

## Building Capacity Through Education/Technology

Marko Manoukian, MSU Extension agent in Phillips County, works with local veterinarians to collaborate on educational opportunities for livestock producers. The livestock industry in Phillips County is worth more than 117 million dollars and produces enough beef to feed 375,000 people annually. In 2015 at an annual Jim Schumacher Memorial seminar, 35 producers received information on vaccinations, collaborative programs with Non-Government Organizations, federal rules on manure management and water, proper harvesting of forages, and the 50K genetic evaluation system. Producers also receive information in one-on-one visits at the Extension office or with the agent to learn how to keep up herd health, manage operations, and save money overall.

Manoukian also works to keep producers apprised of the shrinking U.S. cow herd. This has caused USDA to reach out to other countries for beef production.



**Dr. Anne Johnson addressing area producers about the importance of syringe maintenance within their livestock program.**

U.S. Beef Imports	2,401,512,699	2,994,781,979	24.70%
Country	Jan. - Oct. 2014	Jan. - Oct. 2015	Change
Australia	848,033,887	1,140,399,364	34.48%
New Zealand	521,828,483	613,127,639	17.50%
Canada	496,821,674	530,796,333	6.84%
Mexico	258,220,147	334,945,150	29.71%
Brazil	66,974,308	133,506,322	99.34%
Uruguay	76,040,840	119,429,139	57.06%
Nicaragua	101,081,446	87,685,470	-13.25%
Costa Rica	22,098,491	23,909,568	8.20%
Honduras	7,374,273	3,415,398	-53.68%
Japan	1,388,194	2,568,596	85.03%
Ireland	0	2,205,487	NA
Chile	192,850	1,556,879	NA
Argentina	1,381,353	1,195,646	-13.44%
Denmark	0	25,024	NA
Croatia	14,087	15,294	8.56%
Italy	0	652	NA
Source: ERS/USDA (pounds)			

As of 2015 the U.S. has now become a net importer of beef in value and volume. In a county with beef production worth more than 100 million dollars, Manoukian works to keep producers informed of changes and opportunities. He has developed a listserv where information like the table to the left and additional beef import proposals can be submitted quickly to producers so they may have their voice heard on these issues. The listserv is also used to distribute news and other timely challenges facing the livestock industry.

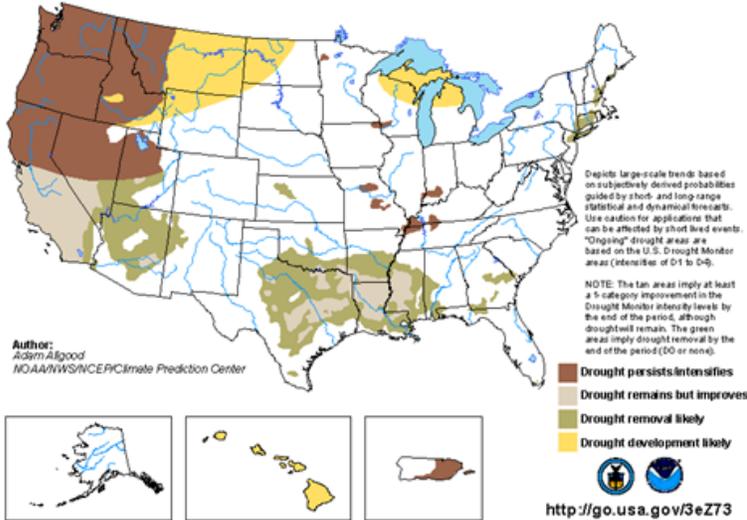
The Extension Agent continues to provide nitrate testing services to area livestock producers. The testing of 34 forage samples in 2015 resulted in 40 percent being positive. If each positive sample would have killed one adult cow, this prevented the loss of 14 animals or \$25,000.

# Soil Moisture a Concern

Following intermittent years of drought and near drought in 2015, stored soil moisture was a focus of the annual crop tours in Phillips County. Approximately 65 area producers attended four crop tours in July 2015. Some locations in Phillips County only had 1.6 inches of growing season moisture since the spring crops were planted. This means that most of the crop was grown on stored soil moisture, which is water that is retained in soil from snow melt or passing rain. Without stored moisture, the grain crops would have been a total loss. 2016 could be another year of high reliance on stored

soil moisture, as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicts an extended dry period through January of 2016 for most of Montana. Because of tools suggested at summer crop tours, producers will be better able to utilize soil moisture probes and precipitation estimates, which will both be important for the 2016 crop year. Information gathered by producers at these Extension crop tours assist in producing over 6.4 million bushels of wheat with a value of 32 million dollars. It is enough wheat to feed 2.5 million people on average.

