USDA NIFA Sponsors Extension Sustainability Summit

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As a result of the growing popularity of sustainability, the United States Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA NIFA) is providing $15,000 for the 2016 Extension Sustainability Summit April 5-7 in Portland, OR. The summit, organized by Roslynn Brain, Utah State University Extension sustainable communities specialist, and the Western Rural Development Center, is intended for Extension professionals interested in leading the way in sustainability.

At the summit, a national strategic plan for sustainability in Extension will be created in collaboration with USDA NIFA, the Western Rural Development Center and USU Extension Sustainability. The strategic plan is intended to help guide Extension nationwide in its sustainability efforts.

According to Brain, the Western Rural Development Center and the USU Extension Sustainability program partnered in 2013 to offer the inaugural Extension Sustainability Summit.

“It was designed to feature and bring together leading sustainability-focused programs within Extension, and the original area of focus was the western region,” she said. “But that first summit demonstrated that there was a national gap and demand, and USDA NIFA expressed interest in helping fund a national summit. We are very pleased to have their support as we launch the first-ever national sustainability summit.”

Brain said her team has received over fifty abstract submissions for quality programs nationwide and there are just twenty available spots.

“We believe there is a lot of interest, and we look forward to the ensuing dialog and plans the summit will provide,” she said. “We encourage anyone from USU Extension to attend and join in the dialogue and the strategic plan.”

For summit registration, visit wrdc.usu.edu/programs/ess2016/.

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