

Extension Regional Sheep Producer's Forum In Brookings

BROOKINGS — SDSU Extension will host the 11th annual Regional Sheep Producer's Forum on March 22. The event takes place at the South Dakota State University Sheep Unit, 1 and one-quarter miles north of campus on Medary Avenue (County Road 77.) The free event begins at 11:30 a.m. with a sheep unit open house, lunch, then an educational program from 1:15 p.m. until 4 p.m.

The forum's speakers will focus on the industry "2-Plus initiative," perspectives in improving lambing and flock health management, SDSU Extension programming focus including iGrow Sheep, and risk management using Lamb-LRP.

Speakers include SDSU Extension State Sheep Specialist Jeff Held and Dave Olilla, SDSU Extension Sheep Field Specialist, along with Rosie Nold, Agriculture and Natural Resources Program Director.

In addition, Dr. Larry Goelz, Pipestone Veterinary Clinic, Pipestone, Minn., and SDSU Animal Science Head Clint Rusk will share their ideas with participants. Patty DeZeeuw, D and D Crop Insurance, Brookings, an agent for the Lamb-LRP product is also part of the day's agenda.

The program will end at approximately 4 p.m.

In addition to SDSU Extension, sponsors who are making the forum possible include; Sydel, Inc., D Crop Insurance, AgFirst Farmers Cooperative, AgriTech, Volga Ag Center, the South Dakota Sheep Growers Association, Sinai Cooperative Elevator, Badger Farmers Co-op Elevator, Premier 1, Mid-States Wool Cooperative, Pipestone Veterinary Clinic, Volga Veterinary Clinic, Millborn Seeds, Sioux Falls Regional Livestock, South Dakota Livestock Sales and Van Well Sheep Buying.

The event is open to all and anyone with special needs can call Jeff Held to arrange for accommodations. Reach Held at 605-688-5433 or email Jeffrey.Held@sdstate.edu.

Deadline For NRCS Initiative Applications Is March 30

LINCOLN, Neb. — USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Conservationist Craig Derickson reminds potential applicants to contact their local NRCS office soon to find out if they are eligible for the agency's Organic Initiative. Applications for the second ranking period of 2012 are due at NRCS offices by close of business on March 30, 2012.

Nationwide, NRCS has nearly \$50 million in financial and technical assistance available to certified organic producers, those who want to make the transition to organic production and producers who sell less than \$5,000 in organic products annually.

As part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Organic Initiative offers a wide array of conservation practices specifically designed for organic production. Through the Organic Initiative, NRCS will provide funding to help organic producers and those transitioning to organic production implement resource conservation practices on their agricultural operations. Organic producers may use the funding to plant cover crops, establish integrated pest management plans, or implement nutrient management systems. Several additional conservation practice options are available.

"NRCS employees will work with producers to design a conservation plan that will work best for their operation. These conservation plans include practices that will help the selected applicants meet many requirements of their USDA Organic System Plans and stay in compliance with USDA's National Organic Program," Derickson said.

The top five Organic Initiative conservation practices are cover crops, nutrient and pest management, seasonal high tunnels, crop rotation, and fencing.

Changes for the 2012 signups include three ranking periods for current and transitioning producers; a threshold ranking score that can speed up approval for qualified applicants; required conservation practices that promote the consistent use of those practices; and an expanded list of conservation activity plans.

Learn more about the Organic Initiative at <http://go.usa.gov/Uo9> and find out about other NRCS initiatives and programs at <http://go.usa.gov/UoX>.

Less Than Meats The Eye

Red Meat Mortality Study Leaves Many Carnivores Unfazed

BY DONALD BRADLEY
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Tell people seatbelts save lives and most buckle up.

Tell them cigarettes kill and smoking rates go down. But new warnings about red meat don't seem to cry out with the same urgency.

Phil Neff of Lee's Summit, Mo., heard about the new study early Tuesday, and at noon he was sitting in Arthur Bryant's BBQ chomping down a beef and pork combo.

"I'm having my meat, I don't care," said Neff, 50.

His buddy across the table, Gary Cowen, 52, in town from Chicago for the NAIA Tournament, with mouth full held up two fingers.

Swallow.
 "Second time in 12 hours," he said, referring to their barbecue intake.

The new study released by the Harvard School of Public Health found that eating red meat — any amount and any type — appears to significantly increase the risk of premature death.

The long-range study examined the eating habits and health of more than 110,000 adults for more than 20 years.

For instance, adding just one 3-ounce serving of unprocessed red meat to one's daily diet was associated with a 13 percent greater chance of dying during the course of the study.

Even worse, adding an extra daily serving of processed red meat, such as a hot dog or two slices of bacon, was linked to a 20 percent higher risk of death during the study.

"Any red meat you eat contributes to the risk," said An Pan, a postdoctoral fellow at the Harvard School of Public Health in Boston and lead author of the study, published online Monday in the Archives of Internal Medicine.

Crunching data from thousands of questionnaires that asked people how frequently they ate a variety of foods, the researchers also discovered that replacing red meat with other foods seemed to re-



PHOTO: METRO GRAPHICS

duce mortality risk for study participants.

Eating a serving of nuts instead of beef or pork was associated with a 19 percent lower risk of dying during the study. The team said choosing poultry or whole grains as a substitute was linked with a 14 percent reduction in mortality risk; low-fat dairy or legumes, 10 percent; and fish, 7 percent.

