

The Leading Object

NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY'S

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND HOME ECONOMICS

FEBRUARY/ 2004

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Legislative update: Nine college-related bills go to finance committees



Nine legislative initiatives related to the College of Agriculture and Home Economics worked their way through the legislative process in Santa Fe as the legislature headed toward a Feb. 19 adjournment deadline. House Bill (HB) 72, appropriating \$582,000 to enhance the Clovis Agricultural Science Center, was referred to the House Appropriations and Finance Committee. The companion Senate Bill (SB) 95 was

referred to the Senate Finance Committee. House Bill 321, authorizing \$300,000 for the same purpose, is in the House Agriculture and Water Resources Committee.

The following bills were all referred to their respective finance committees: HB 56 and SB 24, appropriating \$260,000 for a rural health awareness program; HB 52 and SB 72 for \$150,000 to employ a viticulturist; HB 148 and SB 60 for \$200,000 to establish an Extension veterinarian;

HB 9 to enhance the Tukumcari Agricultural Science Center with \$341,000; HB 122 to provide \$244,000 for an arid turfgrass program; HB 142 to appropriate \$180,000 for off-campus facilities repairs; HB 145 to provide \$150,000 for a livestock judging program; and HB 47 appropriating \$150,000 for a state climatologist. A companion climatologist bill, SB 240, is in the Senate Conservation Committee.

Capital outlay bills include House and Senate bills for \$100,000 for NMSU rodeo facilities and a House bill for \$895,000 for the Clovis Agricultural Science Center.

Other related legislation making its way to finance committees includes HB 13 and SB 63 for \$250,000 to fund an intercollegiate equestrian team at NMSU, and SB 235 for \$250,000 for the New Mexico Rural Development Council.

See page 4 for federal budget.

DEAN'S PERSPECTIVE



by Jerry Schickedanz

These are exciting new times in the New Mexico legislative arena. Just as we had to adapt to the Gary Johnson era, and how that governor affected the legislative process, we must adapt to the Bill Richardson approach to government and to fresh budget challenges. There is always more to learn.

The most common expectation regarding compensation

increases is 2 percent across-the-board. We had a great start in the legislative session, with all of our priorities quickly introduced as bills, plus many other friendly bills introduced as well. There were nine different initiatives directly affecting the college (see legislative update). This has kept me very busy in committee hearings, and I have heard many supportive messages.

Still, it isn't over until it's over, and we could go crazy worrying about rumors of budget cuts and flat funding. We have been vigilant to make sure we are not inadvertently harmed in the budget process. It is amazing how a few hundred thousand dollars can fall through the cracks.

I'm sorry I have been out of pocket as I work full time in Santa Fe, but I would be remiss to do anything else.

Handy government links on college Web site

Quick access to Web sites commonly needed by College of Agriculture and Home Economics faculty and staff is available through the college Web site. Links include the New Mexico Agricultural Statistics Service, state executive departments, New Mexico Legislature, governor's office, New Mexico Congressional delegation and the U.S. and New Mexico departments of agriculture.

To gain access, go to the college Web site at www.cahe.nmsu.edu then click "for employees" and select from the "government links" menu.

Coming Up

HRTM hosts career fair

Hospitality and tourism representatives from more than 30 companies—including restaurants, resorts, hotel chains and golf courses—will visit campus Feb. 19-20 to recruit employees during a career fair.

Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management is hosting the event, which features public exhibits from 9 a.m. to noon Thursday on the third floor of Corbett Center. Many employers will also conduct

formal job interviews Thursday afternoon and Friday, said Janet Green, department head. Students helped organize the career fair, which is one of the largest in recent years.

For more information, contact Judy Story at 646-5995 or jstory@nmsu.edu. A list of companies and scheduled events is posted at: www.nmsu.edu/~hrtm/Resources/html/HRTM/CareerFair.html

Holloway remembered in golf fund raiser



A March 19 golf scramble in Las Cruces will raise money for the New Mexico 4-H Foundation in memory of the late Jesse

Holloway, former state 4-H department head. The 18-hole scramble format will have a 1:30 p.m. shotgun start at Picacho Hills Country Club.

Entry fees are \$100 per person or \$400 per four-person team. The cost covers green fees, cart, sack lunch and a dinner cookout. Deadline for entries is March 15. Hole and tee sponsorships are welcome at \$100 and \$50, respectively.

Entries or sponsorships can be sent to NM 4-H Foundation Golf Scramble, NMSU, MSC 3AE, P.O. Box 30003, Las Cruces, NM 88003.

For more information contact Billy Dictson at 647-3908 or e-mail 4hfoundation@nmsu.edu.

