

# Coming Up Short

## Schools Coping With A Lack Of Ag Education Teachers

BY RITA BRHEL  
P&D Correspondent

Registered nurse, retail salesperson, home health aide, personal care aide, office clerk — these are the careers expected to be of highest demand from now through at least 2020, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

By contrast, the slowest-growing jobs include postal service workers, sewing machine operators, farmers and ranchers, and other agricultural workers.

Overall, employment opportunities are expected to drop within the agricultural sector, indicating a likely shrinking of the industry.

Agricultural education is the industry's major way of introducing youth to future career options in agriculture, food and natural resources. And the primary program used by schools to do this is FFA, through which enhance their classroom learning on agriculture-specific topics such as livestock care, agronomy and agribusiness with an extracurricular, work-based "supervised agricultural experience" as well as participation in leadership activities such as public speaking contests, conventions and skills competitions. The result is a high school graduate with a well-rounded knowledge of the agricultural industry, beginning experience in an agricultural career and the character skills to succeed professionally.

Few other academic subject areas in school have an integrated program such as this.

However, currently not all schools wishing to provide agricultural education can.

"We have a shortage of agricultural teachers right now," said Ellen Thompson, coordinator of the National Teach Ag Campaign, a program of the National Association of Agricultural Educators in Lexington, Ky. "There aren't enough students who are graduating with a degree in agricultural education, and those who do graduate are leaving the profession too soon."

The National FFA Organization's Team Ag Ed, a coalition of 10 national organizations united to promote local agricultural education program success, identified six areas of focus that are part of this shortage during the 2013 Agricultural Education Summit in Indianapolis, Ind:

1. The number of agricultural teacher preparation programs have declined;
2. The number of qualified teachers produced through these programs has declined;



3. The supply of agricultural teachers is only as stable as it currently is because of the availability of emergency and alternative certification methods;

4. The number of high school agricultural education programs that have had to be eliminated due to the unavailability of qualified teachers has been on the rise;

5. A great number of teachers are now at retirement age, so it will take more beginning teachers than usual to replace them;

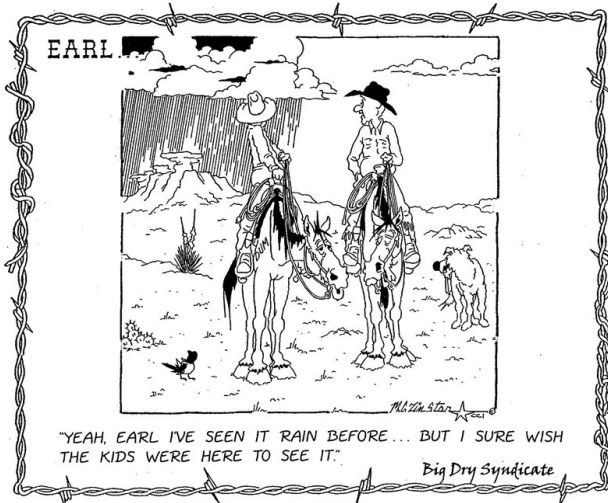
6. Most qualified teachers will not relocate to take a position in another area that needs teachers.

Taking this information, local and state schools and agribusinesses are joining the national effort of Teach Ag, to help address the shortage. Teach Ag's mission

is to recruit and retain high school agricultural teachers by providing scholarships and other incentives to encourage students to choose agricultural education as a career as well as resources to support current school-based agricultural educators, such as a mentoring program.

"We need more students learning about agriculture," Thompson said. "To do that, we not only have to graduate more ag education majors, but we have to keep them in the profession."

Each year, the campaign hosts a National Teach Ag Day, which is being held on Sept. 26 of this year, with special activities to promote its mission. More information can be found at [www.naae.org/teachag](http://www.naae.org/teachag).



## Highway Hay Removal Deadline Oct. 1

PIERRE — The South Dakota Department of Transportation requests the cooperation of all farmers and ranchers in removing processed hay from the highway right of way.

State regulations require that hay be removed from the right of way within 30 days of being processed, but no later than Oct. 1.

Removing hay bales from the highway right of way is an important safety consideration for motorists. The bales or stacks can be a safety hazard for vehicles forced to leave the road and, in some cases, can restrict a driver's sight distance. Hay left in the road ditches late in the year can also cause snowdrifts across the highway.

For more information, contact Jason Humphrey at 605-773-3571.

## Range Beef Cow Symposium XXII Set

BROOKINGS — The Range Beef Cow Symposium (RBCS) will be hosted in 2013 by South Dakota State University. It will be held at the Rushmore Convention Center in Rapid City Dec. 3-5.

The RBCS is a bi-annual educational event designed as "In-Service Training for Cow-Calf Ranchers."

The event will feature well-known speakers who will provide updates on production topics in the areas of beef industry issues, genetics, reproduction, range and forage management, cattle health, beef nutrition, and more.

The Range Beef Cow Symposium began in 1969 as a joint effort of the Extension services from South Dakota State University, Colorado State University, University of Wyoming and University of Nebraska. The symposium regularly attracts more than 900 ranchers and industry-affiliates. It includes a two-and-one-half day educational program, bull-pen sessions with the speakers each evening and a trade show with displays from the beef industry.

