

People & Places

A livestock ‘knowledge broker’

Sarah Smith helps producers find new, more efficient ways to raise animals

By MATTHEW WEAVER
Capital Press

MOSES LAKE, Wash. — If Sarah Smith has her way, more ranchers will soon be using needleless syringes on their sheep, cattle and hogs. “It’s pretty cool,” she said. “We call it the injection gun. Instead of having a needle, the CO2 pulses through at such a high level, it penetrates the skin.” Use of the tool increases vaccination efficiency and safety for humans and animals, reducing the risk of broken needles or accidentally sticking oneself.

As animal sciences regional specialist for Washington State University Extension in Moses Lake, Smith primarily supports beef, sheep and hog producers. She also helps with some goats and with dairy cattle once they’re designated for beef production.

Farm to table
She says she covers livestock from farm to table, keeping in touch with chefs and consumers.

Smith wants to keep ranchers informed about regulations, disease outbreaks and the bigger picture. She will mark her 20th anniversary with WSU Extension in July.

Washington’s ‘marvel’
She considers the Columbia Basin in Central Washington a “marvel.”



Matthew Weaver/Capital Press

Washington State University Extension regional specialist Sarah Smith with her sheep at her ranch Oct. 28 near Moses Lake, Wash.

“A lot of people, they drive on I-90, they see some sagebrush and some fields,” she said. “Even when I took this job, I didn’t understand how much agriculture is here. We have such progressive farmers. They’re trendsetters, they keep us on our toes. The amount of crops coming out of here, the level we can feed people and the quality is just remarkable.” Smith grew up in Northern Idaho. Her grandparents raised cattle, and her parents raised sheep, while she participated in 4-H and FFA. “My parents now have the cattle, and I have the sheep,” she said. She thought she would become a veterinarian, but while studying at WSU, she realized she prefers commercial livestock production for food and genetics. Smith helps her parents

with their wheat and cattle farm in Dusty, Wash. “I really enjoy the cattle part of it,” she said. “The wheat I think is beautiful, but you’re not going to get me in one of those combines.”

Valais blacknose
She keeps Valais blacknose sheep as a hobby, raising show lambs. She markets them by 90 days and 90 pounds, she said. How many sheep does she have? “More than I should,” she said of about 50 ewes. “I’m so fascinated with genetics, that’s why I did it,” she said. “Not necessarily to create a pet — they are pretty darn cute and pretty friendly. I think they bring some unique qualities we could use on the West Coast.” She works with WSU’s veterinary school on arti-

ficial insemination. For sheep, this requires laparoscopic surgery. She jokes that when she sends her ewes to school, she hopes they come back pregnant. Smith considers her work an opportunity to give back. “Someone invested in me when I was going to school,” she said. “This (allows) me to invest in students. ... I’m so thankful to be able to have vets and specialists, if we don’t do this, we’re not going to be able to have them in the future.” **Sharing knowledge** Moxee, Wash., sheep producer Nick Martinez said Smith has helped his ranch with ram breeding studies and trials, providing another set of eyes. “She’s always been helpful and trying to make



Western Innovator

SARAH SMITH
Age: 46
Title: Animal sciences regional specialist, Washington State University Extension
Hometown: Troy, Idaho
Current location: Moses Lake, Wash.
Education: Washington State University, bachelor’s degree and master’s degree in animal science
Family: Has own farm; with siblings, helps parents with family farm
Website: <https://extension.wsu.edu/animalag/>

everything go better,” he said. The needleless syringe will hopefully be faster and safer, he said. “Be interesting to try it,” he said. Smith works to help companies and individual ranchers become more profitable, said Ephrata, Wash., rancher Bill Sieverkropp. “She’s always trying to see what’s happening around the world, where things are going and what do we need to be thinking about in the future,” he said. “I just transfer knowledge, broker knowledge, move it around, help create new recipes,” Smith said. “I learn something at one farm, and say, ‘Well, I think part of this will work over here.’”

CALENDAR

Submit upcoming ag-related events on www.capitalpress.com or by email to newsroom@capitalpress.com.

