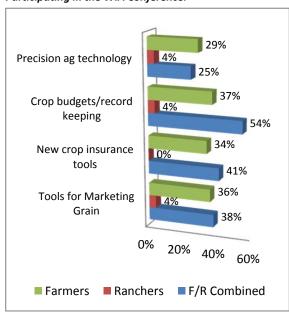
The need to better understand farm and ranch operations and fiscal management were the most instrumental topics in motivating individuals to attend the WIA conferences. Did this motivation continue to actual application of the knowledge and skills gained from the conference to their operations? To better understand how topics are used, individuals were asked to respond to specific practices that could be implemented in their operation in the area of crop management, livestock management and business operations. Individuals were to indicate the category that best described the steps they took to improve or enhance their operation since participating in the WIA conference. The complete ratings for each category are listed in Appendix Table 2.

Since many of the WIA participants indicated they function in multiple agricultural roles, researchers aggregated roles into the following five categories: (a) Farmers, with other non-ranching roles – 56 percent; (b) Ranchers, with other non-farming roles – 10 percent; (c) Farmers and Ranchers Combined (F/R Combined), with other roles – 21 percent; (d) Service providers and consultants only – 12 percent; and (e) Value-added business owners only – 1 percent.

Practice changes in crop management were adopted by Farmers and F/R Combined over any other group of individuals. Since attending the conference, 36 percent of the Farmers and 38 percent of the F/R Combined have or are currently modifying their operations by using new or additional tools for marketing grain and 34 percent of the Farmers and 41 percent of the F/R

Combined are reducing their risk exposure with new or additional crop insurance tools (Figure 1). Thirty-seven percent of Farmers and 54 percent of the F/R Combined have or

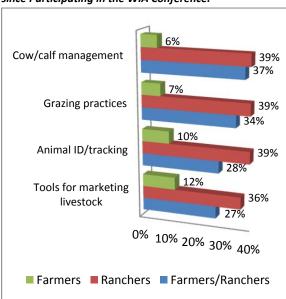
Figure 1. Changes in Crop Management Practices since Participating in the WIA Conference.



are currently modifying operations by developing crop budgets and/or enhancing their record keeping practices. Additionally 29 percent of the Farmers and 25 percent of the F/R Combined are now applying precision agriculture technology in their farm operations. Implementation of these practices by these two categories of respondents are significantly more than any other category, including Ranchers who have or are currently modifying their operations in the areas of using tools for marketing grains (4 percent), using crop insurance tools (0 percent) and developing crop budgets and enhancing their record keeping practices (4 percent). This difference is also reflected in the Ranchers' perspective that these practices were not as applicable to their operations. Both the Farmers and F/R Combined were more interested in receiving training on these practices as compared to the others who

defined themselves as Ranchers and Service Provider/Consultants. Many of the Valueadded Business Owners expressed an interest in receiving additional training in using new/additional tools for marketing grain and developing crop budgets/enhancing record keeping.

Figure 2. Changes in Livestock Management Practices since Participating in the WIA Conference.

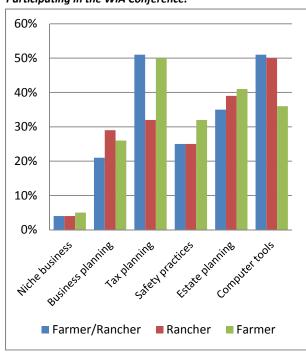


Change of practices was most common for Ranchers and F/R Combined in the area of livestock management (Figure 2). Thirty-six percent of Ranchers and 27 percent of F/R Combined have or are currently modifying operations since the conference by using new or additional tools for marketing livestock. Other changes that Ranchers and F/R Combined have implemented include use of animal ID/tracking processes (39 and 28 percent); new grazing practices (39 and 34 percent); and adding value to the cow/calf enterprise by changing management practices (39 and 37 percent). Many of the Farmers indicated that the livestock practices were not applicable to their operations, which could explain the lower level of adoption by the farmers. When asked if they would like additional training, the Ranchers and F/R Combined

were significantly more interested in receiving additional training in the livestock management area, specifically in the areas of new tools for marketing livestock (54 and 36 percent) and adding value to cow/calf herds through management practices (43 and 42 percent).