Super Bowl grass has NMSU roots

The grass featured under foot of the NFL champions at Reliant Stadium in Super Bowl 38 on Feb. 1 was developed by NMSU professor emeritus Arden Baltensperger. The Bermuda variety was overseeded with ryegrass for green color, and 100,000 square feet of the sod was shipped to Houston for the game.

For more information go to www.cahe.nmsu.edu and click "News Center."

FROM THE FIELD



By Mick O'Neill, Superintendent, Agricultural Science Center at Farmington

Given that two-thirds of the total surface water flowing downstream from New Mexico passes through the San Juan basin, efficient use of water in an arid region plays a crucial role for researchers at the Agricultural Science Center at Farmington.


The Bureau of Reclamation, Upper Colorado River Office, generously provided partial funding for turfgrass and xeriscape research. Dan Smeal has evaluated almost 30 grass

varieties for water requirements, finding warm season grasses maintaining acceptable turf quality at about 65 percent of the water needed for cool season varieties.

In collaboration with the Bureau of Land Management, the gas/oil industry and local ranchers, Rick Arnold is assessing rehabilitation of well sites and accessways with 16 native and non-native grass species using produced water to enhance germination during drought periods.

With partial funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, I investigated depths for subsurface drip irrigation on alfalfa, beans, corn and potatoes. Research on drip-irrigated poplar trees led to a large-scale poplar plantation project by the Navajo Agricultural Products Industry to supply fiber for a local excelsior company. Plans call for establishing approximately 250 acres of drip-irrigated poplar trees over 10 years followed by a 10-year harvest period.

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Deans' Coffee Time
Wednesdays, 8:30-9:15 a.m.
Gerald Thomas Hall Foyer

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Livestock judging team finishes third, fifth

NMSU's livestock judging team finished in the top five at shows in Phoenix and Denver.

The team celebrated New Year's with a third place at the Arizona National Livestock Show behind Colorado State and Texas A&M. In individual standings, Jonie Martin, a junior from Upland, Ind., was second overall, with a first in beef, second in reasons and fourth in swine. Senior Briley Elliott of Newcastle, Wyo., finished second in beef, one point behind Martin. Cody Chabot, a junior from Riverton, Wyo., won in sheep and finished fourth overall individually.

At the National Western Stock Show in Denver, NMSU placed fifth among 32 teams competing Jan. 16, just one point behind fourth-place Illinois. Senior Collin Howard of Smyer, Texas, was sixth in sheep and seventh in overall individual standings. Martin was third in sheep and seventh in reasons.

Other team members are junior Marco Hamilton of Silver City, junior Jenna Hardin of Lovington, and junior Geoff Hathorn of Lubbock, Texas. All are animal science majors except Elliott, who is studying agricultural and extension education.

DEPARTMENT PERSPECTIVE



By Ron Byford, Department Head, Extension Plant Sciences

Strong Extension Plant Science programs are evident in the largest agricultural commodity areas as well as the ornamental and turf industries. The department is recognized for its efforts in pesticide applicator training, plant disease diagnostics, water quality and integrated pesticide management programs. Extension's effectiveness is enhanced through close collaboration with a host of state and federal agencies.

One of the department's most recent initiatives is administering the college's Water Task Force. The college created the task force as a university-wide organization to supply objective, scientific data about water issues in New Mexico. The task force includes about 75 NMSU scientists on water-related issues, who provide rapid responses to public requests for studies, white papers, expert testimony and proposed solutions to water problems.

As part of a joint program with Texas A&M University, the task force is conducting research and educational programs to improve irrigation efficiency in agriculture and urban landscaping in the Rio Grande Basin. The initiative is focusing on water reuse, conservation practices, water quality, satellite imagery, remote sensing and ecological practices that affect irrigation. All our findings will be disseminated to the public in practical ways that directly address water use in the region.

Aggie riders strong at Regional shows in Las Cruces

The NMSU equestrian team continued its winning season with first- and second-place finishes last weekend at a pair of regional Intercollegiate Horse Show Association competitions at the campus Equine Educational Center.

"I'm very pleased with how our riders performed," said Deborah Rosencrans, NMSU stock seat coach. "Although we rode well and placed well all weekend, we came out a nose behind Colorado State University."

NMSU finished in first place Saturday and was named high-point team for the day. On Sunday, the team ended the two-day meet with reserve high-point team honors, which placed NMSU in the second spot in the overall Zone 7, Region 1

standings behind Colorado State. Rosencrans said the team showed strength across all riding levels. Kelli Younker, a 19-year-old freshman, won reserve high-point rider honors with a second-place finish in both the open horsemanship A and open reining B classes on Sunday, to go along with Saturday's first-place finish in the open reining A class.

