

Extension302 Episode 12: 2020 Year in Review  
Released December 2020

Blake Moore:

My name is Blake Moore, Natural Resources and Horticulture agent.

Dan Severson:

Hey, I'm Dan Severson, Ag agent.

Jake Jones:

Jake Jones, Kent County Ag agent.

Katie Young:

I'm Katie Young, Digital Content Specialist.

Blake Moore:

Welcome to Extension302.

Katie Young:

Welcome back to Extension302. I'm Katie young and I am here today to interview our host team. We've heard from them a whole lot this year, and I want to make them answer the questions this time around. How are you guys doing today?

Blake Moore:

Good. Ms. Katie, how are you? Welcome to our... I guess it's our holiday final edition for 2020?

Katie Young:

Yes. It's our wrap-up of 2020. I actually wanted to get started with you guys with an icebreaker because Dan, your icebreakers are iconic. If you had your own late night talk show, who would you invite as your first guest?

Dan Severson:

That's a good one. I like that one.

Blake Moore:

Very good one. I think the iconic dance ever since should be the first to answer as well.

Dan Severson:

That's deep. You could go so many ways with this question.

Katie Young:

What would your deep answer be and what would your shallow answer be?

Dan Severson:

I would probably like to interview my grandma, my Nana. I think that would be [crosstalk 00:01:30] because just from the Ag perspective of what she grew up with, because she was born in '25 and they

went from, by hand and horses and mules to tractors, now tractors that drive themselves. I guess for a professional standpoint, I would probably be like David Letterman, just so I can learn how to do interviews better.

Katie Young:

You'd invite somebody on your interview show to learn how to do more interviews?

Dan Severson:

To do them better.

Katie Young:

I like that. I think that's very cool. I really liked the one about your grandmother. One, is really sweet and two, I mean, she sounds like she's lived through a lot.

Dan Severson:

Yeah. Good woman.

Katie Young:

Blake, what about you? You were throwing Dan under the bus so [crosstalk 00:02:15] here now.

Blake Moore:

Well, I spend quite a bit of time under the bus too. Honestly, there's quite a few people that come to mind but I'd probably look towards maybe one of the naturalists that history has recognized and especially, some of the indigenous peoples. I don't have a specific one but to talk to them about their relationship with the land and how we can better get back into that touch because a lot of the mission that we're doing with the Delaware Master Naturalist program is kind of trying to do that, right? Get back in touch with the environment and how we can coexist and make it a better place as far as how we interact with our natural world because we haven't been doing a very good job at that. Who better than to hear from the folks who did it for thousands of years before we came in here and change things up.

Katie Young:

Very nice. What about you Jake, you're quiet over there?

Jake Jones:

Yeah. I'm always quiet. I would invite finding Bigfoot, the TV show and then have this whole production and bring Blake out with his COVID beard, and that would be the top show.

Katie Young:

It is really funny that you say that because I have a bit of trivia for you guys, and I think that's a perfect segue. I want to hear what you guys think. Which bit of personal growth is most likely to take place in the new year? A, Jake will add chicken paws to his diet. B, Dan will begin refrigerating his peanut butter in an attempt to avoid accidentally poisoning himself. Or C, after growing his beard for the entirety of 2020, Blake will accept his fate as a Yeti and begin roaming the woods throughout the state, occasionally being caught on a low quality camera and sparking a new search for the Yeti of Delaware.

Blake Moore:

My answer is C.

Dan Severson:

I'll go with Blake caught through the woods.

Blake Moore:

Yeah. For sure.

Dan Severson:

I don't see Jake eating chicken paws and [inaudible 00:04:20] peanut butter snack on in the fridge.

Blake Moore:

You might be able to catch me on some CCTV at the local watering hole too, so that's another way to catch the Yeti on camera.

Katie Young:

Earlier this year, unidentified seeds were being sent randomly to folks around the world from China. These seeds were all different and there seemed to be no indication of a reason for the mailings. What was the most likely explanation? A, they were monolith seeds sent to grow, large, three-sided metallic modelists, to help guide UFO's to key landing states. B, they were an elaborate ruse to mail something to random addresses and then post reviews for more specific items to make it seem as if a company has more sales. Or C, magic beans, if planted, will sprout in enormous Beanstalk and reach up into the clouds?

Blake Moore:

I would like to say C and I would like to climb that a mythical Beanstalk to see what's going on up there. But yeah, I'll answer B.

Dan Severson:

Yeah. I mean, I'd really want C to happen. I got to go with B.

