

RESOURCE LINES

College of Natural Resources • Utah State University Logan, UT 84322-5200 • Volume 10 Number 1 Winter 1999

WIRE Goes Down Under

Western Integrated Resource Education (WIRE) is a regional educational program taught by university Extension agents and specialists in Wyoming, Utah, Montana, and Idaho that focuses on total agricultural business and resource management. The program has been funded by university Extension services in the cooperating states and the USDA-CREES Western Regional Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Competitive Grants Program. WIRE teaches a concept of management that provides practical tools for integrating management of physical, biological, financial, and human resources of agricultural operations, emphasizing the process of management rather than particular production technologies.

Meat & Livestock, Australia's North Australia Program, in conjunction with the Queensland Beef Institute and the

FutureProfits Project, sponsored a visit to Queensland by the WIRE team from the University of Wyoming in August and September. Roger Banner, a member of the Utah State University WIRE team, was invited to participate.

Roger, an Extension specialist and associate professor in Rangeland Resources, talked in glowing terms about the success of the exchange. "I felt that programs and materials providing meaningful information on climate application to agriculturalists were exceptionally well-done and useful to producers, scientists, and others. It seemed to me that a great deal more effort is being expended on interpretation of climatic data there than we see here." For more information on climate applications, Roger suggests Web sites www.bom.gov.au/silo/ and www.dnr.qld.gov.au/longpdk/.

Roger also praised Queensland's Building Rural Leaders course offered to enhance the leadership and strategic business skills of rural people in Queensland and a producer-oriented monitoring program called "GRASS Check" that appeared to be quite useful and accepted by property owners and managers.

While in Queensland, WIRE team members taught three abbreviated courses on their own integrated educational package. Banner explained that "in the WIRE course, we teach a process of management that includes strategic planning, tactical planning, operational planning, and performance evaluation. We recognize the dynamic nature of resource management where goals and resource conditions change with time and in response to management." The team also participated in reviews of rangeland Extension and research projects ongoing in North Australia.

But was it all work and no play down under? Roger reports that one of the great pleasures was "visiting with people from rural areas of Queensland and seeing what goes on there. I also visited Carnarvon Gorge National Park and the Great Barrier Reef."

Visit the WIRE Web site: <http://agecon.uwyo.edu/wire/default.htm> or contact Roger Banner: rogerb@ext.usu.edu for more information.



The WIRE team Australia stopped for a photograph after the WIRE course in Chater Towers. Team members (L-R) are John Hendelett, Kent Drake, Jay Jenkins, Randy Weigel, Jim Jacobs, and Frank Henderson (all from University of Wyoming) and Roger Banner (USU Extension/CNR).