A high percentage of WIA participants have or are currently modifying their business operational practices (Figure 3). Forty-six percent of all respondents indicated they have or are modifying their tax planning strategies with F/R Combined leading with 51 percent changing practices and Farmers following close with 50 percent. Use of new computer-based tools in decisionmaking was adopted by 51 percent of the F/R Combined and 50 percent of the Ranchers. Thirty-nine percent of all survey respondents have or are currently modifying their estate plans. An additional 24 percent plan to implement an estate plan within the next 1-2 years.

Figure 3. Changes in Business Operational Practices since Participating in the WIA Conference.



The lowest percentage of change was in the area of starting a niche business using nontraditional crops or livestock. Only 5 percent of Farmers and 4 percent of Ranchers and F/R Combined indicated they have or were currently modifying operations to start a niche business. However, 18 percent of the Ranchers indicated an interest in starting a business within the next 1-2 years. More than half of all respondents (56 percent) did not feel that starting a niche business was applicable to their operation.

When specifically asked if the respondents were interested in receiving additional training in the area of business operations, 37 percent of all respondents would like to learn more about using computer—based tools to aid in decision-making. Individuals also stated interest in estate planning and tax planning (35 and 33 percent).

Impacts of Operational Changes

To measure the impact of changes made in crop, livestock or business operations, respondents were asked to provide a ranking of a potential outcome as having either a no, slight, moderate or high impact.

Respondents were asked, "As a result of your participation, to what extent did the changes you made on the farm/ranch/ business lead to the following...? Figure 4 shows the results of respondents who indicated that the changes made on their farm, ranch or business led to either a moderate or high impact in each of the outcome categories.

The different bars show the responses by the respondents' self-identified roles. The complete ratings for each participant category are available in Appendix Table 3.

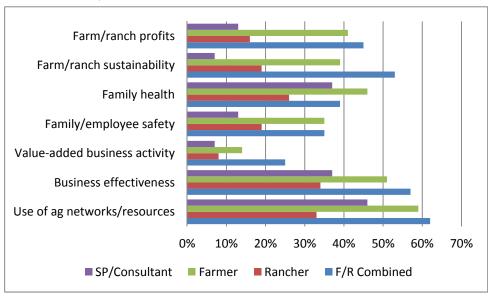
Increased profit...

"Learned to market grain and taught other women.

Impact: \$5,000 - \$12,000 per year.

Farmers and individuals who have a combined farm and ranch operation had the highest percentage of moderate to high impacts. Forty-one percent of Farmers reported that changes made led to moderate and high impacts in the area of increases in farm or ranch profits and 51 percent in business effectiveness. Similar impacts were reported from the F/R Combined category, 45 percent for increases in farm/ranch profitability and 57 percent in business effectiveness.

Figure 4. Percentage of Respondents Indicating Moderate to High Impacts due to Changes Made on the Farm, Ranch or Business.

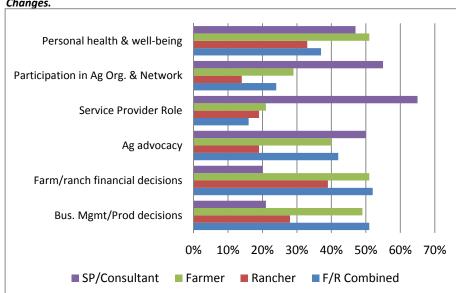


Ranchers had the highest percentage of moderate to high impacts in the areas of increased use of agricultural networks and resources (33 percent) and effectiveness in business (34 percent). A smaller segment of respondents, the Service Providers/Consultants, reported the highest percentage of impacts in the areas of increased in use of agricultural networks and

Increased effectiveness in business...
Create better financial statements & tax records.
Impact: \$300 - \$500/year in lower CPA fees.

resources (46 percent), effectiveness in business (37 percent) and improved family health (37 percent). The individuals with the combined farm and ranch operations had a greater percentage of moderate to high impacts from increased value-added/alternative business activity (25 percent), compared to Farmers and Ranchers

Figure 5. Percentage of Respondents Indicating Moderate to High Impacts due to Personal Changes.



