

# Panelist Biographies

## ***Barry Barber—Turkey Foot Ranch***

Turkey Foot Ranch (located approx. 6 miles NE of Winfield) has raised and sold all natural grass fed beef for over 13 years. Our black angus cattle grow on sunshine, green grass, fresh air and clean water; nothing artificial added. Our beef is lean and nutrient dense for your health; grown without hormones, antibiotics or pesticides; clean and sustainable for the environment; never confined in a feed lot; grown and processed locally. The name Turkey Foot comes from the common name for Big Bluestem and Eastern Gamagrass which are the key grasses found in our "Prairie Buffet" we utilize to finish our cattle. Turkey Foot Ranch has been recognized as a Clean Water Farm and a Stream Steward due to our efforts to protect water quality in our local watershed. Beef is marketed by the individual cut or bundle, by the side (custom 1/4 or 1/2 beef) or can be purchased from health food stores in Wichita.

## ***Merry Bauman and John Brewer—Wyldeewood Cellars***

Both John and Merry grew up on a working horse and cattle ranch East of Leon, Ks. They worked hard and grew just about everything the family, and the animals, ate. (Probably one reason they were determined to find careers where they NEVER had to milk another cow the rest of our lives; ride out on a frisky horse and break ice on the ponds; clean stalls; or slop around in icy mud all winter.)

Dr. John Brewer went to K-State and graduated with honors from the Honors Program. He went on to Arkansas State University for his post-graduate studies, and eventually got his PhD there - at age 27. He met his wife Beth when she was a student in one of his classes. They have three grown children now and two 1/2 grandkids - one more due this year. He is a research scientist, and has worked in many interesting scientific fields thru the years. John was also "drafted" 17 yrs ago by the International Wine Competitions to be a Professional International Wine Judge also - after winning many awards in his first competitions.

Beginning as a hobby winemaker, when he decided to move his young family back to Kansas in 1994, he had already spent 8 yrs and over 200 formulas - developing a way to make world-class wine out of the native elderberries that grew on their Mom's ranch. He was tired of working for others and making them money, and as Mom was getting older, was looking for a way to make the ranch pay too. As the ranch had several acres of elderberries, it was a natural choice - with a lot of nostalgic value also - as it seemed everyone had someone in the family who had made elderberry wine at some point.

Merry Bauman - the oldest of the large family and happily married to Michael - has three associate's degrees, and a large family of her own. Grown, married, & professional kids,

eight grandkids, and a new great-grandbaby on the way. She has worked in many fields, including medical, chemical testing, research & development, freelance writing, and as a Buyer for Boeing. When John was looking for a site for the winery, they searched all over the area and decided on the town where their parents were married in and Merry was born - Mulvane, Kansas. She lives nearby, in rural Peck, so she had the residency requirements met, and they went into business together - officially on Jan. 1, 1995. Of course the business actually started earlier, selling the jellies that they began making, and eventually the syrups. Beginning with the jelly recipes Mom and Merry had used thru the years, and then making syrups - they got the business off the ground before they could legally make and sell the wines. Merry even baked homemade breads and wholegrain muffins to sell out of the store before the wines were ready.

Wyldeewood Cellars rose quickly to be not only the largest and most awarded winery in the State of Kansas, but also the largest jelly and syrup company as well. They have won many coveted awards in the wine industry, including over 500 medals in international wine competitions, and national recognition as the official wine of the Olympic Village during the 2002 Winter Olympics.

From their beginnings as a small business in a small rural town, they have grown now to a multi-million dollar revenue business, with five locations - four in Kansas and one in Illinois.

They have also created a whole new agricultural industry in Kansas - the growing of elderberries. What was once a "noxious weed" in Kansas is now an important cash crop for many farmers and ranchers who grow them for Wyldeewood Cellars. Both John and Merry have been very involved in tourism, agri-tourism development, leadership programs in the state, and have devoted a lot of time and energy to helping other businesses grow and develop as well. Starting with just John and Merry, Wyldeewood Cellars has now employed - full or part-time - over 15 members of the family - encompassing four generations.

### *Dick and Dolly Bonfy—Bonfy Gardens and Ranch*

Dick and Dolly reside on a 460 acre ranch about 14 miles east of Winfield where they garden and host several events each year. Dolly is a retired teacher and Dick is from the meat industry, as well as livestock production. Together they are proud to have seven children and thirteen grandchildren.

