Beef Carcass Research Center brings Real-World Experience to WTAMU Students
By Brittnay Kelly, a senior agricultural media and communication major from Anson, Texas

Every university has its essentials: dorms, cafeteria, classrooms, etc., but West Texas A&M University is not like every university. While WTAMU has the essentials, it also offers something more exceptional.

First established in 1992, the WTAMU Beef Carcass Research Center has become a vital part of the U.S. beef industry offering third party research inside beef harvest/processing facilities. This includes but is not limited to collecting research data for pharmaceutical companies, feedlot research trials, university research trials, seed stock producers and other entities that have a need for data collection.

Dr. Ty Lawrence, director of the BCRC, was recently in Nebraska with some of his students conducting research for a new animal drug approval that has been submitted to the FDA.

Nutrition and pharmaceutical marketing data, university research trials, and genetic improvement data are just a few duties of the BCRC that has a current database of 600,000+ carcasses evaluated.

Its main focus is to foster student learning.

The BCRC provides a high-tempo learning environment that promotes the development of life and career skills while learning the science and business of red meat production.

Current graduate student research includes PMCH genetic markers to sort beef into tenderness categories, prevalence and severity of cattle pneumonia and effect on carcass value.

“I enjoy the opportunity to learn about an industry that affects everyone,” said Kimberly Crist, a senior agricultural media and communication major.

For further information, please contact the Beef Carcass Research center at 800-298-2687 or ccds@mail.wtamu.edu.

Lance Kieth Named to Inaugural Chancellor’s Academy of Teacher Educators

The Texas A&M University System has selected Dr. Lance Kieth as one of the first inductees for the Chancellor’s Academy of Teacher Educators.

The Academy recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the field of teacher education and highlights the role of the A&M System in producing K-12 teachers for the state of Texas.

This year’s inductees are Dr. Jauquita A. Cranfill Hargus, Texas A&M University-Texarkana; Dr. Marion Henry, Prairie View A&M University; Dr. Lance Kieth, West Texas A&M University; Dr. Cherie A. McCollough, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi; Dr. Dawn R. Parker, Texas A&M University; and Dr. Patricia Zelman, Tarleton State University.

“Teachers have shaped the past and now shape the entire future of our state and our nation” said Michael D. McKinney, chancellor of the A&M System. “The Texas A&M System is dedicated to producing outstanding teachers who will stay in this honorable field of endeavor. This initial class of inductees into the Academy all share a devotion to the teaching profession and a commitment to today’s students and tomorrow’s leaders.”

Academy members each receive a $1,000 stipend, commemorative medallion, certificate and recognition at the Chancellor’s Century Council annual meeting. The first class of the Chancellor’s Academy of Teacher Educators was selected by an A&M System committee and future classes will be selected by Academy members.

University faculty, staff and students may nominate any full-time faculty member who has had a significant impact in the preparation of teachers.

“The Department of Agricultural Sciences is extremely proud of Dr. Kieth,” said Dr. Dean Hawkins, head of the Department of Agricultural Sciences. “He is a true ambassador for WT and an outstanding role model for teacher educators.”

The A&M System produced nearly 4,000 certified teachers in 2009 and a 100 percent job placement rate for graduates in middle school, bilingual and special education positions.
The past year has certainly been an exciting one for the College of Agriculture, Science and Engineering. Leadership changes, explosive enrollment growth, construction, increased alumni giving, faculty and student successes are but a few of the major events that make WTAMU “The First Choice University.”

Let me take just a few moments to highlight a few specific examples beginning with student success. Students are the reason we exist and seeing them grow, compete, and succeed is the most satisfying and rewarding part of our job. Our students have distinguished themselves against their peers and as a result are highly sought in the job market. All of that on top of superb recruiting efforts by the Department of Agricultural Sciences lead to an 8% growth in Fall enrollment and an 11% increase this spring.

Of course the Horse Judging Team continues to have a strangle hold on the competition, bringing home another national win at the NRHA Reining Futurity competition. In addition, the Livestock Judging Team has continued to make outstanding progress, placing higher in the national contest than any WTAMU team in history.

Students from the Agricultural Education and Leadership program again brought home many state honors this past year and the Ag Quiz Bowl team turned in an outstanding performance against students from land grant universities in the Southern region.

If you haven’t been on campus in a while, you won’t recognize it. A new dorm is under construction just north of the Agriculture and Natural Sciences (ANS) building and the old ag and nursing building is being renovated to house the engineering programs that have outgrown their current facilities.

The chemistry labs and the agriculture labs in the ANS building have been completely renovated and provide a modern and safe learning environment for our students.

