

Engaging the Agricultural Community

Responses from Participants in Temple Grandin Presentations in Southern New England March 1 – 4, 2010

SARE Project: Producing Local Natural Meat for Consumers

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During the week of March 1, 2010 more than 800 people heard Temple Grandin, notable expert in the humane treatment of animals, speak at UMASS, UCONN, URI or Old Sturbridge Village. These events were part of the jointly sponsored project of the three universities to address the issues of producing local meat for consumers in the three states. The project, *Producing Natural Local Meat for Consumers*, is funded by a professional development grant from the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program, a USDA competitive grants program supporting agriculture that is profitable, environmentally sound, and good for communities.

This project is designed to increase engagement of agricultural service providers and farmers in the production, processing and marketing of natural locally grown meats and other products for consumers.

For several decades Temple Grandin has been one of the world's foremost leaders in the research and design of humane slaughterhouses and modification of slaughter practices to lessen the suffering of animals. Over the four day period March 1 – March 4, 2010 she made one public presentation at Old Sturbridge Village and numerous presentations at classes and work sites at the three universities. (See figure 5 for analysis of participants)

The purpose of Temple Grandin's visit was two-fold: 1.) To inform and educate farmers and agricultural service providers from around the region about all facets of humane animal production from low stress animal husbandry practices, to optimal design of slaughterhouse facilities and humane slaughter practices. 2.) To engage students and faculty in thought provoking discussions about the way animals think and react to the world around them and how this knowledge can be utilized to promote good stewardship of animals destined for slaughter.

A follow-up survey process was designed to measure how participants in the program learned from the presentations and to what use they put that information. A follow-up reminder was emailed in June 2010 and a survey was emailed in October 2010.

We sent the survey to about 500 email addresses that were collected during the presentations. Of those we estimate that 100 were no longer functional and did not reach anyone. (Many contacts were students who may have graduated from the universities and no longer used that email. National experience also reports that one can expect a 20% loss or changes in email addresses over a one year period.)

We thus estimate that our email survey reached about 400 persons and from that we had 90 responses - or 23%. The following is a breakdown of the affiliations reported by the survey respondents. (see figure 1)

Extension educator	13	Graduate Student	8
High School Agriculture Teacher	3	Undergraduate Student	30
Livestock Producer	12	University Faculty	14
Livestock Processor	0	<u>Did not answer</u>	<u>11</u>
Agricultural Service Provider	8		
		Total	90

To help us know who is answering our survey please check ALL affiliations that apply:

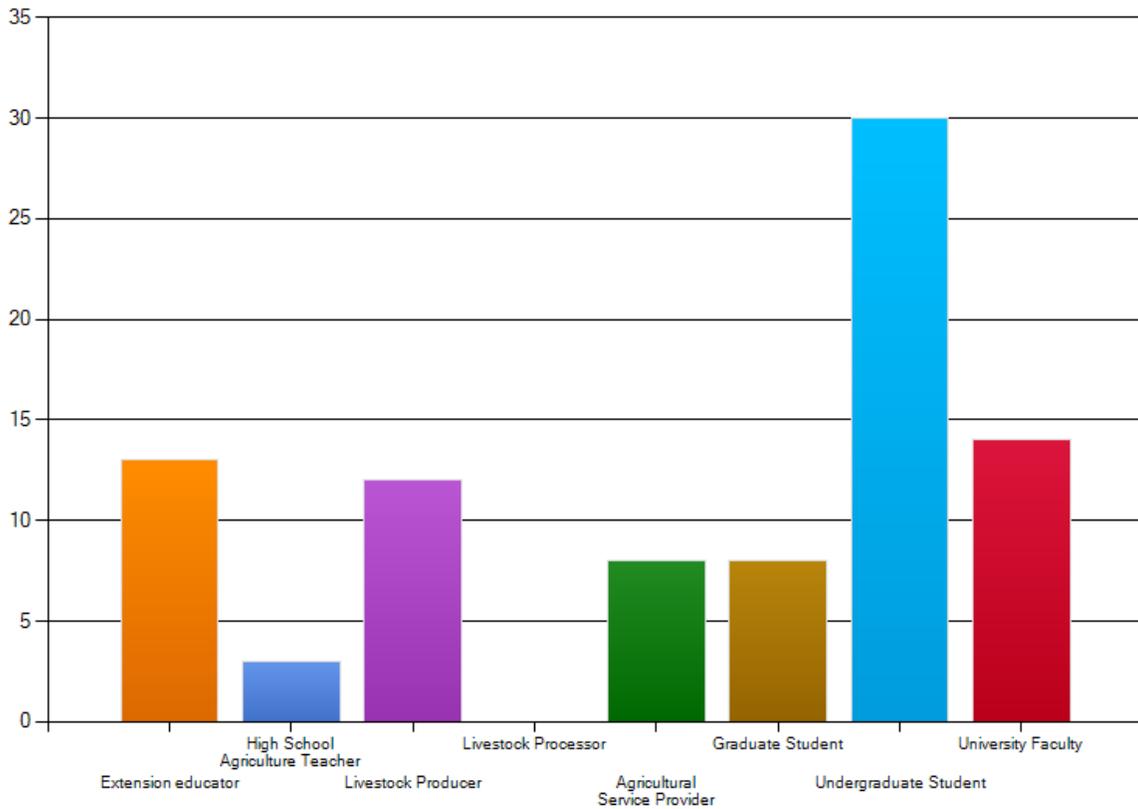


Figure 1

Important Findings

Sixty-five percent (65%) of the respondents reported that they used the information they learned in work with livestock farmers, livestock processors, farm workers, students or others (figure 2).

Sixty-four percent (64%) of respondents stated that they had studied and learned more about Temple Grandin's research and teaching. They also reported: teaching others about causes of stress in animals and ways to reduce that stress and hosting speakers and workshops on this topic. Twenty-six persons stated that they had evaluated animal handling practices and made improvements to reduce animal stress. Figure 3 shows the number of persons reporting each activity. Figure 4 provides more information about which respondents undertook each activity.

When asked to estimate how many individuals they had reached (either formally or informally) with information learned from Temple Grandin's presentations, respondents report reaching 2657 people. Sixty-six of the 90 respondents (73%) had reached out to others with information. Detailed responses are listed in the complete survey report that is attached (see question 7 in the complete survey report).

A total of 817 persons participated in the various Temple Grandin presentations over the four day period (see figure 5 on p. 6 for data). Respondents were asked to rate their understanding of the material presented by Temple Grandin on a four point scale, before and after her presentations. For each of the four areas of information, 94% or more of respondents ranked their understanding as moderate or considerable following the Grandin presentation (see figure 6).