USU Extension Faculty Members Receive National Awards

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Several Utah State University Extension faculty members were recognized by the National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA) for their contributions to education and agriculture in Utah at recent meetings in Salt Lake City.

Katie Wagner, USU Extension horticulture assistant professor in Salt Lake County, received the 2017 Achievement Award from NACAA. With a personal interest in organic gardening and native pollinators, Wagner developed classes, workshops, teaching guides, youth activities, demonstration gardens and blog posts to reach a large population in her county, state and region. Her programs benefited a diverse clientele including prisoners, seniors, volunteers and youth.

Clark Israelsen, the USU Extension agricultural specialist for Cache County, received the 2017 Distinguished Service Award from NACAA. Israelsen has worked as a county Extension agent for 17 years. He enjoys working with local agricultural producers who generate more than $185 million in direct cash receipts each year. Most of his time is spent working with dairies and crop producers.

Jody Gale, Extension associate professor, and Dennis Hinkamp, Extension media specialist, received the 2017 Video Presentation Award. They produced a video instructing home gardeners on what to do with extra sweet corn. In the video, home gardeners are taught how to make drying racks, how to use plastic to create solar heat to assist in drying, how long to let corn dry, storing dried kernels and making and using corn flour.
Phil Rasmussen, a former USU Extension assistant director, received the 2017 Service to American/World Agriculture Award. Rasmussen spent the early part of his career establishing no-till research plots across the Intermountain West, encouraging the use of innovative and sustainable technologies. He also served as the first NASA-sponsored geospatial Extension specialist in 1999. During his career, Rasmussen published more that 200 articles and book chapters covering the fields of sustainable agriculture, soil physics and conservation, and agronomic computer applications.

“It’s important to highlight the excellent job these Extension faculty members are doing,” said Mark Nelson, the NACAA past president. “They’re doing outstanding work that impacts whole communities, and they deserve to be recognized for that.”

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