For additional information, contact Ken Olson, SDSU Extension Beef Specialist, 605-394-2236 or [kenneth.olson@sdstate.edu](mailto:kenneth.olson@sdstate.edu); or Julie Walker, SDSU Extension Beef Specialist, 605-688-5458 or [julie.walker@sdstate.edu](mailto:julie.walker@sdstate.edu).

## Southern Rust Developing On Corn in South Dakota

BROOKINGS — Southern rust was confirmed in Turner and Lincoln Counties. According to Emmanuel Byamukama, SDSU Extension Plant Pathology Specialist, southern rust is an unusual disease to occur on corn in South Dakota.

"Southern rust is favored by warm (80-90 degrees Fahrenheit) and humid conditions. The occurrence of southern rust is a concern because most of the corn hybrids are susceptible to southern rust, unlike the common rust, for which most dent corn hybrids have resistance genes," Byamukama said.

Byamukama added, because most of the corn is passed dent growth stage, the development of southern rust may not significantly affect grain yield. However, for corn that was planted late and has not passed dent, Byamukama encourages growers to scout and prepare to apply fungicide if southern rust favorable weather conditions continue.

The general recommended threshold for rust severity is 15 percent on a whole plant basis. "With the warm weather and heavy dew in the mornings, southern rust may develop to higher severities in a short time," Byamukama said. "Growers are encouraged to keep scouting before deciding if a fungicide is needed. By the time heavy pustules are seen on leaves above the ear, it may be too late to apply a fungicide."

The corn plant pathology working group published a list of fungicides that are effective for several fungal pathogens on corn. This list can be downloaded online; <http://www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/BP/BP-85-W.pdf>. Fungicide label should be consulted to crosscheck pre-harvest restrictions.

### COMMON RUST VERSUS SOUTHERN RUST

The two rusts can be easily differentiated, said Byamukama by the color and distribution on the leaf surface.

"Just like the name suggests, common rust is very common, we have found this rust in every corn field we have scouted. Common rust severity of up to 50 percent on the lower leaves has been observed in a few corn fields," he said. "Common rust has circular to elongate golden brown to cinnamon brown pustules that are usually randomly distributed on the leaves. These pustules can also be seen on lower side of the leaf."

On the other hand, Byamukama explained that southern rust pustules are circular to oval light brown to orange and occur in clusters on the upper side of the leaf. Southern rust pustules have a yellow halo surrounding the pustules when the leaf is held against light.

Both the common rust and southern rust do not overwinter in South Dakota. Rust spores are blown from southern states into South Dakota. Therefore corn residue or crop rotation does not affect the rust disease development.

## Commodity Prices Down From Year Ago

BROOKINGS — Although many areas in South Dakota are still suffering from the effects of last year's drought and are in need of more rain, overall conditions are much better than last year and that has impacted the markets, said Darrell R. Mark, Adjunct Professor of Economics South Dakota State University.

"What a difference a year makes! This time last year corn was being harvested for grain in southeastern South Dakota amid a heightened level of fire risk and silage had been cut in early August. Cow herds were taken off scorched pastures, calves were weaned early, and cows were being fed any alternative feedstuff available," Mark said. "Whereas, this fall's corn crop won't be harvested early, leaving some to worry about the impact of an early frost. Cattle are still on pastures in eastern South Dakota in early September."

As producers gear up for a busy fall season harvesting corn and soybeans, weaning calves and working cow herds, Mark shares some notes on how the change in conditions during the 2013 growing season have impacted markets as well as the overall industry climate:

New crop corn prices are \$2.50-3.50 per bushel lower than last year due to

much better crop condition ratings, which will likely lead to a national yield in the 153 to 155 bushel per acre range compared to last year's 123.4 bushel per acre national yield.

New crop soybean prices are about \$4 per bushel lower than at this time last year, again due to much better crop production prospects. In South Dakota, more than twice as much of this year's crop is rated good to excellent compared to last year.

Pasture and range conditions are dramatically improved in South Dakota compared to last year. Nationally, pasture and range conditions are moderately improved, with the western U.S. still experiencing drought.

Although alfalfa and other hay production have improved this summer, tight stocks at the beginning of summer and challenges putting up quality hay this summer have supported hay prices. Generally, the bottom of the price range has softened compared to last year, but the best quality hay can still bring as much as it did last year at this time.

Distillers grain prices and soybean meal prices are lower than a year ago, reflecting the lower corn and soybean prices.

Lower corn prices and tight feeder cattle supplies have resulted in feeder cattle prices averaging about \$20 per hundred weight higher than a year ago.

Slaughter cattle prices have languished in the low \$120s for much of the year, and currently are on par with year-ago prices. Expected reductions in slaughter numbers in the months to come should support fed cattle prices and help push prices closer to \$130 per hundred weight by the end of the year.

Based on current conditions, Mark said many growers have many marketing decisions to make.

"They are wondering, should I store my corn crop this year; should I store my soybeans this year; should I retain ownership of my calves this fall and background or finish them; should I retain more heifers or buy bred cows to increase the size of my cow herd," said Mark.

He cautioned that the answers to these questions are not the same for everyone because cost of production and risk tolerance differs amongst producers.

He added that all producers need to evaluate the unique opportunities available to them, keeping in mind that this year is very different than last year.

To learn more visit, [iGrow.org](http://iGrow.org).

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**Thank you ever so much  
The Yankton Rodeo Association**

