



## The New Mexico Youth Ranch Management Camp

by Marcy Ward, *Extension Livestock Specialist*

The New Mexico Youth Ranch Management Camp (NMYRMC) is now in its eighth year. This year we had over 40 applicants apply. It was difficult to turn young people away, but it is a sign of just how much the program has grown. The NMYRMC has proven to be one of the most successful collaborations in extension in New Mexico. This July I will be traveling to Vancouver Canada to present the impact the New Mexico Youth Ranch Management Camp has had on our participants, to a national audience. Below is an excerpt of what I will be presenting:

*Less than 2% of the U.S. population is involved in agriculture. Of this population, the average age of active livestock producers is 58. Given this reality, youth education and involvement in agriculture is needed to sustain and grow this very important industry. The New Mexico Youth Ranch Management Camp is a one-of-a-kind intensive learning program designed to educate high school aged students in beef production and natural resource management. The goal is for participants to acquire practical, science-based skills that are employed on modern-day ranches to advance beef production, natural resource stewardship, wildlife management and economics. Each day of the camp focuses on one of these facets to ranch management. Participants also have the unique opportunity to learn from members of the host ranch. The CS Ranch is a historic working ranch located in northern New Mexico. At the beginning of the camp, teams of 4 to 5 participants are formed. These teams must develop a ranch plan, incorporating skills learned during the week of instruction. At the conclusion of the week, teams present their plan to a panel of judges. This is an extensive collaboration among the NMSU Extension Specialists, County Extension Agents and ranching stakeholders from New Mexico and Texas. The camp creates a unique learning opportunity for youth to acquire a knowledge base and skill set in ranch management. The scholastic level of material presented during the camp is such that participants who go on to attend NMSU receive 3 hours of academic credit towards their degree. This program has educated over 175 New Mexico youth. Participant evaluations indicate a significant increase in knowledge in all topics presented. Fifty-five % of participants have gone to college and majored in an agriculture related field.*

I am very proud to be a part of this program and would like to take this opportunity to thank all who work very hard to make NYMRMC successful each year. Thanks to: Jack Blandford (Luna County), Sid Gordon (Otero County), Josh Boyd (Sierra County), Newt McCarty (Valencia County), Steve Lucero (Sandoval County), Tom Dean (Southwest Director), Patrick Torres (Northern Director), Leigh Ann Marez (Eastern Director), Sam Smallidge (Wildlife Specialist), Doug Cram (Forestry and Fire Specialist), Karen Montoya (Administrative Assistant), Sonja Jo Serna (Multi Media Specialist), and Blair Clavel (Producer, Harding County).

Our continued support through sponsorship is also greatly appreciated. Local, regional, and national companies and organizations have stepped up in supporting scholarships, meals, and awards for the participants. Without their help it would be difficult to sustain this great program.

A special thanks must also go to Leslie Barmann, Linda Davis, and the rest of the CS Ranch family for their continued support of the NMYRMC. When we lost our “home” at the Valles Caldera, they opened their doors to us without hesitation. The CS Ranch provides our participants a real working ranch environment which has greatly improved the program.

## **Calendar of Events**

**May 9-11 – Indian Livestock Days, Albuquerque, NM**

**May 14-18 - U.S. Beef Academy, Corona, NM**

**June 10-15 – New Mexico Youth Ranch Management Camp, Cimarron, NM**

**July 25-26 – Ranch Skills and Safety Series, Corona, NM**

**August 29-30 – Applied Reproductive Strategies in Beef Cattle Symposium,  
Ruidoso, NM**



**Memorial Day HOLIDAY – Monday, May 28<sup>th</sup>  
Happy 3-Day Weekend**

The College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences is an engine for economic and community development in New Mexico, improving the lives of New Mexicans through academic, research, and extension programs. New Mexico State University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and educator. NMSU and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.