MONDAY, JAN. 6
Idaho Range Livestock Symposium: 8 a.m., American Legion Hall, Marsing, Idaho. Adapting to a changing rangeland environment. Registration is required. Contact: Scott Jensen, 208-894-4104, scottj@uidaho.edu Website: <https://bit.ly/2DMjyIR>

TUESDAY, JAN. 7
Idaho-E. Oregon Alfalfa and Clover Seed Growers Meeting: 8 a.m., Caldwell Elks Lodge, 1015 N. Kimball Ave., Caldwell, Idaho. Alfalfa and clover seed growers from Eastern Oregon, southwest Idaho and the Magic Valley of Idaho will have their annual meeting. Contact: Benjamin Kelly, 208-888-0988, benjamin@amgidaho.com
Idaho Range Livestock Symposium: CSI Herrett Center, 315 Falls Ave., Twin Falls, Idaho. Adapting to a changing environment. Registration required. Contact: Benton Glaze, 208-736-3638, bgglaze@uidaho.edu Website: <https://bit.ly/2DMjyIR>

TUESDAY-WEDNESDAY, JAN. 7-8
Cropping Systems Conference: 9 a.m., Three Rivers Convention Center, 7016 W. Grandridge Blvd., Kennewick, Wash. The two-day event features something for everyone with a trade show, general and breakout sessions, and research poster sessions. Sponsored by the Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association. Website: <http://directseed.org> Contact: agmgt@agmgt.com, 509-585-5460.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 8
Idaho Range Livestock Symposium: 8 a.m., Bannock County Veterans Memorial Building, 300 N Johnson Ave., Pocatello, Idaho. Adapting to a changing environment. Registration required. Contact: Benton Glaze, 208-736-3638, bgglaze@uidaho.edu Website: <https://bit.ly/2DMjyIR>

THURSDAY, JAN. 9
Idaho Range Livestock Symposium: 8 a.m., BYU-Idaho Ag. Science Center, 525 S Center St., Rexburg, Idaho. Adapting to a changing environment. Registration required. Contact: Benton Glaze, 208-736-3638, bgglaze@uidaho.edu Website: <https://bit.ly/2DMjyIR>

THURSDAY-FRIDAY, JAN. 9-10
Oregon Mint Growers Annual Meeting: 8 a.m. Salishan Resort, 7760 North Highway 101, Gleneden Beach, Ore. Make your plans to attend the 71st annual meeting, where you’ll hear the latest on the mint industry. Contact: <http://oregonmint.org>, 503-364-2944

MONDAY, JAN. 13
Rice Grower Meeting: 8:30 a.m., Evangelical Church, 5219 Church St., Richvale, Calif. This is part of a series of rice grower meetings sponsored by UC Extension. <http://cecolusa.ucanr.edu/?newsitem=82541>.
Rice Grower Meeting: 1:30 p.m., Glenn County Office of Education, 311 S. Villa Ave., Willows, Calif. This is part of a series of rice grower meetings sponsored by UC Extension. <http://cecolusa.ucanr.edu/?newsitem=82541>.

TUESDAY, JAN. 14
Introduction to Food Safety & HACCP Workshop: 8 a.m. U of I Food Technology Center, 1902 E Chicago St., Caldwell, Idaho. This is a one-day overview course designed for line workers, QC personnel, sanitation professionals, supervisors, and other employees of food processing operations. Participants will spend part of the day learning about food safety prerequisite programs, which are used to ensure food products are free from nonhazardous objectionable contaminants. Cost: \$355 Website: <https://bit.ly/2DJSOSP>
Rice Grower Meeting: 8:30 a.m., Colusa Casino Resort, 3770 Highway 45, Colusa, Calif. This is part of a series of rice grower meetings sponsored by UC Extension. <http://cecolusa.ucanr.edu/?newsitem=82541>.
Rice Grower Meeting: 1:30 p.m., Veterans Hall, 1425 Veterans Memorial Circle, Yuba City, Calif. This is part of a series of meetings sponsored by UC Cooperative Extension. <http://cecolusa.ucanr.edu/?newsitem=82541>.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 15
Farm and Ranch Succession Planning Workshop Series: 1-4 p.m. Multnomah Grange No. 71, 30639 SE Bluff Road. Gresham, Ore. Register now for this free series of workshops on farm and ranch succession. Workshops are held every other Wednesday from Jan. 15 to Feb. 26 In addition to these courses, no-cost, confidential, one-on-one business counseling is provided free by an experienced Farm and Ranch Small Business Development Center adviser. Let us help you identify issues and evaluate options in passing your farm and business on to the next generation. A complimentary light lunch is provided at 12:30 p.m. There is room for 50 people. Presented by: Clackamas Small Business Development Center and the East Multnomah & Clackamas Soil & Water Conservation Districts. Questions? Call Diana Tourney at 503-594-0732.
Irrigation Workshop: 9 a.m.-noon, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, Fairview Industrial Drive SE, Salem. Join us for a morning of experts discussing irrigation innovations, incentives and conservation of water. Participants in this no cost workshop will learn how to effectively utilize water with emerging technology, equipment upgrades

