

# IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

## Extension and Outreach

### **Success Story**

#### **Title**

100 Annie's Project Courses In Iowa Had Important Role In Risk Management Education For Women

#### **Author:**

#### **Author's Location**

#### **CoReporter(s) - ISUEO Staff**

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#### **Relevance**

Just 16 years ago, women were 42 percent of the undergraduates in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Today that number has jumped to 52 percent. The 32,167 women farmers in Iowa represent more than one-fourth of all Iowa farmers according to the USDA NASS 2012 Census of Ag. Two-thirds of these women are juggling both on-farm and off-farm careers. The 2012 Study of Farmland Ownership and Tenure in Iowa shows women in Iowa own 47 percent of all Iowa farmland. The 2015 report on Gender Roles & Equality in Agribusiness reported that 90 percent of men and 92 percent of women completing the survey felt women were an integral part of agribusiness.

#### **Response**

Delivering more than 100 Annie's Project courses for women since 2004, the ISU Extension and Outreach Farm Management Team improved the lives of more than 1,922 women through innovative agricultural risk management education.

Annie's Project is the agricultural business education program that empowers farm women to be more knowledgeable about their agricultural businesses. Annie's Project creates a comfortable and supportive learning environment focused on the best farm business management practices. The ISU Extension and Outreach Farm Management Team contributed to expansion of this valuable program to more than 38 states.

"I'm so grateful for the long-term commitment and dedication of the Farm Management Team in providing educational opportunities for women in Iowa," shares Madeline Schultz, ISU Extension and Outreach Women in Ag Program Manager. After 14 years of programming, the Annie's Project local, small group, multi-session, 18-hour courses continue to be demand driven. Recently, the Farm Management Team facilitated nine Annie's Project courses from January thru March, 2018. "Women across our state recognize and value the branded Annie's Project program; and they trust Extension to provide research-based information and tools to help them make good farm management decisions," Madeline adds.

Needs assessment and program evaluation are built into on-going programming in two important ways. First, the team regularly uses local steering committees to help guide course offerings and develop community rapport. Second, the team prioritizes evaluation activities. In 2011, the team began working with the ISU Research Institute for Studies in Education and funded this work through grant projects. With the help of RISE, the team published three journal articles on program methods and impacts and presented concurrent sessions and posters on Iowa's women in ag programs every year at the National Extension Risk Management Education Conferences.

Based on needs assessment and evaluation activities, the Farm Management Team developed eleven additional courses for women: Women Leasing Land (2009), Women Managing Cattle (2010), Women Marketing Grain (2010), Investing for Farm Families (2011), Managing for Today and Tomorrow Transition Planning (2012), Annie's Project Value Added Business Planning (2013), Moving Beyond the Basics of Farm Finance (2014), Women Managing Dairy Cattle (2014), Heartbeat of the Farm Human Resource Management (2015), Women Managing Crops (2015), and Women's Roles in Farm and Ranch Transition Planning (2016). The Farm Management Team delivered more than 64 multi-session farm management courses for women (other than Annie's Project) to more than 826 Iowa women from 2009 to 2018. All of these programs and curricula have been adapted and delivered by Extension educators in other states.

The Farm Management Team works hard to deliver high quality Annie's Project courses and other programs for women. The team organized and invited county professionals and other colleagues to more than 16 statewide planning and professional development meetings since 2010. There were 65 attendees at the October 2017 planning meeting. These meetings increased awareness about risk management education, expanded experience with the ISU Extension and Outreach Program Development Model, and sparked interest in serving the audience of women in agriculture. From day one, the team has acknowledged,

valued and supported the important role of county professionals and other Extension colleagues in achieving program and client success. They established program processes to increase efficiency and customer interaction such as statewide online registration, monthly client-focused newsletters, and online evaluation tools.

Grant writing is an important team activity. Since 2004, the Farm Management Team obtained and managed 47 grants and gifts totaling \$2,859,159 for women in ag programming. In addition to USDA granting agencies, the team developed strong partnerships within the Farm Credit System to support this work. Grant and gift funds contribute to salary recovery, especially around curricula development. These funds also support local course delivery which significantly reduces the county costs of offering programs for women. Participant materials, field specialist mileage, printing, and evaluation are just a few of the expenses covered by these grants. Every team member contributes to the grants. Uniquely, every team member has served as a grant Project Director or Co-Director. This is just one of many indicators of the exceptional teamwork by this group. Recent grants and gifts managed by team members include the following.

