

Madison County Outreach Program 1999

The Situation

Education is a priority among Madison County residents. Ricks College is a private educational institution that offers an associate degree or two-year college certificate. Many residents would like to earn a four-year degree. The county is largely a rural community with approximately 470 farms. Due to several years of low commodity prices, it was felt that other educational opportunities could help the agricultural community.

Our Response

Madison County Extension offered a formal educational setting to those who want to continue their education in professional agriculture without leaving their jobs, family, farm or ranch. This cooperative program's flexibility enables students to get the additional education they need to advance from full time farming to taking on a professional full time job. This can help the family remain on the farm or ranch by earning supplemental income. The outreach program gives the student the ability to reach his professional degree through distance education. This program relies on a variety of methods for course delivery, including video taped session series, interactive compressed video and on-line courses and information.

Achievements

Our program gave eight students the opportunity to complete a college degree. Two classes, Field Crop Production (three credits), and Weed Management (three credits), were taught during fall 1999. These students could not have worked on their degrees

otherwise. One student is working on a Ph.D. program; seven are working on completing their bachelors of science degrees.

More students and classes are being offered for the 2000 spring semester. This program is definitely a benefit to Madison County residents as well as neighboring communities.

The Future

Plant Pathology (4 credits) is now being taught through interactive video with three students from Madison County enrolled. Other courses will be offered also.

Participating Faculty

Jeff Stark, District IV Plant Science Division Chair, University of Idaho

Don Morishita, Weed Specialist, University of Idaho

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For More Information

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