or retrofits, and how to use data to irrigate agricultural grounds proficiently. Speakers: Troy Peters, Ulrike Mengelberg and Teri Hranac will provide engaging topics as well as answer your questions pertaining to irrigation and conservation. Marion SWCD, 503-391-9927. <http://www.marionswcd.net>
Rice Grower Meeting: 1:30 p.m., Norton Hall, 70 Cottonwood St., Woodland, Calif. This is part of a series of rice grower meetings sponsored by UC Extension. <http://cecolusa.ucanr.edu/?newsitem=82541>.

WEDNESDAY-THURSDAY, JAN. 15-16
Introduction to Safe Quality Food: 8:30 a.m. U of I Food Technology Center, 1902 E Chicago St., Caldwell, Idaho. Instructor Jana Hamlett will provide knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the SQF practitioner and how they ensure supplies are in compliance with an internationally recognized and accredited Food Safety Management System which will support compliance to the FSMA rules. Website: <https://bit.ly/2LmRLS3>
Idaho Noxious Weed Conference: 8 a.m. Riverside Hotel, 2900 W. Chinden Blvd., Boise, Idaho. The 2020 Idaho Noxious Weed Conference features a variety of topics dealing with vegetation management. Website: <http://www.idahoweedcontrol.org>

WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY, JAN. 15-17
Northwest Agricultural Show: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Thursday and 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Friday. Oregon State Fair and Expo Center, 2330 17th St. NE, Salem, Ore. The 50th edition of the Northwest Ag Show will feature over 120 exhibitors and partners and seminars and workshops covering a variety of topics important to farmers and ranchers. Admission on Wednesday and Thursday is \$5 for adults, \$3 for seniors, and free for children 12 and under. Admission on Friday is free, courtesy of the Oregon Ag in the Classroom Foundation. Contact: 503-364-4431 <http://northwestagshow.com>

THURSDAY, JAN. 16
Oregon Seed Association Mid-Winter Meeting: 8 a.m., Boulder Falls Inn, 505 Mullins Drive, Lebanon. The OSA Mid-Winter Meeting is held every January in Oregon’s Willamette Valley region. The one-day event consists of committee and general session member meetings, workshops, and includes lunch. Scholarship awards are presented to eligible applicants. The day concludes with an early evening reception to honor past OSA association presidents. See website for more information and registration form. Angie Smith, smith@pacwestcom.com, 503-685-7555.

www.oregonseed.org/events/winter-meeting/

FRIDAY, JAN. 17
SAIF Agri-Business Banquet: 6 p.m. Salem Convention Center, 200 Commercial St. SE, Salem, Ore. The SAIF Agri-Business Banquet is a celebration of the agricultural community and its impact on the mid-Willamette Valley. This year, Jim Bernau of Willamette Valley Vineyards is the featured speaker. <https://salemchamber.org/events/saif-agribusiness-banquet/>

SATURDAY, JAN. 18
Oregon Dairy Princess Ambassador Contest: 5:30 p.m. Salem Convention Center, 200 Commercial St. SE, Salem, Ore. Join the excitement as the county dairy princess ambassadors demonstrate their dairy knowledge and public speaking and communications skills. Online: <https://oregondairywomen.com/events/>

