

Custer County Ag-Products Internet Marketing Project

Final Report for FW00-277

Project Type: Farmer/Rancher

Funds awarded in 2000: \$2,160.00

Projected End Date: 12/31/2004

Region: Western

State: Colorado

Principal Investigator:

[Sara Hebbert](#)

Project Information

Abstract:

SUMMARY

The project has provided participating Custer County producers with an Internet presence, affording them the opportunity to market their products through another avenue. The Web page was developed as the 2002 drought was limiting hay production and prompting many ranches to sell animals. Despite these and other obstacles, several ranchers have taken advantage of the opportunity to market their products on the Web and to continue adding information to the site.

"This marketing project will continue to draw people with products to market as public awareness increases," said Sara Shields, project coordinator. "The project has made many producers more savvy of the Internet and the power it holds for their operations."

OBJECTIVES

Launch an Internet Web site devoted to marketing livestock and hay produced in Custer County, Colo.

RESULTS

The Web site has been established as www.CusterStockGrowers.com. Five producers currently have information, down from 12 originally planned, owing to the 2002 drought, which reduced grass production to only about 10% of normal and prompted producers to sell 75% of the cattle in the county.

Dean Oatman, Custer County extension agent, developed the Web site using Dreamweaver 3. When he resigned his position in August 2001, Gary Hall, as new county agent, accepted the role of technical advisor and continues to update and refine the Web site. The change did delay the site's completion, but it is being updated as new producers are recruited.

BENEFITS OR IMPACTS ON AGRICULTURE

While this project has provided a new marketing avenue for Custer County, demand for the products remains to be seen, pending return to more normal years after recovery from the drought. When agriculture in the county revives, the Web page will be available for marketing products, and it is hoped the marketing tool will assist producers as the Internet continues its constancy in their lives.

PRODUCER ADOPTION

Many producers are using video marketing, and the next logical step is to use the Internet. More producers expressed interest in the project during 2003 as production began to rebound.

REACTIONS FROM PRODUCERS

When the project was explained at the annual meeting of the Custer County Stockgrowers, reaction from those attending was positive, and many expressed willingness to advertise their products on the Web page.

RECOMMENDATIONS OR NEW HYPOTHESES

The report advises against changing technical advisors, which significantly reduced the impact of this project. Although the project continues, its implementation was delayed by the advisor change and the drought.

OUTREACH

The Custer County Stockgrowers was apprised of the project during its annual meeting and targeted mailings have been sent to members. As more products are listed, the project participants plan to conduct more outreach through the news media. In addition, the Web site is linked to others in Custer County.

Research

Participation Summary

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U.S. Department of Agriculture or SARE.



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