And finally, I want to personally thank Dr. James Clark for his 13 years of exemplary leadership of the College. As most of you know, he retired Dec. 31 of this past year after a distinguished career as a faculty member and administrator.

I know that I have a big pair of boots to fill, and I pledge to do everything in my power to live up to that challenge. To do that, I am going to need your help. Given the budget woes of the State, if we are to thrive in the future we will need your moral and financial support.

You can count on us, and I know we can count on you. Drop by and see us.

Don R. Topliff
Dean and Professor
College of Agriculture, Science and Engineering

Greetings from the Department of Agricultural Sciences! Since my arrival in January 2009, my family and I have been overwhelmed by the welcome we have received, thanks to all of you. Your department of Agricultural Sciences at West Texas A&M University continues to amaze me at what it has done and can accomplish.

Our enrollment continues to increase, this growth is a reflection of financial support received from the Agriculture Development Association and the quality of our graduates, faculty, staff and programs. We anticipate this trend to continue as word spreads of the outstanding work faculty and students do.

New faculty have joined us as assistant professor’s: Kate Brooks (Ph.D. from Oklahoma State University) is working in the area of Agricultural Economics and Business and Tanner Robertson (Ph.D. from Oklahoma State University) in Agricultural Media and Communication.

Students working with Dr. Robertson have taken the lead in putting this newsletter together!

I am sure you have heard of budget cuts the University is experiencing, the department is not immune to budgetary reductions; we will do our share and work at ways to be more efficient. We are fortunate to have the support from our stakeholders in the form of scholarships that allow students to receive financial assistance for their academic and extracurricular success; I like to refer to the old adage “A hand up, not a hand out.”

The horse judging team continues to dominate and is the envy of other universities. The Equestrian team success is ongoing. The livestock team is improving and as time goes on I expect their success to be another bright spot for your department.

We hope you will be able to attend the Agriculture Awards Day and Agricultural Development Association Reunion on September 10. Additional details are within the newsletter.

I encourage your continued support in the Department. We are proud of our alumni, current students and those yet to become Buffaloes. You are always welcome to stop by and visit your department!

Dean Hawkins
Head and Professor
Department of Agricultural Sciences
Scholarships Honor Pioneers of Panhandle Agriculture

David A. Swinford

For 20 years, Representative David Swinford championed the cause of West Texas A&M University and the panhandle region in the Texas State Legislature. His commitment to public service and this university has paved the way for current success and future accomplishments.

We now have the opportunity to honor David in the manner in which he has lived his life, by helping others achieve success.

The David A. Swinford Agriculture Scholarship affords us the opportunity to honor David’s life work by continuing the tremendous example he set for service to others. The scholarship will allow agriculture students the chance to excel in an industry that is the heart of this region.

David understood the importance of the agriculture industry to our region and supported it throughout his years of public service. His dedication to agriculture in the panhandle was unparalleled and our students, through your generous gift, will continue advancing the agriculture industry in our region.

The David A. Swinford scholarship will ensure that David’s unyielding commitment to the panhandle’s university will last for decades. I ask you to join the growing number of individuals and businesses who have honored David through gifts to the David A. Swinford Agriculture Scholarship.

Endowment for Excellence in Horse Judging

The WTAMU Equine Industry Program and the Department of Agricultural Sciences is proud to announce the formation of an endowment to support its perennially successful Horse Judging Program.

The endowment, named the “Dr. John Pipkin Endowment for Excellence in Horse Judging,” was created to provide financial support for the pursuit of excellence and to continue ongoing, sustained success by the Horse Judging team in National and World competitions.

The vision for this project comes from Dr. Gordon Davis, Chairman and Founder of CEV Multimedia.

“It is very humbling for us at CEV Multimedia to form an alliance with WTAMU’s world-class equine program, especially the students, and to simultaneously honor Dr. John Pipkin, who has been the company’s equine collaborator since 1987,” Davis said.

Not only did Dr. Davis provide the initial “seed” money for the endowment on March 23, 2011, he also committed to a 50% match of the efforts of alumni and students.

“This kind of partnership is not only crucial to the long term health of our programs, but is an outstanding example of the leadership that Dr. Davis has provided toward the education of students in agriculture,” said Dr. Don Topliff, Dean of the College of Agriculture, Science, and Engineering. “This is good for everyone.”

Meeting the endowment goal of $500,000 by 2015 will be a collaborative effort and partnership by Davis, current and former WTAMU students, program supporters, and the College of Agriculture, Science, and Engineering.

