

beefSD: Enhancing Knowledge and Success of Beginning Beef Producers Through Mentorship and Training

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Background



- Global Food Security
 - Population doubles by 2050
 - Developing economies demanding more protein
- Beef cattle producers are aging
 - Average age = 58
- Efforts needed to improve success of beginning producers





Target Audience



- Beginning farmers and ranchers:
 - less than 10 years in ag production
 - a strong desire to begin a beef enterprise
- Recruit 50 beginning producers from 30 operations
 - 10% or more will be military veterans



Partners

- SD Farm Bureau
- SD Cattlemen's Association
- SD Stockgrowers Association
- SD Farmers Union
- First Bank and Trust, Canton
- Dacotah Bank, Faulkton
- First Interstate Bank, Wall
- Cast study coaches
- Peer mentors



Our Goals – Target Outcomes



- Equip beginning beef cattle producers to make wise management decisions
- Lead to economic, ecological, and sociological sustainability
- Contribute to ongoing agricultural production, land stewardship, and rural community viability

Objectives

1. Provide production, business, financial, and marketing tools
2. Understand alternative production systems
3. Feedback postweaning performance from cow-calf enterprises
4. Mentorship from established, successful producers
5. Gain knowledge of other industry segments



Approach



- Form 3 or more learning communities
- Embed Extension, partner organization, case study, and peer mentors in each learning community

Six major components:

1. Conventional classroom instruction
2. Case-studies of alternative production systems
3. Evaluation of post-weaning performance of participants' cattle
4. Interactive “web-based” learning
5. Yearly multi-day travel-study trips
6. Mentoring

What do you have to share?



- Mentoring is critical
 - Coaching is essential
- Most beginning producers are young – they are dealing with a lot of change
 - Be adaptable with them
- We have developed a curriculum that could be adapted to other states and commodity species and crops



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