(14 and 8 percent). This increased impact may be due to a more diversified operation that employs both farming and ranching practices.

Impacts of Personal Changes

To measure the impact of personal changes as a result of their participation in the WIA conference, respondents were asked to provide a ranking of a potential outcome as having either a no, slight, moderate or high impact. Respondents were asked, "As a result of your participation in the Women in Agriculture conferences, to what extent did the changes you made personally lead to the following...? Figure 5 shows the results of respondents who indicated that the outcome lead to either a moderate or high impact in their personal agricultural roles. The complete ratings for each participant category are available in Appendix Table 4.

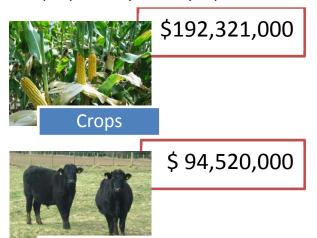
Fifty-one percent of survey respondents with a farm and ranch combined operation and 49 percent of Farmers reported moderate to high impacts in enhancement in their roles in farm/ranch business management and production decision-making. These same groups (52 and 51 percent) stated they

experienced moderate to high impacts in the enhancement of their role in making farm/ranch business financial decisions.

Three Groups, Farmers F/R Combined and Service Providers/ Consultants indicated moderate to high impacts in the area of increasing their role in agricultural advocacy (40, 42, and 50 percent). Nearly two-

thirds (65 percent) of the Service Providers/ Consultants stated they had moderate to high impacts in improving their role as a service provider within their organization and more than one-half (55 percent) in increasing their participation in agricultural organizations and networks. Ranging from one-third to more than half of all respondent categories reported moderate to high impacts in enhancing their personal health and wellbeing.

Figure 6. Estimated Minimum Dollar Value of Select Livestock and Crops Represented by WIA Survey Respondents.



Scope of Potential Impacts

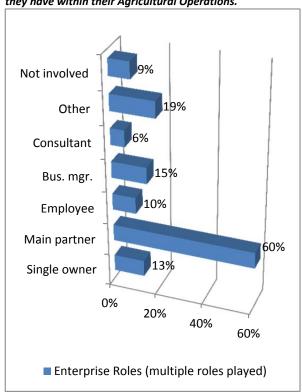
Livestock

WIA conference attendees represent a number of Nebraska's livestock head and farm and ranch acres. To better understand the scope of WIA attendee impacts, individuals were asked to provide the number of livestock head and acres that they farm or ranch. Fifty-three percent of the survey respondents indicated they have livestock head and 75 percent reported producing farm crops. A total of 48 percent of the individuals who participated in the WIA survey provided the following numbers of primary livestock and crops. Minor livestock such as horses, chickens, goats were not included in the calculations; likewise, sunflowers, sorghum, oats were

not calculated for the farm crops. Using March 17-21, 2011 (USDA) market prices and average weights for livestock, the minimum estimated livestock value represented by the survey respondents was \$94.5 million. Furthermore, the estimated value of commodity crops represented by the survey respondents was at a minimum \$192.3 million. The commodity pricing was based annual average price reported in the 2011 Nebraska State Agricultural Overview (USDA NASS). More details are provided in Appendix Table 5.

Compared to Nebraska's overall livestock and crop production, the WIA conference attendees represent only a small fraction of the state's total agriculture volume. The figures do, however, represent an opportunity to provide education to a sector that is willing and able to implement agricultural education and practices that can have significant impact in their farm or

Figure 7. Percentage of Respondents Indicating the Roles they have within their Agricultural Operations.



ranch operation and their personal economic well-being. Women who participate in the WIA conference have the capacity to transfer education and learned topics to those within the farm or ranch organization through their own management or as part of the overall management team. Figure 7 shows the multiple enterprise roles that women are playing that can allow for the influence of positive, economic change.

One respondent stated that the WIA conference

"offers me the information, courage, and confidence to affect a strong impact on the success of our ag operation. When I married into the family, they did not invite me to attend corporate meetings because they 'didn't think I would be interested.' Thanks in great part to WIA I am now the secretary-treasurer of our farm corporation and do most of the grain marketing."