Katie Young:

Last question, in addition to the pandemic and the spotted lanternfly invasion, murder hornets made their way into the United States and then we never heard about it again. What happened? Is it, A, they've disguised themselves as spotted lanternflies to avoid detection. B, American honey bees mounted a coordinated defense and waged war on the murder hornets. Or C, in October, officials in Washington State destroyed the first murder hornet nest in the country and chances are that there are plenty more out there that we don't know about?

Blake Moore:

Yeah. Again, we had to go with C. I kept up on that pretty regularly and they did destroy the one... And here's the cool thing, is they actually took a murder hornet queen and tied a tiny little like radio transmitter on her so she could take them back to the nest and that's how they found them and

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destroyed them. But you never know that the bees could have managed to come back, maybe just wait to see a Disney movie coming out about that here soon.

Katie Young:

All right, guys. Let's jump into the real questions. How was your year?

Blake Moore:

Jake, you had something important happen?

Jake Jones:

While I was stuck at home, I wrote a lot and finished my PhD. That was probably my biggest accomplishment of 2020.

Katie Young:

All right. Congratulations.

Jake Jones:

Thank you very much.

Dan Severson:

Definitely congratulations, Jake.

Jake Jones:

Yeah.

Blake Moore:

It's Dr. Jones, I presume.

Dan Severson:

They're supposed to be an Indiana Jones five coming out. You can make a cameo in that.

Jake Jones:

My graduation party was always going to be Indiana Jones themed, and now I can't have one.

Dan Severson:

2020 was awesome until middle of March and then it sucked. I don't know what happened-

Katie Young:

What happened really to that?

Blake Moore:

What happened in the middle of March, Dan?

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Dan Severson:

I have no idea and I still don't know. I'm still living in it.

Blake Moore:

I'm not going to lie to you, there's been at least a couple of times where I'd have to turn to my wife and I'm sitting here and be like, "Is this really happening? Are we really living through this right now?" Everything just changed on a dime and we've just made it happen. I'm not going to lie, I've struggled mightily with 2020 as far as not being able to interact with other human beings without a computer screen in between us. It's especially difficult for a lot of us in Extension and what we've been able to do in the face of that, it's just been pretty awesome stuff. We can't just ignore the fact that we've done some amazing things in spite of this.

Jake Jones:

Yeah. I mean, personally and professionally 2020, this event has really knocked me back big time and that if you work with me, you'll be able to know the nuances of how I changed and it's just... You don't know what's going to... It's just weird what's going on.

Katie Young:

When we initially planned this podcast, we had built in about a month or so of prerecorded programming to help us kind of hit the ground running, when we did start releasing episodes. However, the outbreak of COVID-19 in the US, pushed our release dates up. Our first episode was about coronavirus impacts on Delaware agriculture, so way back on April 8th, we released that first episode and you chatted with Dr. Keeler and Dr. Gordon Johnson, who's also from Extension and Secretary Michael Skewes from the Department of Agriculture. At the time, we didn't know a whole lot about the virus. We were discussing whether or not it could be spread through the food system, what the status was for H-2A workers and how worker safety might be affected as well as a concern about limited PPE within the Ag industry. Can you guys talk a little bit about what you've seen since then?

Dan Severson:

Yeah. I mean, I guess I'll go ahead and start. Our first episode, I don't even know where we were at that time as far as food in a grocery stores or people having it don't milk and stuff like that. I think with that podcast we were more interested in learning more about the virus and how we can protect ourselves in our food system, in our industry. That's where I was really focused on for that, and you said April, like I said, if you asked me current events, I don't know any for the past nine months because I don't know, it's all been like Groundhog day, every day is the same. Yeah. I'll leave that up to Jake and Blake.

Jake Jones:

I agree with Dan. I think at that time we didn't really know what was happening. I think we were talking about farmers leaving fields in Florida and stuff like that still. Then I think our food system eventually corrected itself, grocery stores became stocked again, which is, I think we've kind of adapted to this new normal, which I think Dan said he's going to punch me if I said that. I think at that time we didn't expect it to last this long and the effects on the agriculture in general, weren't really known yet and so, some of these coronavirus assistance programs were developed after this, once the picture became more clear. I think we've got a lot of information since then and we haven't really covered COVID that much because it's covered everywhere else right now.

Katie Young:

Yeah. I think we felt like if we kept covering COVID, we were going to become the COVID-19 podcasts and that wasn't our goal. For those of you that don't know, this podcast was actually the brain child of Jake, our very own Jake Jones. It was something that we secured funding for through a Cooperative Extension. We got funding for the podcast and we really were looking forward to having a full year of having guests come in our office. Obviously, we were all pushed online pretty quickly.