“This endowment is a testimony of the tremendous successes of former WT students that have judged and a fantastic tribute to the many National and World Championships they have won,” said Dr. John Pipkin, Director of the Equine Industry Program and Head Coach of the Horse Judging team. “I’m so proud for the alumni and students. This will help ensure that current and future students can continue the legacy of success that has already been established by former students.

“This is only possible as a result of the generosity and commitment of Gordon Davis to the support of students that participate in these types of programs.”

James R. Clark

Upon his retirement, the Agriculture Development Association along with friends, family and colleagues of Dr. Clark established the James Clark First Choice Scholarship benefitting students in the Department of Agricultural Sciences.

Dr. James Clark served the department and college of agricultural sciences for 18 years. During his leadership, the department and college saw dramatic increases in student enrollment, acquired substantial funding for research, and enhanced its facilities.

Dr. Clark was also an integral part of creating WTAMU’s first and only Ph.D. program.

During his service, the department received national recognition in faculty and student achievement.

His leadership was key in making WTAMU a “first choice” for students interested in agricultural degrees.

In January, a reception was held honoring Dr. Clark at the home of Helen Piehl. Hosts of the event and significant donors to the scholarship included: Mrs. Piehl, Geneva & Stanley Schaeffer, J’Melle & Gary Fletcher, Patrecia & Ed Wright, Jana & Johnny Trotter, Cleo & Bob Robinson, Texas Cattle Feeders Association and the Agriculture Development Association Board of Directors.

To date, over $17,000 has been raised for the James Clark First Choice Scholarship.

To find out how you can give to these scholarships, contact Tim Bynum at (806) 651-2069 or tbynum@wtamu.edu.

www.wtamu.edu/agriculture

Photograph by Rik Andersen
The Department of Agricultural Sciences has seen impressive increases in student enrollment and with growth comes change. Good change. The department has been busy filling and adding positions to serve the needs of the panhandle and provide a good, quality education to its students. In addition, long-time faculty remain busy sharing their years of experience and researching critical needs in the area. Please take some time to get to know the department’s faculty and their interests.

**Lal K. Almas, D.V.M, Ph.D.**

Dr. Almas is an Associate Professor of Agricultural Business and Economics and joined the Department of Agricultural Sciences in 2001. He teaches courses in marketing and economics as well as agricultural risk management and advanced agricultural statistics.

Dr. Almas’ research interests include production agriculture, environmental and resource economics, agribusiness analysis, water management and planning, economic impact assessment and policy analysis, statistical methods, and agricultural marketing and trade.

**Lance Baker, Ph.D.**

Dr. Baker joined the department in 1995 and is a Professor in animal science. He teaches courses in equine science specifically related to production and management.

His research interests include equine nutrition and exercise physiology, mineral nutrition and interaction of mineral nutrition and bone, acid-base status and effects on mineral balance, and economics of the equine industry.

**Brock C. Blaser, Ph.D.**

Dr. Blaser joined the department in 2009 and is an Assistant Professor of Plant Science. He teaches principles of plant science, a core course for all agriculture majors, as well as undergraduate and graduate courses in crop physiology, plant breeding, and grain, fiber, and oilseed crops.

Dr. Blaser’s research interests are in field crop production, physiology, ecology and systems.

**Kathleen R. Brooks, Ph.D.**

Dr. Brooks, an Assistant Professor of Agricultural Business and Economics, joined the department in 2010. Dr. Brooks teaches undergraduate classes in agricultural economics including the fundamentals of agricultural economics and marketing courses.

Her research interests include consumer preferences, experimental economics, and livestock production economics.

**Michael S. Brown, Ph.D., P.A.S.**

Dr. Brown is a Professor of Ruminant Nutrition and Management and joined the faculty in 2000. He teaches undergraduate courses in animal science and a graduate course in digestive physiology.

Dr. Brown conducts research focused on the impact of grain processing, feeds from the renewable energy industry, trace mineral nutrition, and feed additives on growth performance and nutrient requirements of feedlot cattle.

**James R. Clark, Ph.D.**

Dr. Clark served as Dean of the College of Agriculture, Science and Engineering from 1997 until retiring in December 2010. Now, he is a Professor of Animal Science and coordinator of the department’s graduate program.

Dr. Clark’s teaching areas include courses in reproductive physiology, endocrinology, statistics, and artificial insemination.

Dr. Clark’s research interests include ovarian folliculogenesis, puberty, post-partum reproductive function, in vitro maturation and fertilization of oocytes, embryo culture and development, and artificial insemination in domestic livestock.

