



Agricultural Systems

PHOTO: USDA

Improving livestock safety, production and profitability

Production, nutrition and transportation safety all affect a livestock producer's ability to be successful. Land-grant researchers and Extension educators are developing innovative solutions to help improve their bottom line in these crucial areas.

Successful examples include:

- In **Indiana**, Extension led efforts to help educate small ruminant owners about the Dairy Herd Improvement program to improve the herd health of their dairy goats through a webinar platform during the COVID-19 pandemic. Seventy percent of the owners surveyed reported greater confidence in selecting a Dairy Herd Improvement test type, and 50% said they now understand where to send their samples for testing.
- Extension educators in **North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Georgia** and **West Virginia** developed the Bovine Emergency Response Plan (BERP) and teaching curriculum as a framework for emergency responders to more appropriately address accidents involving cattle transport vehicles. Eighty-three of the participants indicated the training helped them mitigate an event, and 80% shared the knowledge they learned with others.
- Lamb and goat (small ruminant) production is increasing in the United States due to the niche market for their meat by ethnic communities. In **Delaware**, Extension specialists conducted educational sessions for small ruminant producers who are new to the market. All of the participants rated the overall program as very informative, 88% learned new information and 71% said they would implement a new practice they learned on their operation.
- **New Mexico** researchers have shown results that improve reproduction, diet and growth in beef cattle. Examples include: the effects of stair-step nutritional programming on ovarian development in replacement beef heifers; effects of maternal supplementation of arginine during pregnancy on fetal development; and effects of supplemental fat and roughage level on intake, growth performance, and immune function of newly received feedlot calves.

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Beef Brunch educational series becomes leading information source for Louisiana beef cattle producers

*The Beef Brunch Educational Series is the first of its kind in the **Louisiana** State University AgCenter's Beef Cattle program and was initially designed to maintain engagement with beef cattle producers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to its success, this series will continue past the pandemic and become the leading informational source for Louisiana beef cattle producers.*

The series led to development of the "LSU AgCenter—Livestock" channel on YouTube and a Beef Brunch webpage. The series includes live webinars and recorded news updates. Monthly webinars are held at 10:30 a.m., allowing producers time to make initial morning rounds and then be in the fields after lunch. Tuesday was identified as the better weekday to accommodate local livestock auction barn sale dates and other weekly events that cattle producers commonly attend.

Engagement is being measured through video views and requests for survey participation after webinars. Participants reported they were likely to participate in future webinars.