

4-18-2018

Impacts Identified with Women in Agriculture Conference Review

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Schlake, Marilyn R. and Vogt, Rebecca J., "Impacts Identified with Women in Agriculture Conference Review" (2018). *Cornhusker Economics*. 948.

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Cornhusker Economics

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Market Report	Year Ago	4 Wks Ago	4-13-18
Livestock and Products, Weekly Average			
Nebraska Slaughter Steers, 35-65% Choice, Live Weight	124.27	127.81	122.00
Nebraska Feeder Steers, Med. & Large Frame, 550-600 lb.	181.17	188.89	182.38
Nebraska Feeder Steers, Med. & Large Frame 750-800 lb.	143.54	150.41	146.41
Choice Boxed Beef, 600-750 lb. Carcass.	209.94	224.46	213.34
Western Corn Belt Base Hog Price Carcass, Negotiated	55.99	56.29	51.53
Pork Carcass Cutout, 185 lb. Carcass 51-52% Lean.	74.42	72.46	65.96
Slaughter Lambs, woolled and shorn, 135-165 lb. National.	151.02	140.24	148.94
National Carcass Lamb Cutout FOB.	354.50	367.19	371.89
Crops, Daily Spot Prices			
Wheat, No. 1, H.W.			
Imperial, bu.	2.88	3.99	4.15
Corn, No. 2, Yellow Columbus , bu.	3.32	3.44	3.60
Soybeans, No. 1, Yellow Columbus , bu.	8.62	9.33	9.62
Grain Sorghum, No.2, Yellow			
Dorchester, cwt.	5.26	5.63	5.83
Oats, No. 2, Heavy			
Minneapolis, Mn, bu.	2.82	2.65	2.68
Feed			
Alfalfa, Large Square Bales, Good to Premium, RFV 160-185 Northeast Nebraska, ton.	123.75	150.00	*
Alfalfa, Large Rounds, Good Platte Valley, ton.	67.50	97.50	*
Grass Hay, Large Rounds, Good Nebraska, ton.	65.00	93.50	75.00
Dried Distillers Grains, 10% Moisture Nebraska Average.	105.00	151.00	168.50
Wet Distillers Grains, 65-70% Moisture Nebraska Average.	40.50	50.75	54.00
* No Market			

Since 1985, more than 300 farmers, ranchers and business owners annually attend the Women in Agriculture (WIA) Conference. Their purpose – to learn and to network. Are these women using their newly acquired knowledge and skills to positively impact their personal and business goals? Do they share their knowledge, teach others, add value to their agricultural operations, or serve as advocates for agriculture?

These questions were posed back in 2012 when researchers within the Department of Agricultural Economics conducted the first WIA comprehensive survey. In 2017, 782 WIA attendees from the 2013-2017 conferences were again asked the same questions. The results are similar. However, in 2017, more pointed questions were asked to discover how the respondents were using their information to minimize risks and increase productivity.

Individuals who participated in the 2017 survey self-identified their roles within their agricultural operation and within the industry. Just over one-half (52%) of the respondents stated they were main partners and 13 percent stated they were single owners of their agricultural operation. Within the industry, respondents indicated multiple roles, 58 percent stated they were farmers, 36 percent ranchers, and 25 were landowners only. Seventy percent indicated their roles as a combination of farmer and rancher. Almost one-quarter (24%) were involved in agricultural serv-

ices (i.e., FSA, Farm Credit, cooperatives) and only eight percent of the respondents identified themselves as a value-added business owner.

The reasons why individuals choose to participate in the WIA Conference has changed very little over the past ten years. In the 2012 survey, 49 percent wanted to gain knowledge and skills around farm and ranch operations, including how to improve their financial management practices. Comparatively, in 2017, the highest rated reasons for attending the conference included: to know more about overall farm and ranch operations (46 percent), to know more about financial or accounting practices, to improve skills in financial management, and to network with others.

Was the WIA Conference meeting the needs identified by the respondents? Were they improving their financial management practices and reducing risks? Like the 2012 results, the 2017 results indicated a solid **yes**--individuals were or are currently changing their agriculture operations as a result of the WIA Conference.