**Dean Hawkins, Ph.D.**

Dr. Hawkins, a native of Clarendon, Texas, joined the faculty in 2009 as a Professor and the Head of the department. He teaches animal science courses and provides guest lectures in reproductive physiology of domestic animals.

His research interests include cow-calf management, ovarian function and nutritional factors impacting reproductive rates in beef cows.

**Lance Kieth, Ed.D.**

Dr. Kieth is an Associate Professor of Agricultural Education and joined the department in 2002. He teaches courses in agricultural education and leadership.

Dr. Kieth’s research interests include youth leadership in the 4-H and FFA organizations. He also engages in student retention and recruitment studies for the department.

**Ty E. Lawrence, Ph.D.**

Dr. Lawrence joined the Department of Agricultural Sciences in July 2004 as an Associate Professor of Animal Science.

He teaches undergraduate courses in food science, meat animal/carcass evaluation, anatomy and physiology of domestic farm animals, meat science and statistics. He also teaches advanced level meat science and technology and integrated animal science courses for the M.S. and Ph.D. programs.

Dr. Lawrence is the director of the University Meat Laboratory, a facility dedicated to teaching students the science and business of converting muscle to meat. He is also the director of the Beef Carcass Research Center.

**Amanda Love, M.S.**

Love joined the Department of Agricultural Sciences and the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics in a split appointment in 2007. She is an instructor in animal science, teaching courses in horsemanship and equine behavior modification.

Love is the head coach of the women’s equestrian team at WTAMU specializing in hunt seat and western competition.

Love’s research interests surround the economic impact of the equine industry and the consumers of that industry upon the overall agriculture industry.

**David Lust, Ph.D.**

Dr. Lust joined the Department of Agricultural Sciences in 1992. He teaches a variety of undergraduate animal science courses with emphasis on breeding and
livestock management. He is the faculty coordinator for the WTAMU’s 2,300-acre Nance Ranch, where activities include teaching and research projects related to the cow-herd and crops, along with community functions such as youth judging contests.

His research involves optimization modeling for dryland forage and livestock systems using linear programming. He also has research interests in the areas of reproductive management of beef cattle, beef production systems and teaching.

Elizabeth Moore, M.S.

Liz Moore joined the department in 2006. Her duties include teaching Principles of Horticulture and Agriculture IDS 1071.

Liz assists Dr. Blaser in management of the WTAMU Greenhouse and oversees floral design projects and fundraisers.

Bonnie B. Pendleton, Ph.D.

Dr. Pendleton came to West Texas A&M University in 2000 to research and teach integrated pest management. She was promoted to Professor earlier this year.

Dr. Pendleton researches ways to manage insect pests of field crops, especially sorghum, in the U.S. and with scientists in 10 African countries.

John Pipkin, Ph.D.

Dr. Pipkin directs the University’s Equine Industry Program, where he has coached students to more than 50 national or world champion or reserve champion team or individual titles. He also supervises the WTAMU equestrian team that has won more than 25 national champion or reserve champion team or individual titles.

Primarily involved with various equine-related research areas, Dr. Pipkin’s focus is on nutrition, exercise and reproduction. He also has a serious interest in business and leadership development.

J. Tanner Robertson, Ph.D.

Dr. Robertson joined the department in 2011 as an Assistant Professor of Agricultural Media and Communication. He teaches agricultural media and communication courses as well as leadership courses for the department.

Dr. Robertson’s research interests include curriculum and student development, and risk communications.

Bob Robinson, Ph.D.

Dr. Robinson joined the WTAMU faculty about 14 years ago.

He currently serves as Professor for the department and as Special Assistant to the Director of Texas AgrLife Extension.

He also coordinates the internship experience for the department and is an avid recruiter for WTAMU.

Bruce Smith

Mr. Smith joined the department in 2009 as an instructor in agricultural education.

He currently teaches agricultural mechanics for the department and assists in hosting various contests and workshops in mechanics.

B.A. Stewart, Ph.D.

Dr. Stewart joined the department in 1993 as Director of the Dryland Agriculture Institute and Distinguished Professor of Agriculture. He conducts research and coordinates research studies of M.S. and Ph.D. graduate research assistants on a wide array of subjects related to dryland agriculture.

He teaches upper level and graduate courses on global agriculture and the environment, soil and water conservation, and soil-plant-water relationships.

John M. Sweeten, Ph.D.

Dr. Sweeten started in the department in 1996 as a Professor in agricultural engineering.

Dr. Sweeten’s primary focus is research and works in the Kilgore Research Center.

Don R. Topliff, Ph.D.

Dr. Topliff is the Dean of the College of Agricultural Science.
FACULTY cont.