Another attendee stated that,

"Peg Brune's sessions last year were so valuable in helping me 'take the plunge' into Quicken, and it has resulted in improved decisionmaking and other positive changes on our farm."

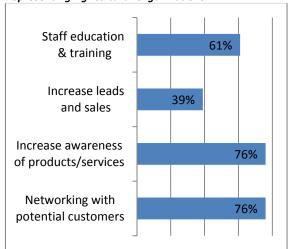
The education provided in the WIA conferences also affects the multiple businesses that are started on and off the farm or ranch. Fifty-nine individuals indicated that they operate one or more alternative or value-added businesses. These businesses include direct beef sales, hay grinding, goat sales, custom calving or haying, dude ranch, agricultural equipment sales and manufacturing, real estate, arts, and wine production. Fifty-eight percent of these businesses have been in existence more than 6 years and 23 percent have been operating less than 2 years or are still in the

planning stages. One-third (33 percent) of the businesses are considered full-time and 25 of the businesses have at least one fulltime employee.

"Years ago it [WIA conference] gave me good solid information & helped me become self-confident and become an active manager with my husband = successful family farm business."

Agricultural service providers are also important attendees at the WIA conference. They provide education and resources that inform and assist the farmers and ranchers and serve as a point of contact for additional assistance. The service providers represent multiple agricultural, government, and commercial entities such as agricultural lenders, extension, insurance, resource conservationists, real estate and more. Beyond personal impacts identified above, there are organizational benefits from WIA

Figure 8. Conference Benefits to Survey Respondents who Indicated they Attended as Service Providers, Representing Agricultural Organizations.

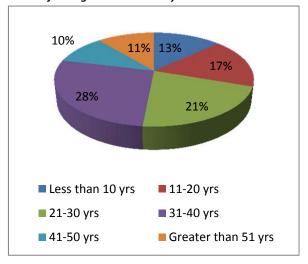


attendance and sponsorship (Figure 8). Besides the education and training opportunities (61 percent), most of these individuals feel that the conference provides them with opportunities to increase awareness of their product and services (76 percent) which results in increased leads and sales (39 percent).

Looking forward

Each the year, WIA has new participants attending the conference, having heard about the conference through former attendees, bank sponsors or their agricultural lenders. The number of years that WIA attendees have been involved in the agricultural industry vary considerably (Figure 9). Many women have been involved since birth, having grown up on a farm and ranch, while others have recently become employed or married into the industry. Thirteen percent of the survey respondents indicated that they have only been involved in the agricultural industry for ten years or less, with half of those indicating five years or less. Conversely, 5 percent have 60 or more years in agriculture. One new participant who has attended the conference

Figure 9. Number of Years Survey Respondents Have Been a Part of the Agricultural Industry.



only twice comments,

"I am not involved in decision-making on our farm. I have little input yet much of what happens affects me and/or my family. I need to hear how other women have survived living on a multigeneration family farm. I need skills and ideas on how to interact with family. I need to know there is hope."

Conversely, another participant who has attended the conference 22 years adds this suggestion to assist the next generation of agricultural women:

"Offer a Mentor Program to match women who have been in ag business long-term with women who are just entering the world of ag. Often it is helpful to have someone to talk to who understands ag but is not a family member. We need to nurture and support the less experienced and/or younger women in agriculture, especially women entering ag from an urban culture."

As the WIA conference planners look forward, attention to the personal and intangible aspects of the conference need to be considered. Survey respondent comments indicate that WIA is not just about skills learned and technology applied. It is also about supporting and affirming the women agriculturalist. It is about personal growth, instilling confidence and networking. When asked what the greatest impact of the WIA conference was for the respondents, 13 percent cited emotional support, 31 percent felt networking with other women to be highly valued and 12 percent felt the personal growth they experienced to be the greatest impact. A respondent stated simply, "Every year WIA is a time when I come home renewed and energized, having new ideas for our

operation." Another participant shares the impact of the WIA conference having "continued faith in the benefit of women gathering together to learn, laugh, cry and share life as farm women. WIA is an important, worthwhile program that enriches lives."

