



Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Center

Teaching Extension Agents About Climate Change Impacts on Livestock

Extension agents in the US often serve as a primary unbiased source for information on scientific topics to their clients. However, many of them are not well equipped to answer questions about changing climate and its impacts on livestock health and production. A multi-university group has worked together to produce an innovative online course to provide agents with a thorough understanding of the basics of climate variability and change in the US as well as its impacts on various species of livestock.

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COURSE CONTENT

1. **Climate is Always Changing: Climate and Weather Trends**
2. **Climate Impacts on Animal Production**
3. **Adaptation and Risk Management**
4. **Climate Science: The Climate System, Past Climates and Present Climate Trends, Climate Models and Predicted Climate Change**
5. **Contribution and Mitigation of Greenhouse Gas Emissions**
6. **Regulations, Policy, and Market Opportunity**
7. **Communicating Science During Controversy**

UNIQUE PROJECT FEATURES

★ Course is designed as self-paced online video training through Moodle with a total time of 12-15 hours

★ Modules are taught by topic experts and include quizzes, forums, written analyses and on-line chats to maximize participation

★ New course sections are started at the beginning of each month and students are given 4-6 weeks to finish the material

★ Students who complete the course earn Continuing Education Credits from Certified Crop Advisor (CCA), the American Registry of Professional Animal Scientists, and many Professional Engineer licensing programs

CURRENT COURSE STATUS

The course has been offered each month since September 2013. So far 139 individuals have registered for the course. Of these, 121 were from the US and 18 from other countries.

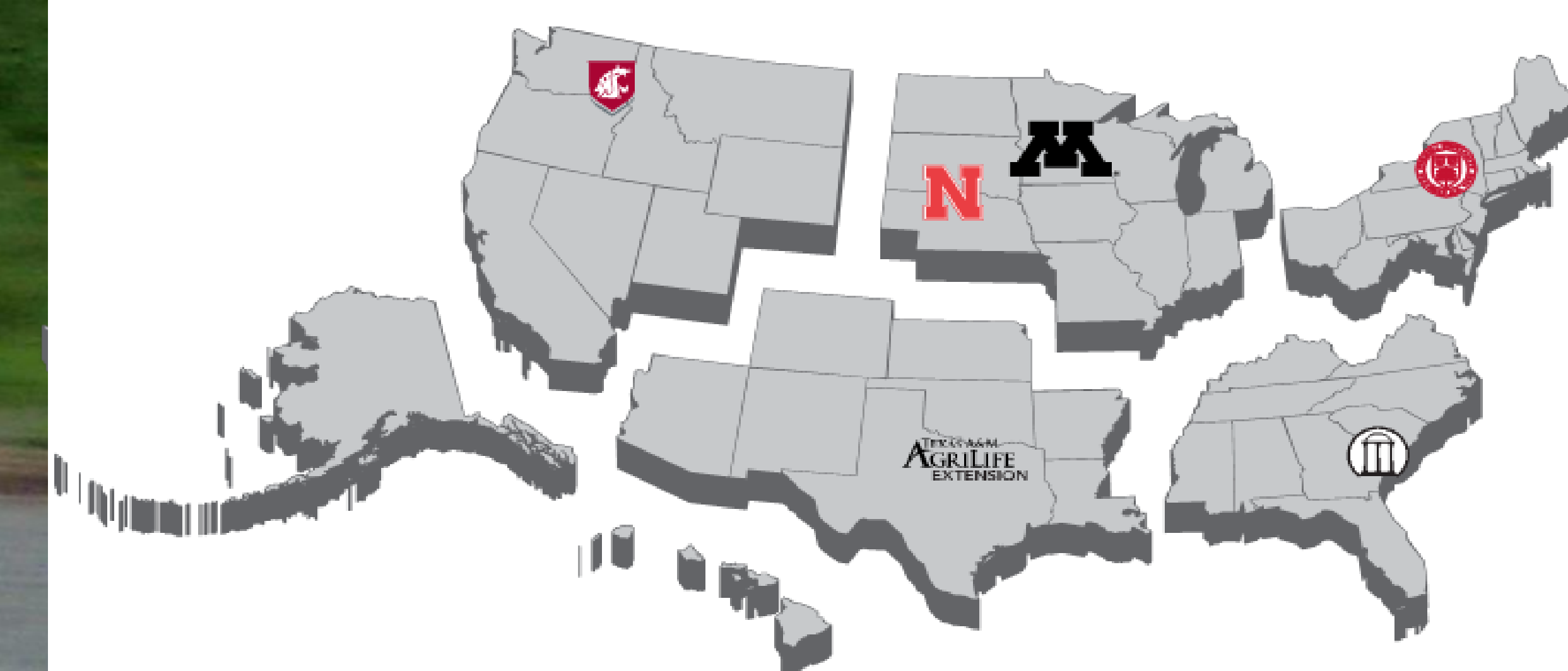
Participants were primarily from Extension (44%), with an additional 30% from universities (non-Extension). The rest were from the private sector (10%), NRCS (6%), regulators (3%) and producers (2%); others' affiliations were not identified.

Of those registered for the course, 36% completed all course requirements. Those who cited reasons for not completing the course mainly indicated time constraints due to the holidays and end-of-year reports they needed to write.

The course is now being expanded to include more web resources and fact sheets for agents to use in client interactions as well as updated video modules.



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"A primary desired outcome is that stakeholder decisions result in reduced greenhouse gas emissions without sacrificing America's capacity to produce meat, milk, eggs and other animal products"