Jake Jones:

Yeah. I think we were fortunate that we had that innovative two days and won the awards that we got for the money to do this and we're kind of already in the planning stages before all this hit. Fortunately, we were already planning this but unfortunately, we had to move a little bit faster.

Blake Moore:

Yeah. The two day event back in February which seems like forever ago, the Delaware innovation and skill-building event put on by E-Extension and some of the folks from Delaware State University and UD Cooperative Extension. It was a great event. We learned quite a bit in there and like I said, Jake had the idea and we were all... Dan comes up to me in Ag Week last year and says, "We're doing this. This is your idea," because he thought I came up with the idea and I was like, "Okay. We're going to do this." We're able to put this together and like he said, just being able to adapt it and be ready to come online when we were kind of forced to, I think is good and hopefully, this is just the beginning of more stuff to come.

Katie Young:

It's funny you say that Blake because I had a similar experience. I started an Extension last October and I had never met Dan before. He comes up to me at Ag Week last year and shakes my hand and says, "Hey, I'm Dan Severson. We need somebody technical to be behind the scenes," and I was like, "You know what? That sounds like a great idea."

Blake Moore:

Could you imagine if we didn't have that cool assistance overlord?

Dan Severson:

Yeah. Well, I'm sorry, I got y'all involved. I got Jake and Blake mixed up because I didn't make that Ag and service meeting. I don't know if I was in Florida or Vegas for training. Yeah. That was all my fault, sorry guys.

Jake Jones:

No. I'm glad Dan got it mixed up because then he got everybody on the whole team involved and so, the project moved forward at a good time. I'm happy with it and I had a lot of fun this year.

Katie Young:

I don't know if you guys remember way back in episode nine. We talked to Ed Usset, who is the Grain Marketing Economist for the Center for Foreign Financial Management at the University of Minnesota. He talked to us about five great marketing mistakes to avoid. In that episode, he mentioned commoditychallenge.com, which is an online game where you can play as a grain producer and get some market practice. Have you guys given that a shot?

Dan Severson:

Personally, I have not. I did go onto that website and check it out and look how you could create a team. Just say if we create a team for Delaware, we reach out to Dr. Usset and he creates whatever he does in that program and you can create a team and stuff like that. But I haven't pursued it any further. I think we talked the other day, me, you and Jake and I was like, "We should probably look into that and see if we could drum up some business or something for that."

Jake Jones:

Yeah. I'm in the same boat as Dan. I went to the website and there are some games you can just join for different States and everything. But if we get enough interest, Dan, I mean, all of us would be happy to put together a group for Delaware.

Dan Severson:

Yeah. If they're listening and if you're interested, shoot us an email. Katie has our contact info, so we can see what we can do.

Katie Young:

Yeah. We'll put our contact information in the description for the podcast but also on our website, if you guys are interested in joining a team.

Dan Severson:

I wouldn't mind posting the challenge URL if anybody wants to join another team that's already created as well, just to give them an experience.

Katie Young:

Yeah. Absolutely. If you want to go online now, it's [commoditychallenge.com](http://commoditychallenge.com). Again, we'll put the link in the description for you. More recently, in episode 10, we talked about managing nutrients and improving water quality with UD Extension's own Nutrient Management team. From what I understand, you guys have some updates on the status of nutrient application in Delaware?

Blake Moore:

Yeah. Part of the Nutrient Management Regulations in Delaware's is aimed at preventing nutrient loss, especially during the time of year when the nutrients aren't as needed. There is a moratorium on fertilizer application, nutrient application from December 7th to February 15th of each year, and also make note not to apply to frozen ground or snow covered ground.

Jake Jones:

Katie, do you want to mention the email list that you're going to start? Because I talked to the nutrient management team and with all these virtual meetings, they said that next year we can certainly start to offer nutrient management credits for listening to the podcast and completing a small quiz afterwards.

Katie Young:

Oh, absolutely. Starting now and into next year, we are launching a new Extension302 mailing list, and that's just a way for you to sign up, to receive future episodes of Extension302 direct to your email

inbox. We'll include links to the different versions of the podcast, whether you'd like to listen on YouTube or whether you prefer to listen to on something like Spotify. You can expect one to two emails per month with the latest episode and then, we'll also send you some additional resources in that email that we think that you would enjoy. To sign up for that, visit us online at [udel.edu/extension/podcast](http://udel.edu/extension/podcast), and sign up for our mailing list.