Conclusion

The Women in Agriculture survey results are a testament to the fulfillment of WIA's mission -- to develop agricultural management skills by providing leadership, learning support, and networking. The WIA conference attendees learn and share the information gained through the various conference speakers and implement them as needed on their farms, ranches and businesses. However, the skills and knowledge are not enough to draw the attendees to the conference, nor to measure the entire scope of impacts. Just as important to the lives of the participants is the networking and support they gain from each other while attending the conference, not just once but over time. Together, through the sharing and mentoring of lasting friendships, the WIA participants provide a nurturing and educational culture that equates to improved agricultural operations, enhanced personal well-being and a stronger agricultural community.

Appendix Table 1: Level of Importance as to Wh	ıy Respor	idents Attende	ed Conferen	ce	
	% Ranked Most Important				t
	Mean	40 years or	41 - 50	51-60	60 years
		younger	years	years	or older
To know more about: (n=267)					
Overall farm and ranch operations	4.2	45%	47%	46%	61%
Agricultural production practices	3.9	30%	38%	23%	32%
Health and well-being	3.6	9%	19%	30%	38%
Regulatory and policy issues	3.7	23%	23%	23%	32%
Estate planning options	3.7	13%	23%	33%	56%
New business opportunities	3.1	23%	19%	21%	13%
Marketing traditional and alternative crops	3.6	18%	29%	30%	37%
Other (n=42)	4.5	86%	50%	75%	75%
To improve my farm/ranch skills in: (n=258)					
Financial management	4.3	47%	51%	52%	68%
Production records	3.9	35%	54%	38%	35%
Organization or overall operations	4.0	33%	44%	40%	30%
Computers, including use of software programs	3.9	29%	37%	49%	39%
Other (n=12)	4.5	100%	75%	60%	100%
To enhance my personal skills in: (n=262)					
Communicating/advocating for agriculture	3.8	27%	28%	33%	31%
Balancing farm and ranch life	3.6	15%	33%	33%	23%
Networking with others	3.9	30%	37%	40%	36%
Renewing commitment to farm/ranch	3.7	26%	31%	32%	24%
Other (n=12)	3.8	0%	50%	50%	0%

	No plans or	Have or	Plan to	Not	Would
	already doing	currently	start	applicable	like
	this prior to conference	modifying	within 1-	to	more
Changes in crop management:	(n=246)	operations	2 years	operation	training
	(219)				
Use of new/add'l tools for marketing	22%	31%	9%	32%	27%
grain. • Farmer	28%	36%	9% 6%	32% 19%	27%
Rancher	0%	4%	4%	82%	11%
• Farmer/Rancher Combined	27%	38%	18%	13%	41%
Service Provider/Consultant	7%	13%	7%	73%	10%
Value-added/Rural Business	0%	33%	0%	67%	33%
Reduce risk exposure with new/add'l					
crop insurance tools.	28%	29%	8%	30%	21%
• Farmer	34%	34%	6%	15%	22%
 Rancher 	4%	0%	4%	82%	11%
 Farmer/Rancher Combined 	30%	41%	11%	11%	30%
 Service Provider/Consultant 	7%	3%	10%	77%	7%
 Value-added/Rural Business 	67%	0%	0%	33%	0%
Develop crop budgets/enhance record					
keeping.	25%	35%	9%	25%	32%
• Farmer	32%	37%	9%	12%	32%
• Rancher	7%	4%	4%	75%	7%
• Farmer/Rancher Combined	25%	54%	12%	5%	51%
Service Provider/Consultant Walana Adad (Panal Paningan)	13%	13%	7%	67%	10%
Value-added/Rural Business Apply precision of technology on the	0%	67%	0%	33%	33%
Apply precision ag technology on the farm.	25%	24%	9%	34%	22%
• Farmer	25%	29%	10%	22%	21%
• Rancher	7%	4%	0%	79%	4%
Farmer/Rancher Combined	35%	25%	12%	11%	39%
Service Provider/Consultant	7%	3%	3%	83%	3%
Value-added/Rural Business	67%	3%	0%	0%	0%
Changes in livestock management:	(n=245)	2,0	- 70		- 70
Use of new/add'l tools for marketing					
livestock.	19%	19%	7%	48%	20%
• Farmer	17%	19%	3%	58%	10%
Rancher	18%	36%	14%	4%	54%
Farmer/Rancher Combined	29%	27%	13%	13%	36%
 Service Provider/Consultant 	3%	7%	7%	80%	3%
Value-added/Rural Business	0%	0%	0%	67%	0%
Implement animal ID/tracking	070	0 70	0,0	0.70	0 70
processes.	25%	17%	5%	50%	15%
• Farmer	20%	10%	2%	60%	7%
 Rancher 	32%	39%	7%	7%	36%
 Farmer/Rancher Combined 	41%	28%	11%	11%	30%
 Service Provider/Consultant 	3%	7%	7%	83%	3%
 Value-added/Rural Business 	0%	0%	0%	67%	0%
Implement new grazing practices.	21%	18%	9%	50%	13%
 Farmer 	17%	7%	8%	63%	10%
• Rancher	29%	39%	11%	7%	25%
 Farmer/Rancher Combined 	34%	34%	9%	13%	20%
Service Provider/Consultant	0%	10%	10%	77%	3%
 Value-added/Rural Business 	33%	0%	0%	33%	0%

