

NATURAL RESOURCES & AGRICULTURE

CLASS 15 | SEMINAR 2



SOUTHEASTERN NEW MEXICO

SEMINAR OBJECTIVES:

- Outline the process for drilling a well from start to finish to include ground water protection, horizontal drilling, and hydraulic fracking.
- Discuss the New Mexico legislative process from introduction to signing into law by governor.
- Connect the revenue generated from oil and natural gas to the impact on state revenue.
- Describe water issues unique to the Pecos Valley.

Mental Health in Rural Communities

by Juan Sanchez

Did you know New Mexico has one of the highest suicide rates in the US? Retired Ag Extension Agent, Mr. Woods Houghton discussed the occurrence in rural areas and the agricultural industry.

Ag producers are superheroes. They quite literally feed the world. However, that task doesn't come easy. There is a large amount of pressure and stress ag producers face. These producers are challenged by natural disasters, extreme drought, weather events, financial pressures due to fluctuating commodity prices, labor shortages, trade, and political policies, and many

more. Given these ongoing challenges, it's no surprise that many ag producers are experiencing stress and mental health concerns.

Mr. Houghton discussed that the producers in rural areas are more likely to be affected.

To begin with, there is a lack of acknowledgment of mental health issues. Mental health is often perceived as a weakness and is sometimes stigmatized. Ag producers are often taught that they should be tough and strong. At times, their pride gets in the way of asking for help. Isolation is also a major contributor to mental health in rural areas. This is due to them spending more time alone and having little face-to-face interaction. The impact of the pandemic had a social strain on these producers. Often, drugs and alcohol are abused as a way to cope with mental issues. In addition, rural communities may also have limited access to healthcare and mental health services, which can make it difficult for producers to receive support when they are experiencing extreme stress, anxiety, depression, or another mental health crisis.

Not only did Mr. Houghton discuss why ag producers are being affected but he expressed the importance of looking for signs when talking with a producer. This includes changes in behavior, changes in routines, declined interest, and many more. He also said that it is important to reach out and communicate with these producers. Staying in touch and helping them connect with resources are steps to help someone. He also discussed the various resources available. This includes church groups, crisis hotlines, and state and federal programs. One major campaign is the Stronger Together

by the American Farm Bureau. The webpage has lots of helpful information regarding mental health in agriculture. The New Mexico Farm and Ranch



Stress Assistance Network, which is a collaboration between the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, New Mexico State University's Cooperative Extension Service, and the New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau has initiated the Here to Help NM campaign. This campaign provides local resources developed to support mental health in New Mexico ag communities. The discussion by Mr. Houghton was eye-opening, intimate, and powerful. I encourage everyone that works in the ag industry to take mental health seriously, look for signs, and offer to help. If you or someone you know is struggling with stress, anxiety, depression, or another mental health challenge, please visit <https://www.fb.org/land/fsom> or <https://www.nmflb.org/Get-Involved/Here-To-Help-NM>.

Holly Frontier PTU in Artesia

by Kaitlin Robinson

HollyFrontier (HFC) is a driving front for the oil & gas industry in Artesia New Mexico. Renewable energy is becoming more popular as people hope to move away from fossil fuel energy. HFC is making the jump for creating renewable diesel with existing plants and new refineries being created. Renewable diesel is a lower carbon alternative to petroleum-based diesel with reduced emissions but no need for conversions prior to use. RD can be used in any diesel vehicle at any time. In 2020, HFC announced its intention to build a multi-million-dollar facility in Artesia as a pre-treatment facility for its renewable diesel units in Cheyenne, WY, and Artesia, NM. This is just part of their estimated \$650+MM investment in their renewable business. The pre-treatment unit (PTU) in Artesia came online in early 2022 to process approx. 80% of the company's feedstock for two of the renewable diesel units owned by HFC. The advantage of the PTU is to locally facilitate converting unrefined soybean oil, tallow, and distillers corn oil for the creation of renewable diesel. At this PTU, they process the feedstock and then ship either across the road in Artesia or to the renewable

diesel unit in Cheyenne Wyoming to convert the product to renewable diesel in addition to the other fuels produced by their refineries.

Some facts and figures for the facility include:

- The rail car facility allows for unloading 26,000 barrels per day (BPD) of feedstock and loading of 18,000 BPD of renewable diesel to be shipped out
- Processing capacity is about 13,000 BPD of feedstocks
- There are 17 tanks to handle the different product streams, 8 of which are stainless steel, and the remainder are even higher-grade steel
- The creation of PTU created 60 jobs in addition to many contractors and support companies in the construction and ongoing operations.
- HFC estimates its production of upwards of 200 million gallons of renewable diesel each year.

