

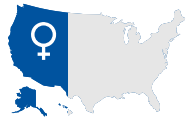
EDUCATE, ENGAGE AND EMPOWER: WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
**COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**

ISSUE

Women are increasingly becoming involved in managing farm operations.



36%

of U.S. farmers are women



56%

of all farms have at least one female decision-maker

Many are facing challenges with their farming operations, including...



weather,



regulations,



markets,



input costs,



pests and disease



and stress from financial, regulatory, familial, political and other sources.

RESPONSE



2019 WOMEN IN AG CONFERENCE

featuring ...



3 keynote speakers,



15 breakout sessions



31 vendors



and on-site healthcare screenings.

IMPACTS



260

individuals participated in the 2019 conference, coming from Delaware (53%), Maryland (40) and Virginia (4%).

99% rated the conference as "excellent" or "good"

97% rated the educational value as "excellent" or "good"

93% rated the networking as "excellent" or "good"

97% felt they are better prepared to make informed decisions about specific areas of agribusiness, including...

19% risk management,

61% marketing,

22% legal information,

49% business operations/plans, and

30% financial information,

96% gained resources.

EDUCATE, ENGAGE AND EMPOWER: WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
**COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**

ISSUE

U.S. agriculture census data confirms that women are increasingly involved in managing farm operations. Recent census data revealed that 36% of U.S. farmers are women and 56% of all farms have at least one female decision-maker. Also, of note, according to the United States Department of Agriculture, farms where female producers are making decisions tend to be smaller than average in both acres and value of production. Women farmers are most heavily engaged in day-to-day farm and ranch decisions, along with recordkeeping and financial management.

Regional Women in Ag Conference attendees were asked questions about their current farming operations. Weather was the biggest challenge for 61% of participants, followed by regulations (37%), markets (35%), input costs (32%) and pests and diseases (24%). Attendees were also asked to rate their stress level in the past month on a scale of 0 to 10. Over half (51%) rated their stress level as an eight or higher. When asked about their stress level compared to the previous year, 38% felt it was about the same with 42% rating it as slightly or much higher. Contributing factors to stress included financial (60%), regulatory (24%), family (24%), other (18%) and political (17%).

RESPONSE

Cooperative Extension staff, university staff and women involved in the agricultural industry from Maryland, Delaware and Virginia collaborated to plan and carry-out the 2019 Women in Agriculture Conference held at Dover Downs, in Dover, Delaware. Conference attendees had the opportunity to listen to 3 keynote speakers, attend 15 breakout sessions, visit with 31 vendors and take advantage of on-site healthcare screenings (an opportunity that 50 participants took advantage of). The goal of this conference is to enhance skills and increase knowledge for women in agriculture to enable them to better cope in a challenging agricultural environment.

IMPACT

Two hundred and sixty individuals participated in the 2019 Women in Agriculture conference representing Delaware (53%), Maryland (40%) and Virginia (4%). 41% indicated that they were first-time attendees. As a result of past Women in Agriculture conferences, 36% have made changes to their agricultural operation or home planning. When asked how they found out about the conference, 47% were aware of the conference from Women in Agriculture emails, 43% from a friend and 27% from social media. Participants rated their overall experience as excellent or good (99%), educational value of the conference as excellent or good (97%) and opportunities for discussion and networking excellent or good (93%).

As a result of this conference: 97% felt they are better prepared to make informed decisions about specific areas of agribusiness. Participants reported learning: Risk management practices for the farm (19%), Legal information for the farm (22%), Financial information for the farm (30%), Marketing for the farm (61%), Business operations and plans (49%) and Gained resources (96%).