Appendix Table 2 (cont'd): Resulting I Improve or Enhance Operations.	From the Confere	ıce - Actual and	Anticipate	d Steps Take	n to
improve or Enhance Operations.	No plans or	Have or	Plan to	Not	Would
	already doing	currently	start	applicable	like
	this prior to	modifying	within 1-	to	more
	conference	operations	2 years	operation	training
Add value to cow/calf enterprise by	-				
changing management practices.	19%	18%	8%	51%	20%
 Farmer 	15%	6%	5%	65%	9%
 Rancher 	25%	39%	11%	7%	43%
 Farmer/Rancher Combined 	30%	37%	12%	7%	42%
 Service Provider/Consultant 	0%	10%	7%	83%	3%
 Value-added/Rural Business 	33%	0%	0%	33%	0%
Changes in business operations:	(n=240)				
Use computer-based tools for use in					
decision-making.	21%	41%	11%	16%	37%
• Farmer	26%	36%	6%	12%	35%
 Rancher 	14%	50%	7%	11%	32%
 Farmer/Rancher Combined 	14%	51%	16%	7%	46%
 Service Provider/Consultant 	13%	20%	17%	43%	20%
 Value-added/Rural Business 	0%	33%	33%	33%	33%
Develop an estate plan.	17%	39%	24%	13%	35%
 Farmer 	17%	41%	22%	8%	35%
 Rancher 	21%	39%	11%	18%	14%
 Farmer/Rancher Combined 	14%	35%	37%	5%	47%
 Service Provider/Consultant 	10%	20%	20%	47%	17%
 Value-added/Rural Business 	0%	67%	33%	0%	33%
Implement new safety practices.	43%	29%	4%	19%	15%
• Farmer	38%	32%	3%	15%	16%
• Rancher	54%	25%	4%	11%	7%
Farmer/Rancher Combined A	53%	25%	9%	7%	16%
Service Provider/Consultant	23%	13%	0%	57%	10%
Value-added/Rural Business	67%	13%	0%	0%	0%
Adapt or adopt tax planning strategies.	24%	46%	8%	13%	33%
• Farmer	24%	50%	8%	7%	32%
Rancher Farmer (Pancher Combined)	25%	32%	11%	4%	29%
• Farmer/Rancher Combined	21% 17%	51%	7%	11% 53%	49% 7%
Service Provider/Consultant Value added / Pural Pusings	67%	20% 33%	10% 0%	55% 0%	
 Value-added/Rural Business Develop a business plan. 	36%	26%	8%	24%	33% 20%
Farmer	36%	26%	5%	19%	19%
Rancher	32%	29%	11%	14%	21%
Farmer/Rancher Combined	43%	21%	13%	13%	27%
Service Provider/Consultant	17%	17%	7%	63%	3%
Value-added/Rural Business	33%	33%	33%	0%	0%
Start a niche business using non-	33 /0	3370	3370	0 70	0 70
traditional crops or livestock.	24%	4%	8%	56%	17%
• Farmer	25%	5%	5%	52%	15%
• Rancher	21%	4%	18%	43%	25%
Farmer/Rancher Combined	26%	4%	12%	46%	21%
Service Provider/Consultant	10%	0%	3%	83%	7%
Value-added/Rural Business	33%	0%	33%	33%	0%