The Santa Fe native is one of five NMSU riders who qualified for the regional championships, which will be held at Colorado State University in Fort Collins on March 13. During the fall, sophomore Elizabeth Knight from Las Cruces earned enough points to qualify for the regional championship.

The Aggies will be back in action for two Western shows Feb. 21-22 at Colorado State.

New staff

Robert Brazell

Records Tech II
Home Economics Program
Unit/Albuquerque

Shannon Drake

Extension Associate I
Home Economics
Otero County

Kimberly Gober

Extension Nutrition Educator
Lincoln County

Larry Perkins

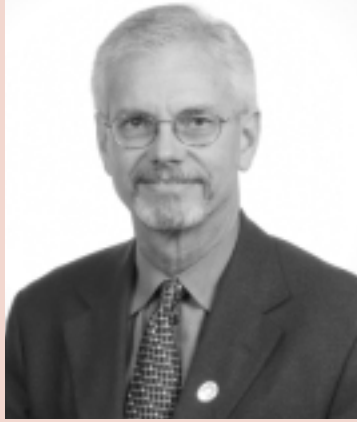
Farm Superintendent
Tucumcari Agricultural
Science Center

Aaron Scott

Farm Superintendent
Clovis Agricultural Science Center

Carolyn Sperandeo

Administrative Secretary II
Ext Plant Sciences/Albuquerque



By Wesley Holley, Associate Dean of Academic Programs

It was great to see the students back from Christmas vacation. Spring brings with it a renewal—recruitment of new students, seniors planning graduation and students just excited to be one year closer to their careers. Spring is great!

Change in the college also is in the air. A new academic major is being implemented. A conserva-

tion ecology major jointly offered by Biology and Fishery and Wildlife Sciences is making its way through the university approval process, while we continue to work on an aviation program.

There is new focus on recruitment that exposes more students to the possibility of careers through the college. Enrollment growth will illustrate the viability of majors in the college and great opportunities for a multitude of students.

We established standing college committees in advisement, retention, graduation, recruitment/careers and scholarship, which promise to open communication between faculty, my office, and departments and foster mutual cooperation. I will share more about these and other changes in future columns. Meanwhile, if you have suggestions to improve our efforts in supporting students, faculty and alumni, I'm eager to hear them.

Spring enrollment up

Spring enrollment is up from year-ago figures for the College of Agriculture and Home Economics at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. There are 1,370 undergraduates, up from 1,342 in Spring 2003—a 2 percent increase. Graduate enrollment is 239, compared to 228 one year ago, a 4.8 percent increase.

Events

Feb. 19

Ranch-to-Rail Field Day
Clayton
Contact: Clay Mathis, 646-8022

Feb. 19-20

Lowenstein Lecture Series
Dr. Molly Jahn
Las Cruces
Contact: Dee May, 646-1137

Feb. 20

NM 4-H Youth Horse Judging School
Las Cruces
Contact: Frank Hodnett, 646-5472

March 3

Onion Conference
Las Cruces
Contact: Stephanie Walker, 646-5280

March 4-6

Agri-Tourism Conference
Albuquerque
Contact: Gerald Chacon, 983-4615

March 7-9

Western Pecan Growers Conference
Las Cruces
Contact: Esteban Herrera, 646-5280

March 16

Tucumcari Bull Test Sale
Tucumcari
Contact: Ron Parker, 646-1709

For more information go to www.cahe.nmsu.edu and click "College events."

President's USDA budget cuts NMSU funding

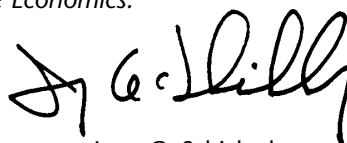
The Joe Skeen Institute for Rangeland Restoration was zeroed out and other Extension funds were cut in the fiscal year 2005 federal budget submitted by President George W. Bush. More than 9 percent of discretionary funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service was cut, said Washington administrators.

The Skeen Institute was funded for \$895,000 for FY 2004. Smith-Lever 3 b and c formula funds were proposed for less than a percent decrease and almost a 25 percent decrease was proposed for the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program. Other budget lines scheduled for decrease are sustainable agriculture and farm safety formula funds.

*The Morrill Act of 1862 established a land-grant university in each state where **The Leading Object** would be instruction in agriculture and related fields.*

*The **Leading Object** is dedicated to encouraging communication among all areas of NMSU's College of Agriculture and Home Economics.*

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Jerry G. Schickedanz,
Dean and Chief Administrative Officer

NMSU is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and educator. NMSU and USDA cooperating.