By Hillary Siegfreid and Trevor Ashcraft

The West Texas A&M University Department of Agricultural Sciences is the ideal place for students to become involved with extracurricular activities throughout their college experience. During the year, there are many different agriculture teams that compete around the U.S. in various competitions.

Quiz Bowl

The Agricultural Business Quiz Bowl team is made up of four girls and two boys this year. Team members include: Lindsey Dillard from Borger, Janae Noggler from Vega, Brittany Weinheimer from Lark, Cydney Friemel from Vega, Wade Malone from Amarillo, and Dennis Underwood from Dimmitt.

In February, the team traveled to Corpus Christi to compete in the Southern Agricultural Economics Association Quiz Bowl. There were a total of 94 students in the competition from 15 universities. Dr. Lal Almas, advisor of the quiz bowl team, said, “Although our team didn’t bring home the overall win, they all did a great job at the competition!”

Crops Team

The crops team at WTAMU is busy practicing and preparing for the upcoming NACTA contest in Modesto, California in April. Members on the crop’s team include: Jim Belt of Seminole, Amber Synatschk of Sudan, Travis Allison of Shamrock, Renee Allison of Amarillo, Alexis Coufa of Vernon, Justin Stark of Kress, and Michea Finch of Kress.

Each member of the crops team is taking a class to prepare and practice for the upcoming contest. They also hosted and developed the agronomy CDE contest for WTAMU and Clarendon College this semester. Their advisor, Dr. Brock Blaser, said the students have been working hard and are ready to compete at the NACTA contest.

Livestock Judging

This year’s team includes: Shelbie Belott of Canyon, Ryan Byrd of Canyon, Brandon Diller of El Paso, Megan Kirtley of Hobbs, N.M., and Justin Dennis of Stinnett.

The year started off well for the livestock judging team at the National Western Stock Show in Denver, Colo. At Denver, the team was fourth overall in sheep and goats. Kirtley took home 5th place high individual in sheep, and Dennis was 9th high individual in hogs. Fort Worth was the team’s next stop for the Southwestern Exhibition. Kirtley was the 2nd high individual in horses.

At the San Antonio Livestock Competition, the team received 3rd place overall in goats. Diller was the high individual in sheep, and Kirtley also took home 6th high individual in goats. Judging Coach Corey Fischbacher of Wildorado and advisor Dr. Kevin Williams said the team finished strong in Houston with the team finishing 15th and Kirtley finishing 3rd in sheep and goats and 7th in placing. Diller was 8th high individual in hogs. The team also finished 9th in placing.

Linnaean Team

The Linnaean (entomology quiz) Team competed at the Annual Meeting of the Southwestern Branch of the Entomological Society of America in Amarillo, Texas, March 8. The team was not one of the top two teams and did not advance to nationals. This year’s team is Travis Allison of Shamrock, Renee Allison of Amarillo, Jim Belt of Seminole and Joy Lynn Newton of Amarillo.

Kevin Williams, Ph.D

Dr. Williams joined the department in 2009 as an Assistant Professor in agricultural education. He teaches courses in agricultural education and leadership and assists with the Livestock Judging Teams and the Collegiate FFA organization.

STUDENT SUCCESS

Hillary Siegfreid of Holly, Colo. is a senior agricultural media and communication major.

Equestrian Team

In May 2010, 21 members of the WTAMU Girl’s Equestrian team piled into vans and made their way to Lexington, Ky. The Lady Buffs finished fifth of nine teams in the Western competition and ninth of 19 teams in the Hunt Seat competition. They also came home with many individual successes.

The Lady Buffs began their trek to success working at home. They spent months riding and honing their skills. Coach Amanda Love also established work outs for the riders to tone their muscles and increase their balance, all to make them better riders.

The hard-work and determination of the team paid off.

The Equestrian team’s season began at home where they hosted three Western point shows for the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA) at the WTAMU Horse Center. The Lady Buffs came out on top overall, placing first in two of three shows.

The success of the team did not end there. They were consistently triumphant. By March 9, the WTAMU Equestrian Team had captured the program’s fourth consecutive Western Region Championship title at North Central Texas College after entering the Championship with a 32-point lead over their nearest competitor, Redlands Community College. This win helped the team get closer to competing at the National Championship.

Two members of the Western team showed individual success as well. Andrea Spencer from Clinton, Ill., was the Reserve Champion in Open Horsemanship while Rachel Olson from

Hillary Siegfreid of Holly, Colo. is a senior agricultural media and communication major.
About $150,000 were awarded to students enrolled in the department last year.

College faculty received over $2 million in grant money last year.