Appendix Table 3: Degree of Impacts of Fa	arm/Ranch/Bu	siness Char	nges Made. <i>(</i>	n=274).	
	No Impact	Slight	Moderate	High	Not
	1	Impact	Impact	Impact	Applicable
Increased profit for the farm or ranch	22%	32%	28%	8%	11%
• Farmer	21%	32%	30%	11%	6%
Rancher	27%	54%	12%	4%	4%
Farmer/Rancher Combined	19%	32%	39%	6%	6%
Service Provider/Consultant	23%	10%	13%	0%	53%
Value-added/Rural Business	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%
varae aaaca, Rarai Business	3370	0770	070	070	0 70
Improved farm/ranch sustainability	22%	31%	27%	9%	12%
Farmer	22%	34%	27%	12%	6%
 Rancher 	19%	58%	15%	4%	4%
 Farmer/Rancher Combined 	20%	22%	44%	9%	4%
 Service Provider/Consultant 	23%	10%	7%	0%	60%
 Value-added/Rural Business 	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%
Improved family health	18%	31%	29%	12%	10%
• Farmer	15%	35%	31%	15%	4%
Rancher	19%	41%	22%	4%	15%
Farmer/Rancher Combined	31%	27%	26%	13%	4%
Service provider/Consultant	10%	7%	30%	7%	47%
Value-added/Rural Business	33%	33%	33%	0%	0%
- Value added/Rarai Basiness	3370	3370	3370	070	0 70
Enhanced safety for family and					
employees	24%	33%	23%	7%	13%
• Farmer	23%	36%	26%	9%	7%
• Rancher	39%	27%	15%	4%	15%
 Farmer/Rancher Combined 	26%	33%	26%	9%	7%
Service Provider/Consultant	10%	23%	13%	0%	53%
 Value-added/Rural Business 	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%
Increased value-added/alternative					
business activity	39%	26%	11%	4%	20%
• Farmer	41%	28%	10%	4%	17%
 Rancher 	31%	46%	4%	4%	15%
 Farmer/Rancher Combined 	45%	19%	17%	8%	11%
 Service Provider/consultant 	24%	14%	7%	0%	55%
 Value-added/rural business 	33%	33%	0%	33%	0%
Increased effectiveness in business	14%	28%	36%	13%	7%
• Farmer	14%	30%	38%	13%	6%
Rancher	19%	41%	30%	4%	7%
Farmer/Rancher Combined	17%	24%	37%	20%	2%
 Service Provider/Consultant 	10%	17%	27%	10%	37%
 Value-added/Rural Business 	0%	33%	67%	0%	0%
,					
Increased use of agricultural	110/	2007	260/	2007	60/
networks/resources • Farmer	11%	28%	36%	20%	6% 404
	14%	24%	34%	25% 704	4% 404
Rancher Former/Panahar Combined	7%	56%	26%	7%	4%
• Farmer/Rancher Combined	9% 204	27%	46%	16% 13%	2%
 Service Provider/Consultant Value-added/Rural Business 	3% 0%	20%	33%		30% 0%
 Value-added/Rural Business 	U%0	33%	33%	33%	0%