During this couple's 20 years of marriage they have enjoyed growing and selling produce from their garden including flowers, herbs, and vegetables. Each year, Dick and Dolly participate in three farmers' markets per week from June through September, in Ark City and Winfield.

We are fortunate to have "Prairieman" installed on our ranch; A three-acre permanent crop art designed by Kansas Artist, Stan Herd. Last May, Southwestern College erected a

permanent shell over the outdoor stage area south of “Prairieman” and the Southern Kansas Symphony performed before a crowd of 600 people.

### ***Teresa Chrisler—Solomon RC&D***

For the past five and a half years, Teresa Chrisler has worked as Program Assistant and Grant Writer/Administrator for the Solomon Valley and Smoky Hills RC&Ds. In April of 2011, funding provided to the RC&D program through USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) was eliminated. The two non-profit, 501 (c)(3) organizations voted to merger into one group and keep Teresa on as Director (a.k.a. sole employee) lol.

One of the most recognized RC&D projects that Teresa has the privilege of being a part of is working with the Kansas Black Farmers Association (KBFA) in Nicodemus, Kansas to raise teff in Northwest Kansas.

Teresa has farmed and ranched north of Natoma for 30 years and raises cutting and reining horses. The crop she is most proud of however, is her four sons, ages 22, 21, 19 and 14.

### ***Phyllis Collins—Pearly Gaits Ranch***

My name is Phyllis Collins. I have returned to the Midwest following 22 years of living on the west coast. The comfort of our rural lifestyle called to me in midlife. I was lucky enough to find a wonderful 60 acre home with a potential business attached. My second career in life has been in the veterinary field. I am a registered veterinary technician. My love of animals and desire to have a place for my own horses to live with me led to the purchase of Pearly Gaits Ranch in Wellington, Kansas. I love Tennessee Walking Horses and named the ranch for their smooth gait. Pearly Gaits Ranch is a horse and dog boarding business that I run from my home. We board around 12 horses in addition to my 6 horses. We also do overnight motel for horses that are traveling along I 35. We offer RV parking for the travelers as well. There is a hay pasture on the property and we cut our own hay and usually have some for sale throughout the year. The dog boarding business was added later and is the most popular part of Pearly Gaits Ranch. We have indoor heated and air conditioned rooms for overnight and long term stays. We also have a number of outdoor runs to accommodate short walks or afternoons in the sun as the dogs require. My fiancée and I live at Pearly Gaits Ranch. Mark works for BNSF as a conductor and helps me with projects around the ranch that I can't do myself. Otherwise my business is pretty much a one woman show. I have additional help that I call in from time to time so I can have time off. So is the life of a 7 day a week business at Pearly Gaits Ranch

### ***Heather Faye—Faye Farms***

Faye Farms is a small family farm located in Udall, KS. It has been owned and operated for the last 17 years by Mark and Heather Faye. Mark and Heather didn't start their

farming careers in Kansas. Their farm was originally started along the South Shore of Lake Superior in Bayfield, Wisconsin. With a desire for a warmer climate and better farming conditions they moved their entire farm 900 miles south in June of 2007.

Mark and Heather had been commercial dairy farmers for 15 years. Because they could see a further need for change, they switched the entire operation over to direct sales in the fall of 2009. While raw milk and pork sales are the main focus of the farm, soap making has become an integral part of the operation.

### ***Shannon Martin--Stone Barn Mercantile***

Shannon and Grady Martin operate the Stone Barn Mercantile and Farm near Dexter. The Martins operate a fall pumpkin patch and corn maze, rent log cabins year round and recently have expanded the venue to include weddings and receptions. The first season for the Stone Barn was in 2005 and the Martins have added attractions each year. The newest additions are a trebuchet and gem panning trough. They live on the property with their four children, Micah, Riley and twins Wade and Wyatt, who love to help with the farm.

### ***Martin and Cheryl Rude--The Barns @ Timber Creek***

Martin and Cheryl are the builder-owner-operators of the Barns @ Timber Creek. We've lived in Winfield for over twenty years. Both are employed at Southwestern College--Martin works with students interested in leading worship in the church and Cheryl teaches leadership development. They have two children in college.