**U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook** Drought Tendency During the Valid Period Valid for October 15 - January 31, 2016 Released October 15, 2015



United States season drought outlook map from NOAA.

Grain pours into a semi-truck during 2015 harvest.



## St. Mary irrigation project moves forward

The St. Mary irrigation project initiates its flow near St. Mary River on the Blackfeet Reservation. The facility is owned and managed by the BOR (Bureau of Reclamation). Since 2003, a group of affected citizens has been working with state, federal, tribal, recreation and irrigation interests to find a workable solution to the deterioration of the 1916 constructed facility. In November of 2015 the Phillips County Extension Agent was approved by the working group to be the local Co-Chair, representing basin members along with the other Co-Chair, Lt. Governor Mike Cooney.

The St. Mary irrigation project provides irrigation water to 125,000 acres from Havre to Glasgow. The irrigation system alone can produce enough food to feed a million people annually. The system also provides drinking water to 18,000 people across the Hi-Line including the towns of Havre, Chinook, Fort Belknap, and Glasgow.

On a global basis 98% of the water is in the form of salt water and only 2% is in the form of fresh water. With a global population to reach 9.5 billion by 2050, water will become a critical asset. The Phillips County Extension Agent is committed to assisting the St. Mary Working Group find a workable solution to fixing the aging infrastructure.



Drop two is in imminent danger of failure.



# Phillips County 4-H Happenings



## Multi County 4-H Camp

The Phillips County Extension Agent, along with agents, leaders, staff and teen leaders, develop and implement a two-day 4-H camp for youth ages 8 to 13. This camp encompasses six counties and 72 youth. Eleven teen leaders serve as counselors and create a camp that is all inclusive, fun-filled and loaded with hands-on activities. Youth learn to work with peers by participating in team building activities such as canoeing, archery, native dye, paw prints and a scavenger hunt.



Youth are taught canoe safety before enjoying the water by learning how to paddle a canoe.

Phillips County had 28 youth participate in various camp activities such as an orienteering workshop. Youth were given a compass and a set of bearings with a certain amount of distance to cover before ending up at the finish line. Youth learned navigation

skills in reading a compass, team building and communication skills along with fitness as they had a variety of terrain to go through.



Above, youth learn to stay healthy by exercising in fun and creative ways.

Below, youth are shocked as a teen leader creates an "oil spill."



## Introducing youth to positive influences through 4-H

Extension staff along with adult volunteers and teen leaders provide 23 Cloverbuds with decision making and social skills. Youth ages 5 to 8 participate in a non-competitive educational program with hands-on activities. Teen leader Taylor taught youth to become aware of the importance of exercise and healthy food by creating a fun way to burn off calories with home made batons and dancing. This activity helps youth in decision making by choosing healthy snacks and develops their social skills through games with their peers.

Youth became aware of pollutions. They learn about air, noise and water pollution, how it could affect them and what they can do about it. Youth increased their social and decision making skills by creating an oil spill with their peers. Youth had to decide how to clean up the spill and what could have been done to prevent the spill.

# 4-H Scholarships



Senior members from 2014-2015 that have participated in the Phillips County 4-H program for 10 years.

The Phillips County 4-H program works to better the lives of its members through participation, belonging, and doing. This is certainly evident by the continued involvement of youth in 4-H through their senior year. Seniors have to be involved in teen leadership to apply for the scholarships that are provided by our PC 4-H Council each year. Teen leadership experiences have included mock interview judging, showmanship clinics, leather workshops, babysitting clinics and being a mentor to a younger member. The long term benefits of begin a 4-H member for over nine years is the devel-

opment of public speaking, leadership and self-confidence.

## 4-H Fair Fun

The Phillips County Agent, staff and adult volunteers help youth prepare for the 100th Phillips County Fair. Youth in 4-H learn to raise healthy animals that will be purchased by area consumers. With the financial journals completed, they learn the value of working for a dollar.



Youth being interviewed by the judge.



Above a youth poses with her market lamb.



Above a youths first time showing his animal at the fair.

Grade	K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
	5	9	12	14	15	14	17	11	10	10	7	11	11
Female	4	7	6	9	8	7	8	5	6	4	2	5	9
Male	1	2	6	5	7	7	9	6	4	6	5	6	2

The table at the left shows the grade level of youth and the gender of each age

## Contact Us



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