The Ag Development Association raised over $35,000 at the Ag Reunion to support recruiting and scholarships.

About $150,000 were awarded to students enrolled in the department last year.

Seven students have graduated from the Ph.D. program.

Horse Judging Team

The WTAMU Horse Judging team spent many grueling hours fine-tuning, not only their evaluation skills, but also the presentation of their oral reasons. Needless to say, this hard work and determination paid off.

The group, coached by Dr. John Pipkin, consisted of 11 students. These firehouses opened their competitive season with a fifth- and sixth-place overall finish at the All-American Quarter Horse Congress Oct. 13 in Columbus, Ohio.

Several WTAMU students placed in the top 10 individually. Hillary Finck, a junior animal science major from Whitesboro, placed fourth in halter, sixth in performance and third overall. Chyna Tinney, a sophomore agricultural media and communication major from Neosho, Mo., earned a 10th place finish in reasons.

With only two weeks before the team’s final competition, they knew they had to hit the ground running in order to prepare for their final contest of the Fall when they traveled back to Oklahoma City in December for the National Reining Horse Association National Championship. The team was determined to bring home the 14th champion or reserve champion win at the contest in 16 years of competing at the NRHA contest.

And they did just that. The team placed first overall with a total of 4,376 points, followed by Texas A&M University in second place with 4,356 and the University of Wisconsin at River Falls at third with 4,301 points.

In individual placings, Christa Forsberg placed first overall, and teammate Hillary Finck placed fourth. Dalton Coberley placed ninth overall, Lindsay Raften placed 12th, and Kristen Brown, a junior equine business major from Lexington, Ky., placed 36th at the national event.

“Trevor Ashcraft of Mayetta, Kan. is a senior agricultural media and communication major.

Great job teams and Go Buffs!
First Choice Award Recipients
2003 Roy and Arlene Bryan
2003 Stanley ‘55, ‘70 and Geneva ‘55 Schaeffer
2004 Johnny and Jana ‘95 Trotter
2005 Dr. Russell and Natrelle Long
2006 Gary Culp ‘71
2006 Bob and Nancy Josserand
2007 Dr. Bob Robinson ‘70
2007 Rep. David Swinford
2008 Ross Wilson
2008 Rep. Warren Chisum
2009 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo
2010 Dr. James Clark
2010 Spicer Gripp Youth Foundation

Graduate of Distinction Recipients
1971 B. Raymond Evans ‘46
1972 Tom Devin ‘32
1975 Milton A. “Buff” Morris ‘34
1982 State Senator Bill Sarpalius ‘78
1994 Vernon Harman ‘29
2000 Dr. Bob Robinson ‘70
2001 Russell D. “Red” Steagall ‘60
2002 Bill Piehl ‘60
2003 Robert Devin ‘71
2005 Louis Hinders ‘48
2006 Dr. Lowell Catlett ‘73
2006 Dr. Raymond Hinders ‘48
2006 Dr. Ron Thomason ‘62
2006 John R. “Rusty” Tinnin ‘62
2007 Dr. Andy Cole ‘71
2007 John Fuston ‘66
2008 Barry Evans ‘84
2008 Steve Kennedy, D.V.M ‘77
2009 Gary Culp ‘71
2009 Boyd Vaughn ‘56
2009 Monte Winders ‘80
2010 Ed Wright ‘70

The Department of Agricultural Sciences is proud to announce that Dr. Noel “Andy” Cole has been awarded the 2011 Distinguished Alumnus Award.

The Distinguished Alumnus Award, first awarded in 1970, recognizes and honors WTAMU graduates who have made significant contributions to society and whose accomplishments and careers have brought credit to WTAMU.

The award is given by the WTAMU Alumni Association.

Cole received his Bachelor of science in agriculture (animal science option) with a minor in biology from WTAMU in 1971. He continued his studies at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Okla. where he received both his master’s degree in animal science and doctorate in animal nutrition with a minor in biochemistry.

After completing his education, Cole went to work for the United States Department of Agriculture –Agricultural Research Service, where he conducted research on the effects of nutrition and management of the stress response and nutrition status of transported feeder cattle and subsequent effects on animal health and performance. He served in this position from 1977-1996. Since 1996, Cole has conducted research on the effects of nutrition and management on nutrient excretion, manure management, and ammonia and greenhouse gas emissions from beef cattle feedyards.

“He is nationally and internationally known for his work in beef cattle nutrition and environmental agricultural work,” said Dr. Dean Hawkins, Head and Professor. “Through his career with USDA, Andy has become one of the most highly respected animal scientists within USDA and in the world. He has sought to provide invited talks on a variety of nutrition-related subjects, and more importantly his opinion is highly regarded.”