Previous studies had associated red meat consumption with diabetes, heart disease and cancer, all of which can be fatal. Scientists aren't sure exactly what makes red meat so dangerous, but the suspects include the iron and saturated fat in beef, pork and lamb, the nitrates used to preserve them, and the chemicals created by high-temperature cooking.

The Harvard researchers hypothesized that eating red meat would also be linked to an overall risk of death from any cause, Pan said. And the results suggest they were right: Among the 37,698 men and 83,644 women who were tracked, as meat consumption increased, so did mortality risk.

Almost 24,000 people died in the two studies. Of those, 5,910 were from heart disease and 9,464 from cancer.

In separate analyses of processed and unprocessed meats, the group found that both types appear to hasten death. Pan said that at the outset, he and his colleagues had thought it likely that only processed meat posed a health danger.

Carol Koprowski, a professor at the University of Southern California's Keck School of Medicine who wasn't involved in the research, cautioned that it can be hard to draw specific conclusions from a study like this because there can be a lot of error in the way diet information is recorded in questionnaires, which ask subjects to remember past meals in sometimes grueling detail.

But Pan said the bottom line was that there was no amount of red meat that's good for you.

"If you want to eat red meat, eat the unprocessed products, and reduce it to two or three servings a week," he said. "That would have a huge impact on public health."

A majority of people in the study reported that they ate an average of at least one serving of meat per day.

The American Meat Institute was among the first to dispute the findings. In a statement issued Monday, the industry group criticized the Harvard study for "relying on notoriously unreliable self-reporting about what was eaten and obtuse methods to apply statistical analysis to the data."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture says Americans eat less beef today. The intake peaked in 1976 with a per capita consumption of 89 pounds. By 2000, the amount dropped to 64 pounds, as chicken consumption rose swiftly, to 50 pounds.

Some of those cautionary reports about red meat must be sinking in.

Still, some people seem quite willing to blow off the warnings. Probably in part because you can get a ticket for no seat belt, and most cities have no-smoking ordinances.

How bad can red meat be if there's no law against it?

And everybody knows someone like Barbara Thornton. She's 83 and had lunch Tuesday at the Gates Bar-B-Q in Kansas City, Mo.

"I eat it all the time, don't bother me," she said.

Coming out of Bryant's, Tyson Johnson, in town from Nacogdoches, Texas, waved off talk of the study.

"Guess what — everybody's going to die of something," he said on the sidewalk. "I've been eating meat every day for 63 years. And I knew a guy who never ate meat, and I went to his funeral."

Back inside, Cowen from Chicago, went philosophical by citing the old saying that you are what you eat.

"I don't want to be tofu," he said.

Neff used a last fork of meat to chase sauce around his plate.

"I don't even know what tofu is," he said.

The Los Angeles Times contributed to this report.

Farm Rescue Accepting Applications For Spring Planting Assistance

JAMESTOWN, N.D. — Farm families in need of crop planting assistance this spring should apply now for help through Farm Rescue.

The nonprofit organization is currently accepting planting requests from farmers in North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, and eastern Montana. Farm Rescue provides planting and harvesting assistance to farm families that have experienced a major injury, illness, or natural disaster.

"It is very important that farmers apply early to receive top consideration," said Calli Stoudt, Program Coordinator of Farm Rescue. "Don't assume that someone else needs the help more than you. We also accept anonymous referrals of farm families that may be in need of a helping hand yet hesitant to apply for assistance."

All information is kept confidential and reviewed only by our board of directors to select appropriate cases."

Families assisted are selected based on a number of factors including extent of need, farm size, farm viability, and geographic location for moving equipment and volunteers in a timely manner. Although there is no deadline to apply, applications postmarked by April 1 receive priority consideration.

Each family may receive up to 1,000 acres planted free of charge. Since 2006, Farm Rescue has assisted 160 farm families that have experienced hardships ranging from open-heart surgery and cancer treatment to severed limbs and car accidents.

"Farm Rescue now has the

equipment to plant corn in addition to small grains and soybeans," said Bill Gross, President of Farm Rescue. "We have added corn planting equipment to assist more farm families with a wider variety of crop planting needs."

For an application or more information, go to farmrescue.org or call 701-252-2017

SDSU Extension Unveils iGrow Mobile

BROOKINGS — SDSU Extension introduces yet another convenient way for South Dakotans to access information — iGrow Mobile.

iGrow Mobile connects individuals to iGrow.org via their mobile devices. iGrow is the teaching platform developed by SDSU Extension to assure state of the art program delivery and access Extension information and resources 24-7.

The iGrow mobile site is designed to work specifically with the browser of handheld devices. When individuals visit iGrow.org using their handheld device, the iGrow.org mobile site will automatically appear.

iGrow Mobile features an app-like navigation. On most devices, iGrow Mobile features articles, weather, markets, local cash bids, news, social media, radio, events, and videos. The version of the mobile site developed for iPhone and Android devices features an option called "Customize Home," which allows individuals to select which content will display when they click the "Our Areas of Expertise" dropdown.

Because the site is optimized for mobile devices, the functionality is slightly different than that of the iGrow Web site viewers are used to seeing from their computer.

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If you are over 50, schedule a screening with your doctor now. Do not wait for symptoms to occur. Financial help may be available.

For further information contact the South Dakota Department of Health.

GETSCREENEDSD
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1-800-738-2301 www.getscreenedsd.org
 A program of the South Dakota Department of Health.