Check out Holly Frontier's website for renewables for more information!

<https://www.hfsinclair.com/home/default.aspx>

Facilities



<https://www.hfsinclair.com/operations/facilities/default.aspx>

Eddy County Sheriff's Office

by Megan Schuller



Class 15 Fellows with Capt. Hutchinson

Amidst a busy schedule of protecting the public and recent promotion, Captain Matt Hutchinson was able to meet with Class 15 in Artesia. He is the undersheriff for Eddy County and has been working in law enforcement for the past fifteen years. The class discovered some of the challenges that law enforcement encounter in a boom/bust community. Surprising to find out that there is more crime in the bust times than in the boom.

With a county that is the 5th largest rural community in the state, Capt Hutchinson has his hands full. Like many employers, Eddy County Sherriff's department is short of staff and with the number of calls received, his officers are extremely busy. Oil field crime and illegal dumping are among the top calls the department receives. With a county the size of Eddy county, it could take the office 2-3 hours just to arrive at the location of the call. That is a lot of time in the vehicle for an officer.

We asked Capt Hutchinson about his management style and how he handles the ever-changing policies within the department. His answer: Progressive Management. Training is essential and a large portion of their budget is allocated to this. Officers work through many scenarios, de-escalation techniques are among the routine training for his staff as well as mental health training.

It was nice to visit Capt Hutchinson and share his experience and knowledge about law enforcement. I believe we all walked away with an appreciation of his staff and the importance of their roles in our communities.



Capt. Hutchinson

Pecos Valley

by Marcy Ward



Mr. Balok

In mid-April, class 15 traveled to Artesia, NM to visit with several professionals tied to agriculture and natural resource development in the region. One of the topics covered was water issues facing farmers and ranchers that live in the Pecos Valley. Mr. Aron Balok, superintendent of the Pecos Valley Artesian Conservancy District (PVACD) spoke on the subject. Established in 1931, the PVACD is funded through mill levies. The mission of the PVACD is to monitor water use in the region while navigating regulations that impact the waters that travel through the district. Its board of directors is made up of local citizens, farmers, ranchers, and oil and gas personnel who all provide input to Mr. Balok. It is then his job to ensure all obligations are met as effectively as possible.

Water is vital to support both agriculture and oil production in this very productive area of New

Mexico. The battle over water between industries and even between states makes use of regulation very challenging. The state office of engineers oversees use allocation across the state. The state as a whole must remain compliant with policies that ensure enough water is passed on to Texas, while still leaving enough for those who own water rights for beneficial use here in New Mexico. Since this district is the last “stop” of water flow out of New Mexico into Texas, the area must stay within its water allotments. To meet this obligation, the PVACD plays a vital role in monitoring use through an extensive metering program. Under the guidance of Mr. Balok, the PVACD has made great strides to make sure the aquifer below and the surface water above remain at adequate levels for use, while improving water conservation.

Gallup Clifton Strengths

by Roxanne Chepsongal

How do you know what skills it takes to be an effective leader? One tool to identify these skills is assessments such as the Gallup Clifton Strengths Assessment.

The Gallup Clifton Strengths Assessment was developed by Don Clifton six decades ago from his and his colleagues' research at the Nebraska Human Resources Research Foundation. Clifton determined that certain character traits were present for those who were successful in college and graduated versus those not as successful. He spent time practicing strengths-based psychology with students and completed laboratory research. Currently, the Clifton Strengths Assessment has been completed by 27,406,231 individuals.

Class 15 completed the Gallup Clifton Strengths Assessment prior to attending seminar 2. This assessment is used to identify individuals' top talents and understand more about what makes them unique. The fellows were placed by their strengths within 4 groups based on the assessment. These 4 groups are executing, influencing, relationship building, and strategic thinking. The groups explain how people use their strengths to deal with information, get things done, influence others, and build relationships. Class 15 enjoyed discussing their



Class 15 Fellows Travis & Megan

strengths with each other and ultimately gained a better understanding of how to use their strengths as leaders.

This assessment is important to become effective leaders by becoming aware of our own and our team's strengths. Successful leaders must build teams not by being good at everything but identify and use their right strengths for an ideal team. For more information about completing an assessment check out this link [CliftonStrengths for Students - Gallup \(strengthsquest.com\)](https://strengthsquest.com).



