PROGRESS REPORT: Iowa Beginning & Young Livestock Producer Success Network

Objectives
Develop a network of beginning and young livestock producer peer groups across the state to both educate and mentor. The peer group curricula will focus on both business management and production skills, but also will provide peer mentoring and social networking.

Funding Awarded $156,054 ($80,507 FY13 and $75,547 FY14)

Funding Expended to Date $49,501.74

Progress to Date

- Eight peer groups exist across the state with three new startup groups in 2013.
- Group participation ranges from 12 to 30 young and beginning livestock producers. Some have several years of production experience while others have none; numerous species interests are represented. Male and female participation with a fair number of spouses attending.
- Farm/field and business tours, educational presentations and discussions led by ISU Extension and Outreach specialists, government agencies, lenders, allied industry, commodity representatives and producers. The average group has had three to five ISU specialists involved.
- There is much participation and support from county extension councils, county Farm Bureau’s and commodity groups. The average group reaches five to eight counties.
- As a communication and social outreach tool, the development of the BYLPN webpage is now posted [http://www.extension.iastate.edu/iowabylp/](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/iowabylp/). Group details, dates, contacts and resources can be found here.

Next Steps
There will be a continuation of fostering relationships and identifying needs of existing peer groups by meeting 2-4 times a year. A next critical step will be identifying key young farmers that will “take the reins” of local peer group organization. Through the webpage, social media or a regional gathering it is desired to connect the different groups for educational and social networking purposes.

Due to the delayed startup in 2012 associated with the drought response programming and its impacts on the clients, there is a request to extend funding in FY15 to ensure the continuity of existing and startup peer groups. Additionally, there will be a need to develop a definitive plan for local grassroots leadership and organization beyond the grant supported efforts of ISU Extension and Outreach.