



extension
IMPACTS

This comprehensive, two-part course deals with the total legacy – the belief systems and material possessions a person wishes to leave behind.

Leaving a lasting legacy in Uinta County

Situation:

Estate planning is a difficult topic for many. Discussions of succession, inheritance, business transition, and legacies can cause many emotions that can be hard to face. Thinking about a loved one's passing or our own mortality can make us feel uncomfortable, scared, ashamed, sad, or anxious. With this range of emotions, it is not hard to understand why estate planning is a neglected subject in many families. To keep businesses solvent and relationships free of turmoil, however, estate planning is a necessary, if uncomfortable, component of our personal life-planning strategy.

University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service personnel in Uinta County introduced "A Lasting Legacy" – an estate-planning tool. This comprehensive, two-part course deals with the total legacy – the belief systems and material possessions a person wishes to leave behind. A church auxiliary group in Evanston heard about "A Lasting Legacy," became very interested in the topic, and requested the program.

In September 2008, Course 1 of "A Lasting Legacy" was taught to 16 participants by two West Extension Area educators. The curriculum for Course 1 focuses on non-tangible things a person might wish to pass on, such as values, beliefs, and traditions. The other component of the course dealt with improving and maintaining intergenerational relationships, communication, values, and life lessons, and with allocating possessions of emotional value. "A Lasting Legacy" was developed for agricultural producers. In the Evanston course, only 15 percent of participants owned agricultural operations or were involved in agriculture. Accordingly, the presentations were adapted to be relevant to a broader audience. Along with the presentations, each participant was given the course workbook to complete at home to help facilitate discussions with family members.

Impacts:

A post-course electronic survey was completed by all participants. The questions allowed participants to assess the effectiveness of the course and the presenters, the relevance of the subject, and how the course affected their future plans/behaviors.

Results of the evaluation follow:

- One-hundred percent of participants reported they plan to use the workbook provided to help in the process of leaving their legacy.
- Almost 93 percent of participants reported their knowledge increased as a result of the program. Of those, 50 percent strongly agreed their knowledge increased.
- The presenters received high marks for teaching, preparation, and knowledge on the subject. One-hundred percent of the participants “strongly agreed” or “agreed” the presenters did an excellent job.
- During an informal follow-up with one participant, she said she called all of her children the day after the course to schedule a family meeting.

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