Class 15 Fellows Juan & Kaitlin

Natural Resources

by JD Degroat

Anyone who lives in the great state of New Mexico knows we have an abundance of sunlight. Our state also has its fair share of wind (seems more than we would like lately). Both are a source of renewable energy that energy contractors have tried to tap into since the development of solar and wind power technology. On the other hand, New Mexico is rich in oil, natural gas, coal, and other fossil fuels that have been used to power our state and nation for a century.

During the second meeting of the New Mexico Agricultural Leadership program in Artesia, NM; Class 15 Fellows were given the opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of renewable and non-renewable energy. Each Fellow was assigned an energy source (wind, solar, oil, natural gas) and had to research and argue their position for their respective energy source.

In our discussion, Fellows argued the need for clean, renewable energy that is affordable and reliable for New Mexico residents, businesses, and industries. The current national conversation centers around the need to produce clean energy to limit the effects of climate change which Fellows presented in their arguments. With the state's abundance of wind and solar energy, it was argued that our state is a prime location for clean,

renewable energy. Several companies are working hard to make this energy accessible, economical, and profitable.

However, as we discussed, solar and wind technology have not reached their maximum potential for homeowners and businesses to remain out of the dark. The energy produced by coal, natural gas, and oil is still very much needed by everyone throughout the country. For decades, New Mexico's abundant fossil fuel reserves have provided reliable energy for generations. With today's advanced technology, energy producers are working to make the fossil fuel industry cleaner and environmentally friendlier.

Each Fellow brought forth great arguments, in favor of and opposing, the use of renewable and non-renewable energy. As evolving leaders, we must work with both industries to provide clean, reliable, and economical energy for those who choose to follow. We must look, analyze, critique the data (the science) and make the best decisions that will be beneficial for those we work for. As leaders, we can't say one works best over the other, we need to be open-minded. As citizens, we should work to make each type of energy production work best for our needs.



Class 15 Fellows Marshal and Dineh

Oil... Black Gold

by Marshal Wilson

Enduring an exceptionally windy week, one of the hallmarks of a New Mexico spring, the fellows of class 15 traveled to Artesia for our second in-person seminar which focused on natural resources and policy.

One of the speakers that our group heard from was Tyler Dean an Engineering Manager at Burnett Oil Company who presented on the intricacies of oil leases and the creation of oil wells. Mr. Deans presents his information in a way that one does not need to be an engineer to appreciate. For example, we learned that different oil companies will often purchase a share of an oil lease as a way to limit their risk exposure rather than owning the whole lease. That way, if there are problems with an oil well or the lease fails to live up to expectations, the company is impacted by only a portion of the entire lease's losses versus taking the entire loss. Of course, there are instances where a company will buy and run the entire lease and associated oil well and will reap the benefit of all of the oil and gas production but with big potential pay off's come increased risk. Mr. Deans demonstrated an example of this risk when he told us of an oil well that had experienced potentially devastating impacts during the drilling process and there was only one owner associated with the well, meaning that the owner incurred all of the risks of losing their entire investment.

Another aspect of oil and gas production that I found interesting is the fact that New Mexico gets paid royalties for oil and gas production even if it is not used to produce a usable product. If one drives through oilfield country in the dark one will often see multiple points of orange light spread across the landscape. These points of light are controlled ignition of excess gas production that is not able to be harvested for other uses through a process called flaring. Flaring is a way to mitigate additional greenhouse gas emissions and New Mexico is paid royalties on that gas production regardless of whether it is flared or used for energy production.

Mr. Deans also touched on the importance of keeping an open mind and making sure that you are informed about a subject before forming public opinions about it. The process of producing the oil and gas that, like it or not, power our everyday lives is much more involved than most of us recognize. So is almost every other good or service that we consume, which makes programs like New Mexico Ag Leadership so important because it helps individuals further their understanding of a multitude of topics.

Artesia was an excellent host community, we would like to express our appreciation to the Artesia Chamber of Commerce and the many sponsors that made the seminar possible.



A Walk in the Orchard

by Dineh John

We had the opportunity to tour the Seven Rivers Pecan Orchard with Ross Townsend-Seven Rivers Pecan Orchard Manager. The 850 acres orchard is a family-owned business and located in Carlsbad, NM.

Our tour covered multiple sections of the successful



pecan orchard which were growing, harvesting, sorting and storing. There was a lot to see and learn. First thing I figured out; growing pecan trees is not a simple task. These trees must have multiple varieties planted, be trimmed a specific way annually, watered and given nutrients on a scheduled basis. When asked what

type of pests they had and what type of management was used, we were informed that their pests were mainly deer but a couple times, pigs were observed. To manage this, fencing was installed. For weed prevention, they cleared and flattened the irrigation beds to optimize harvest.

