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Cornhusker Economics

Cooperative Extension

Institute of Agriculture & Natural Resources
Department of Agricultural Economics
University of Nebraska – Lincoln

Faculty Exchange Program Finishes Its Fourth Year

The Department of Agricultural Economics recently completed its fourth year of partnering with USDA in a Faculty Exchange Program. During August of each year beginning professors from Russian and the Ukraine arrive in Lincoln, stay for about five months and then return to their homelands. While in Nebraska they take classes, travel, develop new class outlines, collect material and write articles, all of which are used when they return home to introduce to new classes and extension activities at their respective universities. The last group brings the total to 17 visiting professors that we have hosted at Nebraska. Impressions of the U.S. and Nebraska from last falls group, in their own words, follows.

Irina Skachkova

Omsk State Agrarian University, Russia

In the middle of July the new cycle of the Faculty Exchange Program begins. This program is sponsored by the USDA. This years participants from Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Yugoslavia arrived in Washington D.C., where we had a 3-week orientation. We learned about the USDA, its divisions and their functions. Then we departed for different states, going to universities in Nebraska, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Colorado to participate in FEP.

I think the FEP is very important for Russia. Since Russia chose the way of free market economy, our educational system has had a lot of changes. Universities had to finance their activities mostly from their own funds, so they had to implement commercial education and attract more students. Universities have to be competitive and give very good education. New courses related to market economy appeared in recent years. It has led to a necessity to increase the professional level of the staff. Professors had to revise existing courses, develop new ones, write outlines,

Market Report	Yr Ago	4 Wks Ago	4/4/03
<u>Livestock and Products,</u>			
<u>Average Prices for Week Ending</u>			
Slaughter Steers, Ch. 204, 1100-1300 lb Omaha, cwt	\$71.60	\$76.72	\$79.88
Feeder Steers, Med. Frame, 600-650 lb Dodge City, KS, cwt	87.37	80.92	88.69
Feeder Steers, Med. Frame 600-650 lb, Nebraska Auction Wght. Avg	97.76	88.39	96.76
Carcass Price, Ch. 1-3, 550-700 lb Cent. US, Equiv. Index Value, cwt	111.05	118.37	122.15
Hogs, US 1-2, 220-230 lb Sioux Falls, SD, cwt	31.75	35.00	32.00
Feeder Pigs, US 1-2, 40-45 lb Sioux Falls, SD, hd	35.71	*	42.50
Vacuum Packed Pork Loins, Wholesale, 13-19 lb, 1/4" Trim, Cent. US, cwt	*	94.07	87.26
Slaughter Lambs, Ch. & Pr., 115-125 lb Sioux Falls, SD, cwt	*	*	*
Carcass Lambs, Ch. & Pr., 1-4, 55-65 lb FOB Midwest, cwt	*	180.60	193.01
<u>Crops,</u>			
<u>Cash Truck Prices for Date Shown</u>			
Wheat, No. 1, H.W. Omaha, bu	3.08	3.61	3.44
Corn, No. 2, Yellow Omaha, bu	1.83	2.32	2.33
Soybeans, No. 1, Yellow Omaha, bu	4.43	5.54	5.82
Grain Sorghum, No. 2, Yellow Kansas City, cwt	3.45	4.38	4.26
Oats, No. 2, Heavy Minneapolis, MN, bu	2.34	2.10	2.03
<u>Hay,</u>			
<u>First Day of Week Pile Prices</u>			
Alfalfa, Sm. Square, RFV 150 or better Platte Valley, ton	115.00	150.00	127.50
Alfalfa, Lg. Round, Good Northeast Nebraska, ton	60.00	77.50	75.00
Prairie, Sm. Square, Good Northeast Nebraska, ton	92.50	115.00	117.50
* No market.			



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collect material for these courses and acquire new experience. FEP provided by the USDA helps a lot in this business. During this program professors of Russian Agrarian Universities have a great opportunity not only to learn about teaching experience and teaching techniques of American professors, but also to observe activities of American farmers, processing enterprises, supply cooperatives and other agribusiness firms in the U.S.

My first impression from Nebraska was the fields of corn and a new word in my vocabulary "cornhusker." Now I know what it means! At that time I just heard about American football and had never seen it even on TV. But in Nebraska I learned about fun, entertainment and business, professional things.

I had two field trips around Western Nebraska, South Dakota and California. I gained knowledge about the whole system of U.S. agriculture; how agricultural production goes from a farm through processing to a supermarket. I also got valuable knowledge about activities of the Extension Service, Cooperative Extension Specialists in different universities, and learned about programs provided to farmers and rural communities.

My home University has participated in FEP for four years. During this time a number of courses have been implemented or revised in OSAU. Besides, UNL and OSAU began to develop a joint project in the sphere of Distance Education. UNL has good experience in Distance Education. I was impressed by the modern equipment, hi-tech classrooms, labs and libraries at the University. All the professors are very kind and responsive. They always devote their time to answering our questions, share their experience and knowledge and help us better understand the courses that they teach. And I should note that all the people who I met in Nebraska are very nice. Everybody in Nebraska is very friendly and helpful. I really enjoyed my stay here. I fell in love with the wonderful people and special beauty of the nature in Nebraska!

And I would like to thank all the professors that I worked with and say special thanks to our supervisor Dr. Lutgen, Dr. King, Sue Miller, Sue Ellis our English teacher and Sue Dedic our good friend.