Figure 1 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that as a result of the WIA Conference, the changes made on their farm, ranch or business led to either a moderate or high impact in each of the outcome categories. The chart shows the responses by the respondents' self-identified roles.

Forty-five percent of farmers reported that changes made led to moderate and high impacts in profit for the farm or ranch, 54 percent had moderate or high impacts in effectiveness in business management and 47 percent in safety or family and employees. Similar impacts were reported from the farmer or rancher combined category, 40 percent for increases in farm/ranch profitability and 51 percent in effectiveness in business management

Figure 2 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated that as a result of the WIA Conference, they experienced moderate or high impacts in their personal agricultural roles. The greatest impact reported was in the areas of confidence in management of operation and family and/or business communications. Sixty-three percent of farmers/ranchers combined reported moderate to high impacts in confidence in management of their operation and 57 percent had moderate to high impacts in family and/or business communication. Over one-half of farmers (55%) and ranchers (52%) also reported moderate or high impacts in their roles in farm/ranch business financial decisions. Farmers also reported their roles in farm/ranch business management and production decisions (54%) and personal health and well-being (53%) as having moderate to high impacts.

Figure 1. Percentage of Respondents Indicating Changes Made on the Farm, Ranch or Business Led to Moderate and High Impacts for each Category

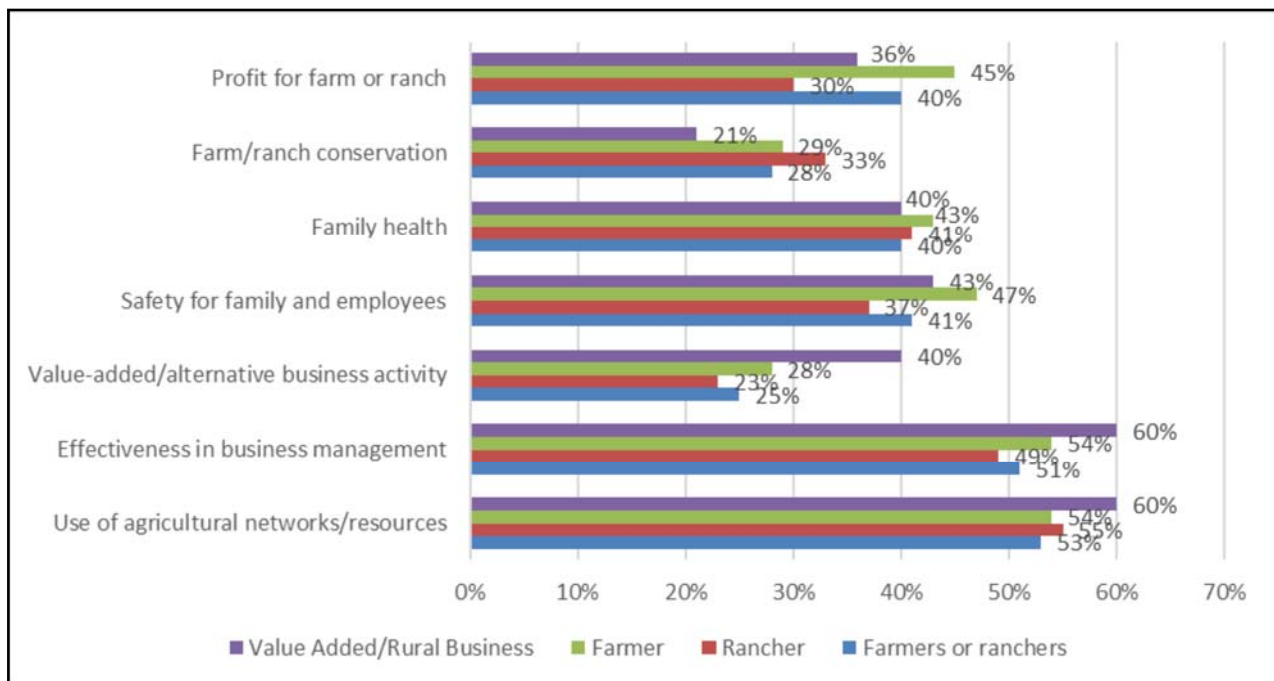
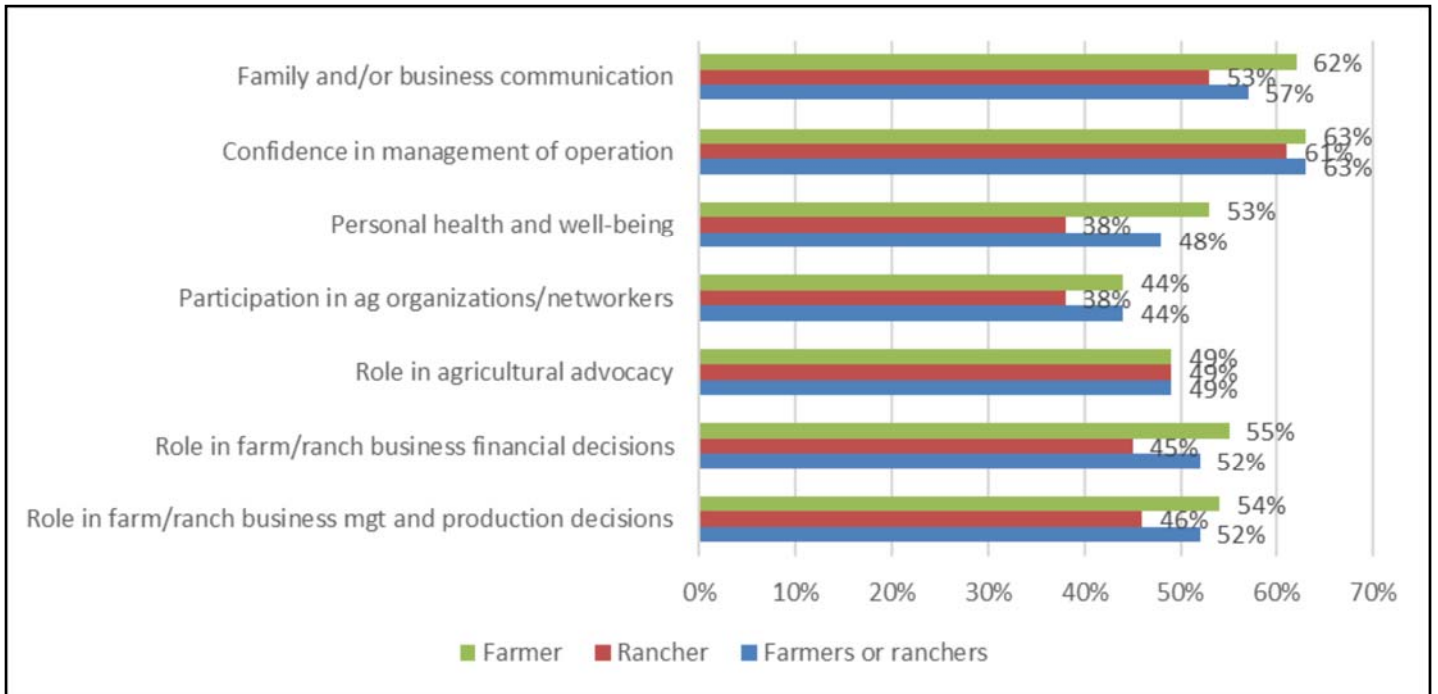


Figure 2. Percentage of Respondents Indicating Moderate and High Impacts from Personal Changes.



The impacts of the WIA Conference are further explained through respondent comments. One attendee stated, *“By learning about and using various marketing tools/contracts, I was able to increase our income 1-10% above previous years. I took over much of the day-to-day market watch and was able to alert my husband to potential market moves and what we should do.”* Another stated, *“Just by having a market plan saved us from doing something 'stupid' in fast moving markets. It's hard to put a dollar amount on this, but not having a plan or not understanding a contract meant we lost over a dollar per bushel one year.”*

Overall, the impacts of the WIA Conference has measureable impacts and lends to the importance of this conference. One attendee summed up the value of the WIA Conference, *“I think it's a great opportunity for women to learn about practices, changes in the industry, etc. There are so few times the women involved in a farm/ranch operation are recognized or have an event solely dedicated to them. Thank you for such a great event!”*

To read the entire 2017 Women in Agriculture survey results, visit wia.unl.edu or contact the survey researchers below.

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