During harvest, the trees are shaken so the pecans fall to the ground. Harvesters such as the Jackrabbit are then used to pick pecans up and move them into hoppers. From there, they would be transported to their cleaning and sorting operations.



The first section was a mechanical cleaner that removed foreign objects such as stones, leaves, branches, shucks, cracks, etc. Second, pecans were mechanically and then manually sorted on conveyors that allowed employees to visually separate for #1 and #2 quality. Lastly, products were then crated and stored in very large freezers to maintain quality while waiting for customer shipments.

It was a great experience to see and hear what farmers must do to bring in quality product like Seven Rivers Pecan Orchard. We are grateful for their hospitality and look forward to hearing about their continued success!

Meet Bob!

by Kaitlin Robson

Bob the Artichoke made sure to oversee our sessions and meet our speakers too! Fashioned from a tennis ball, plastic cup, and felt – Bob came to life and started his travels with Seminar 2 in Artesia. We would be remiss if we didn't share the story of Bob and why we have an artichoke as a class mascot. Arriving at dinner the first night of our first seminar in Las Cruces, we met NMAL Board President Bob Mayberry. After much deliberation of the menu, Mr. Mayberry declared “well as long as it doesn't have artichokes” which launched significant discussion on our fellows like or dislike of artichokes and hence was born the inside joke to last the life of this class at least! Consensus to liking artichokes from the fellows resulted in discussions of a class mascot and low and behold Bob was dreamed up and brought to life. To this day, we thank Mr. Mayberry for being a good sport and continuing to support us!



NMAL in the Spotlight



Congratulations to Class 15 fellow Juan Sanchez on defending his creative component titled “International Livestock Trade Website”. Juan earned his Master of Arts in Agricultural and Extension Education on May 6, 2022.



Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs the Right Honorable Lord Richard Benyon met with producers and subject matter experts on March 18 at the New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum in Las Cruces. Pictured here are class 13 alumni Derek Romig (Dairy Farmers of America) and Heather Salopeck (Legacy Pecans).

A WORD FROM COLLEGE DRIVE

by Tina Wilson

In April, the fellows of class 15 traveled to Artesia, New Mexico to explore the natural resources such as oil, gas, and water. We learned more about mental health issues among producers rural and the state legislative process. Once again state representatives Jim Townsend and Cathryn Brown shared the some of their precious time with us to talk about how revenue from oil and gas industry contributes to the state. A highlight for me was touring Seven Rivers Pecan Orchard. This was the first time I have seen the equipment used to harvest pecans. Very impressive! This was my second time traveling to Artesia for a seminar, but I always learn something new.



We also challenged ourselves during the seminar to only follow the oral directions of a leader, Megan, to complete a picture using toothpicks. The fellows could not ask any questions or have a direction repeated. It was a great exercise in communication and listening. My favorite quote from this exercise is “I can see the picture in my mind but can’t make the toothpicks line up.”

Speaking of learning some new. For most of May, I will be participating in a study aboard to Germany. The focus will be global issues in agricultural communications. My philosophy towards education is that one should never stop learning and finding ways to improve themselves. In addition to Germany, I will be traveling to Switzerland to visit my Swiss daughter, Delia, and her husband Reto. My family hosted her as

an exchange student back in 2002 to 2003. I will get a chance to visit two farms while there. Like I said before never stop learning.

During the last few weeks, my partners at NMDA and I have been heavily involved with planning our international trade mission to England and Scotland. The group will travel on Friday, June 24 and return July 3. I am looking forward to learning more about agriculture in the United Kingdom. As many of you know I lived there for 3 years but at that time I was



working on the base, taking classes for my first masters, and heavily involved with Girl Scouts. I really didn’t have much of an opportunity to explore.

Our class mascot, Bob the artichoke, made

his debut in Artesia. Isn’t he cute? He has received many compliments. Bob was created by class 15 fellow Kaitlyn Robinson. Bob will be traveling with class fellows on adventures as they learn more about agricultural, leadership, and the political process. For now, Bob is resting in my office for his next adventure to England and Scotland. Bob will be a well-traveled artichoke by the time class 15 finishes the program in July 2023.





Have news? Tell us!

We love to hear what our alumni are up to! Send us a picture of a recent trip, conference, life event or milestone so we can share with fellow alumni and supporters. Send pictures and a brief description to nmal@nmsu.edu to be featured in one of our newsletters.

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