impact

University of Idaho Extension programs that are making a difference in Idaho.

Waste to Worth Conference brings national manure and ag waste experts to Idaho

AT A GLANCE

With the participation of academics, producers, allied industry and students, this conference generates a framework to share research advances and experiences in livestock waste management

The Situation

The biannual Waste to Worth Conference (W2W) is organized by the Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Community (LPELC), a group of Extension professionals, researchers and personnel from diverse agencies working on animal agriculture waste and resource management. Since its first meeting in 2013, the conference has been held at different locations within the USA. For 2025, University of Idaho Extension personnel chaired the conference and worked with the LPELC organizing committee to bring this national conference to Idaho for the first time.

Our Response

University of Idaho Extension faculty teamed up with LPELC to organize and deliver the conference in Boise on April 7-11. The Idaho Sustainable Initiative for Dairy (ISAID) project (a USDA Sustainable Agricultural Systems grant) was the main conference sponsor. Other local and national sponsors contributed financially and in-kind. Presenters included U of I faculty, local and national representatives from the dairy and agricultural industries and producers. The conference included tours, presentations, workshops and panels. The three tours showcased Idaho agriculture, irrigation water and waste management in the Treasure and Magic Valleys. The poster session included students and faculty as well as a graduate student poster competition.



The traditional conference cultural dinner featured the Boise Basque Center, with a Basque dinner and dancing performance.

Program Outcomes

The conference had 134 attendees, including academics, students, agricultural producers, allied industry, and state and federal personnel from the U.S., plus eight international participants. The primary focus was on manure management, with most of the participants working on topics related to dairy production. Beef, poultry and swine production were also represented by participants, as well as processing and consumer-focused areas. Eighty participants attended the tours, interacting with other attendees, host producers and institutions. Tour feedback highlighted the diversity and

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excellence of Idaho agriculture, praising the profound impact of this experiential learning and networking opportunity.

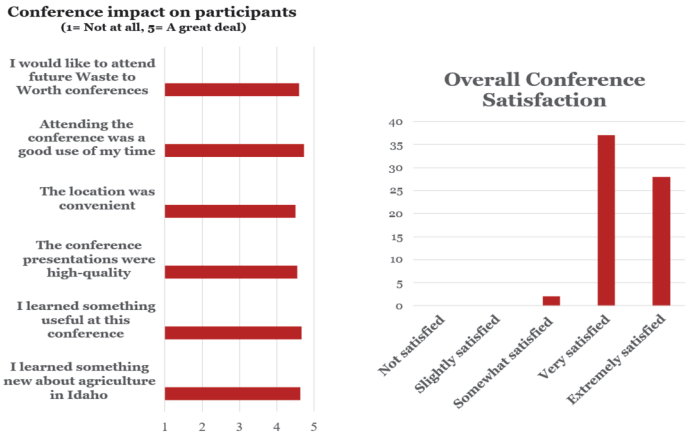
Workshop attendees valued the relevance, variety of perspectives and quality of information presented. Workshop topics included interactive manure application mapping, manure technologies, mortality composting, baseline sustainability assessments, moving the sustainability needle in agriculture and poultry litter management. Presentations included a wide diversity of topics, from soil health to manure management, to emissions reduction and Extension projects.

ISAID students as well as students from other states participated in workshops, meetings, presentations and the graduate poster competition. The experiential learning and networking opportunity this conference offered to Idaho graduate students was extremely valuable and it was highlighted in the conference evaluation and their comments to faculty.

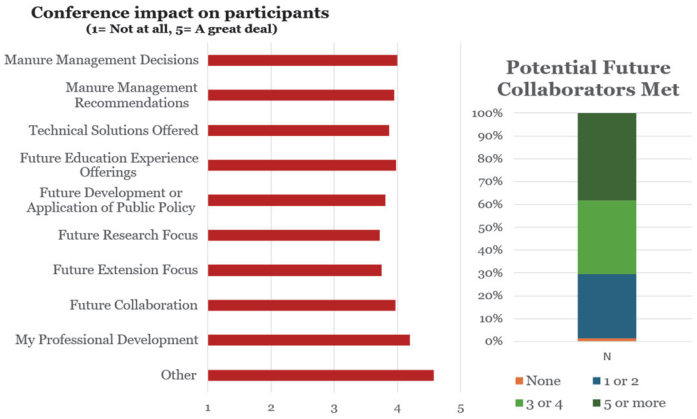
Overall, participants were very satisfied with the conference and their learning and networking experience. Some of the comments from participants express their satisfaction:

- "I enjoyed networking with colleagues, seeing and learning about western agriculture."
- "Was able to see a functioning system which solidifies understanding much more than reading about it ever could."
- "One of the things I valued most was meeting other professionals and building a sense of community."

W2W conference summative evaluation



W2W conference impact



Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

Idaho Sustainable Agriculture Initiative for Dairy; ISAID funding provided by a USDA-NIFA Sustainable Agriculture Systems (SAS) grant #2020-69012-31871.

Waste to Worth Conference & Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Community websites.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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