Jake Jones:

Beginning in 2021, once we have relevant topics on Nutrient Management, you probably offer a half credit because our podcasts usually run about a half hour long. We will start to offer those credits once they're approved by DDA and UDs' Nutrient Management Team.

Katie Young:

Yeah. As soon as that's available, we'll be advertising that and pushing it out. We'll definitely mention it on the podcast. It'll be on the UD Extension website and a few other places. That's not happening yet, but it is something to look forward to next year. If you guys could have picked a topic that we could have covered this year if we had been able to, what other stuff would you have liked thrown in?

Blake Moore:

Well, I think from the beginning I said, "Well, when Delaware State Fair Concerts were released and they had Hank Williams Jr. coming," I had that on my calendar. That was going to be our first live podcast.

Katie Young:

Yes.

Blake Moore:

We were going to interview Hank Williams Jr. and I don't know what Ag we would've got out of that, but that was the one I wanted.

Dan Severson:

Yeah. I mean, for me, it would certainly be talking about the Delaware Master Naturalist Program that we have going on. Just being able to start a brand new program in an area that I am very passionate about would be something I'd love to talk about and something hopefully we can talk about in 2021.

Katie Young:

All right. Obviously, with everything going on, a lot of events are being done differently for the foreseeable future. That includes Ag Week for 2021. You guys want to tell us a little bit about that?

Dan Severson:

Yeah. Sure. Ag Week is still going to happen. Again, it's going to be virtual. But more or less it's going to be Delaware Ag Month. There's a website at University of Delaware for Ag Week you can go to, and click on the sessions. Some of them will be streamed live. Some of them will be recorded and you could watch them at your own pace. Some have nutrient management credits. Again, like we mentioned, you will have to take a quiz, a short little quiz at the end to verify that you've paid attention and you get your credits. But yeah, no. I think one of the programs I'm involved in will start beginning of January and I think we end February 2nd. We'll fall a little bit into February.



Blake Moore:

Yes. As part of a Delaware Ag Week, we always have a Woodland Management Session and we're going to do the same this year. It'll be January 11th from 1:00 to 3:00 and we're going to look forward, talking about natural and working lands and how the small track forest landowners can do different with their property in order to help with either climate change and might actually be able to make some money off of having a better focus on your property.

Jake Jones:

I'll add that if you go to the Delaware Ag Week website, you can actually start to register for these events right now, so you can get them added to your calendar and yeah, and a lot of the schedules up there already with topics.

Katie Young:

Just to give you that URL, it is [sites.udel.edu/delawareagweek](https://sites.udel.edu/delawareagweek). Again, we'll have the link in the description.

Dan Severson:

Yeah. With COVID going on, we were able to get some speakers that we would not normally be able to get because of travel restrictions. Everybody's Zooming, so we can get people that we would not normally be able to reach out to or get. We still want to thank our sponsors and supporters that have been with us and hopefully, we get to do this live in 2022.

Katie Young:

All right. Do you guys have any announcements? Anything that you want to add?

Dan Severson:

Well, we're going to wrap up this last final podcast of 2020. I would just like to reach out and thank all of our listeners are out there, that listened to us. To say thank you to Extension and the innovation team that listened to our pitch and gave us our financial awards to get this out there. I'm thankful for our Extension team and the team that I work with, not just in the Ag Team or not just the podcast but everybody. It seems to have been behind everybody, had everybody's back during this time because we were all struggling somehow some way, whether we knew it or not. But we had support there. I just will say, thank God for everybody today.

Jake Jones:

I'd like to thank the listeners and we're going to be in touch more. We're going to have more episodes and we're going to have that email list. Hopefully, we can start getting some feedback and talking... You guys can have a say in what we're covering. I'd like to thank Dan and everybody else on the team, but Dan's the one who really pushed us to start and then also, all the guest speakers too, because I don't think anyone turned us down.

Dan Severson:

Oh, yes.

Jake Jones:

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That was good.

Blake Moore:

Yeah. I'd like to thank each of you, Jake, Dan, Katie for being part of a great team. We'd also like to thank Dean Rieger and Dr. Michelle Rogers for their financial support in funding this idea that was something that we were really excited about and something that we rolled out early and wouldn't been able to do without that funding. Thank you to all the listeners, you guys make it worth it. We hope to interact with you a little bit more in the coming year and hopefully like you said, we can come onsite and do some more interviews with some folks. Like Dan said, not have a new normal, go back to the old normal.

Speaker 5:

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