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Women In Agriculture

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The nineteenth annual Women In Agriculture Conference was held September 11-12, 2003 in Kearney, Nebraska. This year’s conference hosted 425 women representing 5 states and 79 counties in Nebraska. As in the past, lenders played a large part, 233 of the women who attended were sponsored by their local lender. The conference took on a special format this year as a time of healing and sharing due to the untimely death of Deb Rood, Conference Coordinator.

Deb’s nineteen years as coordinator and co-creator of Women In Agriculture, its programs and its annual conference touched thousands of lives. Deb’s primary focus was networking, she was aware that ag women learned as much from talking and sharing with one another as they did from the experts.

This year’s conference offered nineteen workshops focusing on computerized record keeping, income tax management, estate planning, marketing and financial workshops. Other topics included family relations, water issues, kid’s chores, communication, understanding debt, beautifying your home from the outside in and how to bring out the B.E.S.T. in ourselves.

Many programs have been developed as a result of the success of this conference. The Women In Agriculture Risk Management groups will begin meeting this month. These clubs provide an opportunity for women to learn management and decision making skills, and gives them an opportunity to socialize with like-minded women. Many ag women across the state have received training to become co-facilitators and are beginning clubs in their area.

The Women In Agriculture Regional Conferences for the North Central Region will be held January 12-
13, 2004 in Sioux Falls, SD and January 15-16, 2004 in Normal, IL. These conferences are designed for ag women who are involved in either ag production, ag business or land ownership from across the North Central Region. The conferences will provide an opportunity to meet and network with other ag women throughout the North Central Region.

The National Women In Agriculture Programming Conference will be held February 17-18, 2004 in Kansas City, MO. This conference is designed for state and county educators who want to begin or expand programming for women involved in agriculture. As a result of this conference extension educators will have a better understanding of risk management education, how to develop risk management programming for ag women, and will establish a nationwide network of educators interested in women’s programming.

The above programs have been developed as a result of grants awarded to Deb in the past few years. She had a great desire to educate and train women involved in agriculture. Ag women are faced daily with a variety of business and personal decisions in their operations.

It was an honor and privilege to complete the coordination of this year’s conference. I’m thankful for the groundwork Deb established and for sharing her vision with us. It is now up to us to face the challenge of continuing on without her.

Beth Eberspacher, (402) 472-2039
Programs Coordinator
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