- Charles Brown, Project Co-Director, Farm Credit Services of America Gift, 2017
- Ryan Drollette, Project Co-Director, Risk Management Agency Grant, 2017-18
- Tim Eggers, Project Director, NC Ext. Risk Management Education Center Grant, 2014
- Shane Ellis, Project Co-Director, NC Ext. Risk Management Education Center Grant, 2016-17
- Steve Johnson, Project Co-Director, NC Ext. Risk Management Education Center Grant, 2016-17
- Kelvin Leibold, Project Co-Director, NIFA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Grant, 2011-2014
- Melissa O'Rourke, Project Co-Director, Farm Credit Services of America Gift, 2018
- Gary Wright, Project Co-Director, NC Ext. Risk Management Education Center Grant, 2017-18

A few other outstanding achievements in women in ag programming by the Farm Management Team follow.

- 2004 - Bob Wells taught the first Annie's Project course in Iowa in Washington County. In January 2018, Ryan Drollette and Washington County delivered the 101<sup>st</sup> Annie's Project course in Iowa.
- 2005 - Tim Eggers developed two national Annie's Project websites and documented program delivery methods, curricula, impacts and more.
- 2008 - Tim Eggers and Bob Wells completed a shared faculty exchange at CSREES/NIFA in Washington DC in 2008 to share about Annie's Project.
- 2012 to 2015 - The team trained more than 211 educators from 31 states at 9 professional development events through two SARE PDP grants to share about Annie's Project.
- 2012 – The national Agriculture and Applied Economics Association bestowed the Distinguished Extension/Outreach Program Award on the ISU Farm Management Team for Annie's Project.
- 2013 – The team hosted an Annie's Project Tenth Anniversary Celebration and Conference on campus. Governor Branstad signed a proclamation honoring Annie's

Project which was presented by Iowa House Representative Annette Sweeny.

- 2015 - Kelvin Leibold began his service on the Board of Directors of the National Annie's Project Education for Farm Women NPO, to represent Iowa and help the organization succeed.
- 2015 and 2017 – National Association of County Agriculture Agents recognized the team with Search for Excellence in Farm and Ranch Financial Management Awards for Annie's Project.
- 2006 to 2017 – With Lisa Scarbrough's help, the team created more than 20 Success Story videos about women in agriculture who benefited from ISU Farm Management Team programs.
- 2017 – Based on client concerns about crop prices, the team partnered with Landus Cooperative and others to host a Grain Marketing Forum on campus which was attended by 80 women.

### **Type of Change(s)(s)**

- Learning Changes
- Behavior Changes
- Condition Changes

### **Impact Statement**

When farm and ranch women are empowered, they can contribute to a more sustainable agriculture by improving economic resiliency, conserving natural resources, and taking on influential roles in their families and communities. Extension educators have an important role in risk management education for women.

### **ISUEO Signature Issues**

Food & the Environment --> Farm Business Management

### **Outcomes**

Research by the ISU Extension and Outreach Farm Management Team was reported in the December 2017 Journal of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents. The abstract stated that as leaders, family communicators, and visionaries of tomorrow's rural landscapes, women are influential decision makers. They are stepping up to challenging and changing roles in agriculture. This creates a critical need for education directed specifically to this gender. Annie's Project educators created positive impacts for women in fourteen states from 2013 to 2015. More than 677 women from 76 courses responded to a national survey. Annie's Project courses were successful in extending knowledge in the five agricultural risk areas of finance, human resources, legal, marketing and production. Results indicate a statistically significant difference in the overall mean knowledge gains from pre-course assessment to post-course assessment with  $p > .01$  in all content areas combined. Importantly, survey respondents who agreed or strongly agreed the Annie's Project best education practices were implemented were more likely to make gains in knowledge than respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed the practices were implemented. Results demonstrated participants took important actions toward managing all five agricultural risks.

#### **Location / Participant(s) Came From**

- State

#### **Partner(s)**

- Business and Industry
- County Extension Staff
- Local Government/Agency