

## NU ag educators still working with Big 12 schools

Written by Gothenburg Times  
Wednesday, 23 June 2010 21:16 -

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The University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Oklahoma State University have partnered with Kansas State University to help expand K-State's educational program for agricultural producers.

"It is a management training course designed for producers who are dedicated to making improved management decisions and bringing strategic planning and thinking to their operations," said Brad Lubben, extension public policy specialist and the program's collaborating faculty member at UNL.

Lubben previously worked with the Management Analysis and Strategic Thinking Program, or MAST, while at K-State and helped bring the program to UNL.

"This is an effort to expand the reach of the MAST program to more producers and involve more researchers across the region . . . Drawing on additional specialists is important to help bring more resources and expertise to the program," Lubben said.

The majority of the program is completed through online learning modules that participants can work on from home on their own time. This allows the program to attract a variety of participants, and there are currently MAST alumni in seven states.

"MAST has been a highly effective program over the last seven years in providing participants with advanced agricultural and agribusiness management training," said David Lambert, head of K-State's Department of Agricultural Economics. "Instructors from all three land-grant universities will pool their talents in challenging MAST participants with a wide range of decision tools relevant to agricultural management, production, marketing and finance."

The program consists of eight learning modules covering: land ownership and leasing; machinery ownership and leasing; financial analysis; human resources; tax management and policy; risk management; marketing; and an optional module that varies in content.

During the distance portion of MAST, faculty members at the three universities will be available

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to answer questions and help participants explore different ways to help their businesses succeed.

“There is value in producers taking time for in-depth management training and strategic planning... This program and other management education programs like it give producers the opportunity to do strategic thinking that is critical to success,” said Lubben, who is a collaborator for modules involving agricultural policy.

Along with the online work, K-State will host two on-campus sessions at the start and end of the MAST program. The 2010-2011 program kicks off with an orientation session on Nov. 16-17. The program then concludes with the second on-campus session on Feb. 22-23, 2011.

For more information about the MAST program, go [online here](#) or contact Lubben at blubben2@unl.edu or (402) 472-2235.