Cole has received research grants from industry, state and federal governments totaling more than $3 million. Along with his significant contributions through his research, Cole has also had the opportunity to give over 100 oral presentations regarding his research to producer and scientific groups in 14 states, Canada, Brazil and Mexico.

Along with his significant contributions to the agriculture industry, Cole has continued to serve as an ambassador for WTAMU. He currently serves on the Agricultural Development Association Board of Directors, and is currently a member of the WTAMU Alumni Association’s Phoenix Club and Buffalo Club.

In addition to his volunteer service, Cole also established the Cole Agriculture Scholarship Endowment in 2003 to honor his family. This scholarship has provided much needed support to WT agriculture students and will continue to do so for generations to come.

“It is said that we can give of our time, treasure and talent,” said Tim Bynum, WTAMU Senior Development Officer. “Andy has given generously of all three in support of his alma mater.”

Along with his many contributions, Cole has also been awarded numerous prestigious honors. One of those includes the 2007 Graduate of Distinction, an award given by the department to alumni who continue to make a difference in the agricultural industry and the department.

“Cole is proud of his WT heritage, and we are proud he is a graduate of this program,” Hawkins said. “He has supported our graduate programs by serving as a committee member, providing access to USDA facilities and mentoring our younger faculty. His support of WTAMU is without comparison, and we depend on his assistance as the department continues to evolve.”

Alumni Spotlight By Rachel Adkins, a graduate student from Canadian, Texas
CANYON, Texas—Six faculty members in West Texas A&M University’s Department of Agricultural Sciences have been recognized by The Texas A&M University System as recipients of the fall 2010 Student Recognition Award for Teaching Excellence, formerly known as the Teaching Excellence Awards.

The Teaching Excellence Awards were initiated by McKinney in 2008 to honor and reward the system’s top teachers as selected by students. Faculty members who teach courses of three hours or more and have a minimum of 16 students are eligible.

The system awarded $697,500 to the more than 250 outstanding faculty recipients throughout the system. WTAMU had the most faculty winners out of all the 11 campuses in The Texas A&M University System.

“Teaching is very important to us,” Michael D. McKinney, chancellor of The Texas A&M University System, said. “And when the students being taught give special recognition to the teachers who are making an impact on them, it says a lot about the quality faculty we have throughout the system.”

Recipients of the award are Dr. Lance Baker, associate professor of animal science; Dr. Kevin Williams, assistant professor of agricultural education; Elizabeth Moore, graduate assistant; Dr. Lance Kiett, associate professor of agricultural education; Dr. Todd Hubbs, assistant professor of agricultural business and economics; and Dr. Clay Robinson, professor of plant science.

The Ag Gathering Recognizes Students and Student Accomplishments

The Ag Gathering brings students, friends, family and faculty together to celebrate the accomplishments and success of the students in the Department of Agricultural Sciences.

The Ag Gathering or T.A.G. was created to spend more time honoring students and recognizing all the hard work student teams and organizations do for the university, the department and for the community, said Lance Kieth, Associate Professor in Agricultural Education.

About 250 students, faculty and guests attended this year’s event. Students and faculty organized the event.

“It’s a great thing for the department, said Tanner Robertson, Assistant Professor in Agricultural Media and Communication. “It’s an awards program for students, by students.”

Student teams were recognized for their accomplishments, while student organizations recognized their officers and the events their members participated in during the year.

Individual honors were given to students for their leadership and accomplishments within the department and within their program areas.

This year’s Outstanding Seniors were honored for their hard work and determination. This year’s Outstanding Seniors are: Stephanie Schumacher in Agribusiness; Eric Diaz in Agricultural Business and Economics; Ashton Cates in Agriculture; Hilary Harang and Brittan Gruhlkey in Agricultural Education; Kayla Kelley and Hillary Siegfried in Agricultural Media and Communication; Amy Petrie in Animal Science, Natalie Baker in Equine Industry and Business; and Jody Gilchrest in Plant, Soil and Environmental Science.

Three students were given the Charles Smallwood Leadership Award, one of the highest honors granted to students in the department.

The award is given in memory of Dr. Charles Smallwood, a former dean of the College of Agriculture at WTAMU, to students who exhibit excellent leadership skills, hard work and dedication to the department and university.

This year’s Smallwood leaders are: Chris DeSautell, an agricultural education major; James Graves, an animal science major; and Christa Forsberg, an equine industry and business major.