FRIDAY-WEDNESDAY, JAN. 17-22
American Farm Bureau Annual Convention and Trade Show: Austin Convention Center, 500 E. Cesar Chavez St., Austin, Texas. This is your opportunity to help set the agenda for the leading voice of agriculture. Participate in educational workshops to advance your leadership skills, expand your business acumen and gain deep insight into the trends and realities impacting food production. Contact: <https://annualconvention.fb.org/>

SUNDAY-TUESDAY, JAN. 19-21
NFU Women’s Conference: Catamaran Resort Hotel and Spa, 3999 Mission Blvd., San Diego, Calif. This conference will not only prepare attendees for success in agriculture, but it will also provide them with their own network of women farmers and ranchers they can reach out to throughout the year. Contact: Hannah Packman, hpackman@nfudc.org, 202-554-1600. <https://nfu.org/womensconference/>

WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY, JAN. 22-24
American Hop Convention: Portland Marriott Downtown Waterfront, 1401 SW Naito Parkway, Portland. The Oregon Hop Growers Association and its members welcome hop growers and industry members to Oregon for the 64th annual American Hop Convention. Hop Growers of America, 509-453-4749. <http://www.usahops.org/convention/>.

TUESDAY, JAN. 28
FSPCA Preventive Controls for Human Food Course: 8 a.m.-5 p.m., TBD, Twin Falls. The Food Safety Modernization Act regulations require every food processing facility to have a “Preventive Controls Quali-

fied Individual” (PCQI) who has completed a specialized training course, such as this one, and who will oversee the implementation of the facility’s food safety plan. Janna Hamlett, jannahamlett@techhelp.org, (208) 736-3610. \$750. <https://techhelp.org/events/pcqitwin2020/>

4-Part Workshop On Small-Scale Backyard Dairy Management: 5:30-8 p.m., Linn County Extension Office, 33630 McFarland Road, Tangent, Ore. This four-class series is for those interested in owning a dairy animal to provide milk for home use. This class will not cover rules and regulations for selling milk or milk products. Nutrition and Feeding (Jan. 28), Facilities and Manure Management (Feb. 4), Milking and Milk Handling Procedures (Feb. 11) and Health and Reproduction (Feb. 18) Teagan Moran, teagan.moran@oregonstate.edu, 541-713-5011. \$60 for series. A partner can be added for a discounted \$35. <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/smallfarms/events/>

MONDAY, FEB. 3
Oregon Blueberry Conference: 8 a.m. Salem Convention Center, 200 Commercial St. SE, Salem, Ore. This is the Oregon blueberry industry’s annual meeting and features a variety of presentations and other informational sessions. Contact: <http://oregonblueberry.com> 503-364-2944

TUESDAY, FEB. 4
Create a FSMA Compliant Food Safety Plan: 1-4 p.m., Idaho Falls, Idaho Falls. The IFSC is a free program that helps small food processors (500 employees or less) create a FSMA compliant food safety plan during six afternoon sessions spread over 2 months. Idaho Falls course takes place 1-4 p.m. on Feb. 4 and 18, March 3, 17 and 31 and April 14. Janna Hamlett, jannahamlett@techhelp.org, (208) 731-9363.

TUESDAY-THURSDAY, FEB. 4-6
Spokane Ag Show: 9 a.m., Spokane Convention Center, 334 W Spokane Falls Blvd., Spokane, Wash. Spokane’s annual celebration of all things agricultural, with a large ag equipment show and full schedule of presentations that will be of interest to all ranchers and farmers. Online: www.agshow.org

TUESDAY-THURSDAY, FEB. 11-13
World Ag Expo: 9 a.m., International Agri-Center, 4500 S. Laspina St., Tulare, Calif. World Ag Expo is the world’s largest annual agricultural exposition. More than 1,500 exhibitors display the latest in farm equipment, communications and technology on 2.6 million square feet of exhibit space. Free seminars focus on a variety of topics important to dairy producers, farmers, ranchers and agribusiness professionals. Online: www.worldag-expo.com



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