



For Release: IMMEDIATE

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Date: November 10, 2017

South Dakota Agricultural Leaders Explore Land Use and Diverse Ranching

Members of Class IX of the South Dakota Agricultural and Rural Leadership Program (SDARL) recently explored issues on land use and diverse ranching during a three day seminar in Spearfish, Belle Fourche, and Harding County.

The seminar featured a visit to Slim Buttes Buffalo Ranch to learn how Sandy and Jacki Limpert and their son, Brodie, transitioned their sheep, cattle and haying business into a buffalo-exclusive ranching operation. Class members learned about the high survival rate of buffalo, regardless of weather, the resurgence of buffalo meat as a restaurant menu item, and the impact buffalo ranching is having on the economic outlook of South Dakota.

Class members also heard a panel discussion and presentation by land owners and officials associated with oil and mineral rights in the region. Bob Johnson, former Harding County Commissioner, Linda Gilbert, former school board member and rancher, and Tim Brown, rancher, told of conflicts in their communities where oil revenues were a benefit to economic development, but surface and mineral right conflicts negatively impacted ranchers. Also presenting were Mike Lees, from the South Dakota Department of Energy and Natural Resources, and Corey Irons, General Manager at Continental Oil Company. The class toured ranches and oil fields in the area.

Dr. Parthasarathi Nag, Professor of Mathematics and Black Hills State University, spoke to Class IX members and alumni about the social, cultural, and economic conditions in India, where the class will travel for an international study seminar in February.

Developing Visionary Leadership

Board of Directors: Nate Franzen, Yankton - Chair; Roxanne Knock, Tulare – Vice Chair; Nathan Sparks, Mitchell - Treasurer; Haven Stuck, Rapid City – Secretary. Members: Bill Even, Adel, IA; Mike Jaspers, Sioux Falls; Terry Jaspers, Sisseton; Eric Jennings, Spearfish; Don Marshall, Brookings; Jon Nelson, Lake Preston; Stephen Pohl, Brookings; Michelle Robbins, White; Brad Sanderson, Lake Preston; Robert Thaler, Brookings; Todd Wilkinson, DeSmet; Myron Williams, Wall; Kurt Zuehlke, Britton.



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The second day of the seminar saw class members excel in developing exceptional presentation skills. Jeff Bishop and Mark Bowser from Baker Communications worked on audience analysis, structuring presentations for effectiveness, use of the voice, and projecting confidence and high-impact which are, essential for leadership development.

The seminar concluded with a half-day devoted to understanding the extensive sheep and wool industry in South Dakota. Speakers included Dave Ollila, SDSU Extension Sheep Field Specialist, and Gwen Kitzan from Kitzan Sheep Producers, Nisland, SD. Class members toured Center of the Nation Wool, the nation's largest marketing wool warehouse, in Belle Fourche. Additional tours included the Pittman Sheep Production Ranch, and the Newell Sheep Yards, a sheep-only sale yard.

The SDARL program is a series of seminars over 18-months where competitively-selected class members learn the skills, knowledge, and character of leaders for agriculture and rural communities in South Dakota. A new class will be selected in 2018, with applications available January 1 on the website at www.sdagleadership.com. The SDARL Foundation, a 501 –c-3 corporation under South Dakota law, is the management and funding organization for the program and other leadership development efforts.

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SDARL leadership class members explore diverse ranching practices at the Slim Buttes Buffalo Ranch in Harding County.



Class members begin working on presentation skills training in Spearfish, SD during a recent seminar held in several West River locations.

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