Tatiana Ermakova

Saratov State Socio-Economic University, Russia

I came to Nebraska in August 2002 on a Faculty Exchange Program. My first impression of Nebraska was the sight of boundless fields with corn and soybeans that I saw from an airplane before landing in Lincoln. The view was great; the lands of Nebraska have special beauty. Approaching Lincoln, I had no idea of what was waiting for

me there... I just wanted to learn more about American agriculture, new technologies, meet with people and better understand this land so mysterious for me.

Now, after spending more than five months here, I can say that it's been the greatest experience in my life. We attended classes at the University of Nebraska and traveled all over the state. I've been at many classes in my life, I studied and taught, but the classes are different here. I was impressed by the level of technology, the equipment in classrooms and computer labs. The style of teaching is very different here. In Russia teachers used to dictate lectures to students, and students wrote down every word during the class. This system seemed to be effective to us and the only one suitable, but in the United States I've learned about so many other creative and simple ways of organizing a class. Audio- and video conferences, PowerPoint presentations, classes via the Internet and cable TV, all these things went far beyond the limits of my imagination. Now I am looking forward to implementing all those techniques in Russia, they will be interesting and beneficial both for students and teachers.

Another exciting experience was visiting different places in Nebraska, meeting people and being on farms. The agricultural sector in the USA is much more advanced than in Russia, but still there are a lot of similarities, such as weather conditions and crops grown. American farmers are special people; they love their land and take very good care of it. We became very good friends with a family of farmers, and I had a chance to ride in a combine and a tractor. It was very exciting! Besides, I've gained knowledge about producing and marketing of agricultural commodities, agricultural equipment and agribusiness management.

Nebraska has been such a friendly and hospitable home for me, and I'm so sad that I have to leave soon. I will miss the beautiful landscapes of Nebraska, extraordinary sunsets and wonderful people. I want to thank everybody who took such good care of us during our stay in Lincoln, especially our supervisors Lynn Lutgen, Sue Miller, Dr. Jim King and our big friend Sue Dedic.

Iryna Firsova

**Kharkiv State Technical University
of Agriculture, Ukraine**

This year I got a unique opportunity to participate in the Faculty Exchange Program – 2002. The FEP gave us an insight into two very important things for our careers and success:

1. The American agriculture, its organization, operation, management and marketing, strengths and weaknesses;

2. The American economic education, its' methods of teaching and teaching evaluation; attitudes to educational process; techniques; structure of courses and organization of educational process.

Actually, by career and success I mean success in educating new world class professionals that will develop Ukrainian economy and make it sustainable, and cooperation with the local government and the existing enterprises, farms, etc. in order to do the best I can for my country today. And if somebody had asked me if this trip to America helped my profession, I would of course say yes.

Yes, of course this trip helped me with my profession, really helped! And I will take back home with me not only the idea about life in the U.S. and the American people, but the excitement about all the beautiful places.

I have visited here, but also gained knowledge and skills while being here, lots of useful materials, books, new ideas for my dissertation, career and life, respect to American culture and lifestyle and to the Ukrainian, Russian, Serbian and Uzbekistan culture, history, lifestyle and art. Here I got to know many people from different countries. Now I have more friends, they are all talented and very good people.

Now that I understand more in the area I work in, I will be able to teach the others more. And I feel more strength and more inspiration to continue working in Ukraine. Well, and the world seems much more opened to me now.

I have to mention that everything here was VERY different from what I had expected to see: from people to Grand Canyon, from the teaching methods in the universities to the lifestyle. I am really excited, inspired and more skilled to put this inspiration and the creative ideas into life, practice, work.

And moreover, I was very lucky to come to Nebraska and to meet all those people I have met here: our supervisor and all the professors who helped me.

What else can I add? Well, lots of things, because I feel like I can talk about this trip, about my experiences, new ideas, knowledge, etc. for hours. But I think I will be doing that in Ukraine. So here I have tried to limit myself to the minimum words, in order not to make you bored.

Food Processing Industry in the USA, and to learn about education and extension systems in the U.S.

Very useful for me was the cooperation with professors at UNL. It helped me to collect all necessary materials, gain new teaching methods and figure out optimal contents of new courses developed here for Kharkiv State Academy of Food Technology and Management, which is my home university.

I have worked a lot with library and web sources, which allowed me to collect data for my scientific research. I also collected some materials for colleagues in my home university in the field of teaching courses, distance education, function of extension service, managing coops in agriculture, differences between traditional and New Generation Coops, value-added processing and marketing, adding value through vertical structure, and so on.

For this period we also had a lot of visits in agrarian and food processing enterprises to familiarize us with the whole cycle of agricultural production beginning from farms to store shelves. All these meetings helped us to understand methods of cooperation between producers of agricultural products, processing enterprises and sales, advertising and governmental agencies.

We also had two big field trips that gave me an opportunity to visit different respective universities and learn about organization, managing, member relation, marketing and world trade programs, prices and financing questions of agribusinesses and food industry in the USA.

All events that I had during my staying in the USA were extremely informative and useful. Knowledge obtained here should be very useful for my teaching and research activity, and I would like to express my gratitude to all people involved into the Faculty Exchange Program.

Lynn Lutgen, (402) 472-3406
Extension Marketing Specialist

Angelika Krutova
Kharkiv State Academy of Food Technology
and Management

This years Faculty Exchange Program involves teachers from different universities from the Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Yugoslavia. I participated in this program because I considered it a very good opportunity to understand functioning of Agribusiness System and