This year’s theme was Mexican pile on and the meats program provided the meat, the animal science program provided the refreshments, agricultural business and economics provided the desserts, the feedlot program brought paper goods, and plant, soil and environmental science and the equine program brought side dishes. The agricultural media and communication program provided the decorations and the agricultural education program was in charge of set up and clean up.
The WTAMU Agricultural Development Association (ADA) is an independent organization formed in the early 1970s to support the Department of Agricultural Sciences.

Last year was truly a banner year for the ADA. In September, ADA hosted its 10th Annual Ag Reunion with nearly 300 alumni and friends in attendance. Proceeds from the live and silent auctions at that event totaled $36,000!

As you can imagine, Ag Reunion is an “all hands on deck” kind of event. Along with the board of directors, many community volunteers and sponsors play a pivotal role in the success of Ag Reunion.

The ADA board chose to honor two such men this year, Chris and Vance Reed of Great Western Distributing, with the inaugural ADA Buffalo Award for their many years of support for this event. Ag Reunion also marked the beginning of a fundraising raffle project to give away a custom WTAMU pool table. That effort netted over $3,000.

Total membership in ADA increased for the third consecutive year.

Successful fundraising activities and increased membership equates to more support that we can provide the department.

Our No. 1 priority is to provide the agricultural faculty with the resources necessary to attract the best and brightest from across the state and beyond our borders.

In 2010, we did just that, in record fashion, providing the Department of Agricultural Sciences with $25,000 specifically for student recruitment.

There is no other department on this campus whose faculty are as engaged in hands on recruiting and it is due to your support of the ADA.

In addition, ADA took on a leadership role in the establishment of the James Clark “First Choice” Scholarship Endowment, honoring Dr. Clark’s years of service to WTAMU and the agricultural community.

The seed money provided by ADA has since turned into a robust $17,000 scholarship endowment that will support WTAMU agriculture students for decades.

We are proud of our efforts and we hope you are too, but we realize we are not even close to reaching our full potential. Join today and help us get one step closer.

ADA Corporate Sponsors
The Agricultural Development Association’s (ADA) corporate sponsors are a critical component of the ADA and its mission. The Department of Agricultural Sciences thanks the ADA and its corporate sponsors for their continued support. To become a corporate sponsor, please contact Tim Bynum at (806) 6561-2069 or tbynum@wtamu.edu.

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Important Dates
July 11-15 – Texas FFA Convention
Sept. 10 – The Ag Reunion
Aug. 20 – Lynn Co. WTAMU Ag Appreciation BBQ
Last year’s Ag Reunion was a huge success thanks to ADA members, alumni, guests and students who attended. Don’t forget to put this year’s Ag Reunion on your calendars!

Ag Reunion
September 10, 2011
Nance Ranch
The department has successfully implemented the Agricultural Media and Communication degree program at WTAMU. The program celebrated its second birthday on Jan. 30 and is dedicated to the students it serves.

“We needed an agricultural communication program here at WT,” said Dr. Lance Kieth, Associate Professor in Agricultural Education. “This program has and will continue to be dedicated to helping students tell the story of this great industry.”

The efforts to bring this program to WTAMU started seven years ago when a group of determined faculty analyzed other agricultural communications programs to formulate a degree plan for WTAMU students.

“We had to wait for the right timing to push for this degree,” Kieth said. “That time came four years ago when the agricultural education program reached 100 students.”

With the immediate interest and high demand for the program came the addition of Dr. Tanner Robertson. He joined the department in December after serving at Oklahoma State University as an Assistant Professor in agricultural communications.

“This is the perfect place to develop agricultural communicators,” Robertson said. “By place, I mean WT and the Panhandle of Texas.”

The degree program also offers many career and personal development opportunities for students interested in communicating agriculture through class work, internships and the Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow, a student organization.

“This is a hands-on industry, so the program is filled with hands-on learning experiences and opportunities,” Robertson said.

Agricultural communication graduates work everywhere in the world and in a number of fields.

“Students with this degree are media professionals who specialize in the science of agriculture,” Robertson said.

Currently, students take courses in mass communication and the Department of Agricultural Sciences to fulfill this degree. As the program grows, courses related to the specific challenges in communicating agriculture will be added.

Those who helped develop the agricultural media and communication program are: Dr. Trudy Hanson, Department of Communication Head and Professor at WTAMU, Dr. Lance Keith, Associate Professor Agriculture Education, Dr. Leigh Browning, Associate Professor of Mass Communication, Randy Ray, Assistant Lecturer of Mass Communication and Director of Broadcast Engineering, and the Late Dr. Robert Herrington.

Currently, there are more than 30 students majoring in agricultural media and communication at WTAMU.