Appendix Table 4: Degree of Impacts of P	ersonal Change	s Made. (n	=274).		
	No Impact	Slight	Moderate	High	Not
	•	Impact	Impact	Impact	Applicable
Enhanced role in farm/ranch business					
management and production decisions	17%	31%	29%	15%	8%
 Farmer 	13%	34%	33%	16%	4%
 Rancher 	24%	48%	16%	12%	0%
 Farmer/Rancher Combined 	19%	28%	32%	19%	2%
 Service Provider/Consultant 	24%	10%	14%	7%	45%
 Value-added/Rural Business 	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%
Enhanced role in farm/ranch business					
financial decisions	16%	31%	27%	19%	8%
• Farmer	12%	33%	31%	20%	4%
Rancher	15%	46%	27%	12%	0%
Farmer/Rancher Combined	17%	29%	27%	25%	2%
Service Provider/Consultant	28%	7%	10%	10%	45%
Value-added/Rural Business	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%
Increased role in agricultural advocacy	20%	34%	24%	16%	7%
Farmer	22%	34%	22%	18%	5%
Rancher	31%	46%	19%	0%	4%
Farmer/Rancher Combined	13%	40%	25%	17%	6%
Service Provider/Consultant	13%	17%	30%	20%	20%
Value-added/Rural Business	33%	0%	67%	0%	0%
value-added/Rurar business	3370	0 70	07 70	0 70	0 70
Improved role as a service provider	220/	270/	2007	F 0/	150/
within your organization*	32% 30%	27% 34%	20%	5%	15%
• Farmer			18%	3%	15%
RancherFarmer/Rancher Combined	39% 49%	27%	15%	4%	15%
	49% 3%	24% 10%	12% 48%	4% 17%	12%
Service Provider/Consultant Walnut and All (Providence Providence)					21%
 Value-added/Rural Business 	67%	0%	0%	33%	0%
Increased participation in agricultural					
organizations/networks	26%	35%	19%	11%	9%
Farmer	27%	38%	19%	10%	7%
 Rancher 	26%	44%	7%	7%	15%
 Farmer/Rancher Combined 	35%	35%	14%	10%	8%
 Service provider/Consultant 	10%	17%	38%	17%	17%
 Value-added/Rural Business 	33%	33%	0%	33%	0%
Enhanced personal health and well-					
being	17%	33%	31%	14%	5%
• Farmer	14%	33%	36%	15%	2%
 Rancher 	33%	22%	26%	7%	11%
 Farmer/Rancher Combined 	23%	40%	23%	14%	0%
 Service provider/Consultant 	4%	25%	29%	18%	25%
Value-added/Rural Business	0%	67%	0%	33%	0%

Appendix Table 5: Estimated Dollar Value of Select Livestock Represented by WIA Survey Respondents. Livestock # of Head Average Price/Head Dollar Value(000) (March 17-21, 2011 market prices) 54,604 \$100* Swine (nursery/grow/finish) \$ 5,460 \$213* 338 Swine (reproductive) 1,587 \$ Sheep 4,289 \$175± \$ 751 Beef (feeders) 33,416 \$1,172§ \$39,164 Beef cows 33.660 \$1,450# \$48,807 **Totals** 127,556 \$94,520

Sources: Estimates based on average weight and local pricing

#Ericson, NE - Ericson Spalding Livestock Auction (WH_LS758) March 17, 2012

Appendix Table 6: Estimated Dollar Value of Select Crops Represented by WIA Survey Respondents.							
Farm Crops		# of Acres	Average Statewide Yield*	Price Per Unit*	Dollar Value(000) (July & Sept, 2011 cash)		
Corn*		144,230	160.0 BPA	\$6.10 \$/bu	\$140,768		
Soybeans [±]		72,115	53.5 BPA	\$11.50 \$/bu	\$44,369		
Wheat [¤]		23,651	45.0 BPA	\$6.75 \$bu	\$7,184		
	Totals	239,996		·	192,321		

Source: Estimates based on average bushels per acre (BPA) and average price as determined by: *2011 State Agriculture Overview: Nebraska. USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, May 14, 2012

^{*}National Direct Delivered Feeder Pig Report: Week Ending March 16, 2012; National Daily Hog and Pork Summary, March 21, 2012; National Direct Sow Price Comparison report (NW_LS832) March 21, 2012

[±]National Sheep Summary for Wednesday March 21, 2012

[§]Nebraska Weekly Feeder Cattle Auction Summary (WH_LS795) March 17, 2012; National Daily Direct Slaughter Cattle - Negotiated Purchases Summary (LM_CT115) March 20, 2012

Agricultural Economics Evaluative Study, December 2012
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