The original stone barn at The Barns @ Timber Creek is on the National Historic Register and stands as a testament to the hard work of a fine craftsman. B&B hosts Martin and Cheryl Rude moved an 1890s post and beam barn to the property, reconstructed it and have added the comforts of today to the buildings of yesterday. Plan to stay in one of the guest rooms for your special celebrations, quiet getaways, retreats, group gatherings, or family reunions.

### ***Becky Walters--Walter's Pumpkin Patch***

Becky Walters (the city girl) married the farmer and quickly learned that livestock and big, green equipment were not her forte. Looking for her niche on Carroll's family farm, began a hobby pumpkin patch which has grown into the largest retail pumpkin patch in Kansas. Becky is a board member for the nationally known NAFDMA organization (North America Farmers Direct Marketing Association), was one of the first members of the Governor's Agritourism Initiative Council and is the present Chairman, and was a nominee for the Governor's Business Excellence Award in 2010.

# Presenter Biographies

## *Donald Cain—KS Small Business Development Center*

Donald Cain's passion for entrepreneurship began at a young age working in the family's construction business and being involved in entrepreneurship programs like Youth Entrepreneurs of Kansas and Students in Free Enterprise. This passion led him to obtain his B.B.A in entrepreneurship and marketing from Wichita State University. During his time at WSU, Donald worked for the Center for Entrepreneurship and was involved with the Kansas Family Business Forum.

Donald's experience ranges from working with small family owned businesses to fortune 500 companies. Prior to becoming the consultant for Cowley College Kansas Small Business Development Center Donald was a Store Manager for Gamestop, Operations Manager for Green Lantern Carwash, and the Admissions Coordinator for Wichita Technical Institute. Donald currently serves all small businesses from pre-start to exit planning by providing free consulting, low to no cost training, market research, and referral services. His office is located at Strother Field in Winfield, KS where he serves Cowley, Sumner, Harper, Barber, Pratt, and Stafford counties.

## *Kerri Falletti—Cowley County Economic Development*

Kerri moved to Cowley County in August 2003. She began working with Cowley County Economic Development in March 2004. She began getting involved in the county's communities and attending specific training courses through Oklahoma University's Economic Development Institute which led to becoming a Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) in April 2009 through the International Economic Development Council. Kerri is a 2007 graduate of Friends University with a degree in Business Administration. In 2009, she worked as a Business Consultant for Kansas Small Business Development Center for nine months to launch the Cowley College Outreach Center before returning to Cowley First as the Director of Community and Economic Development. As Director, she participates in many local and regional organizations, works with business and industry's needs and concerns, and works to promote Cowley County's vision, growth, and development. She is active in committees that develop the community as well as support local business.

In addition to this position working with business and industry, she is also an adjunct instructor for Cowley County Community College teaching the Introduction to Entrepreneurship online course. She is involved at Crossroads Community Church, Floral 4-H, and many sporting activities with her sons. In her spare time she enjoys working around her farm, gardening, fishing, hunting, camping, and horseback riding.

***Mike Irvin—KFB Foundation***

Mike Irvin is the Director of Kansas Farm Bureau's Legal Foundation. He has extensive dealing with issues vital to agriculture.

Mike is a native of Goodland, Kansas, where he grew up on a farm and practiced law for over twelve years before he began his work with Kansas Farm Bureau. He has an extensive background in commercial and civil litigation and public administration.

Mike earned an undergraduate degree in Business Finance from Kansas State University, a Masters in Public Administration from the University of Kansas, and a Juris Doctorate from Washburn University School of Law, Topeka, Kansas.

Mike, his wife Robin, and their three children, reside in Manhattan, Kansas.

***Dean Kennedy—Community National Bank & Trust***

E. Dean Kennedy leads the Winfield Trust Office at Community National Bank & Trust as Executive Vice-President & Trust Officer with over 40 years of banking and trust experience. Dean is a seasoned trust department manager with experience in all areas of trusts, estate planning, investments, retirement planning, and trust operations.

Dean is a graduate of Pittsburg State University, Oklahoma State University Intermediate Trust School, and Southwestern Graduate Trust School at Southern Methodist University in Dallas.

Dean is a past President of the Kansas Bankers Association Trust Division, The Winfield Chamber of Commerce, and the Winfield Rotary Club. He has been very active in community organizations and events, including Band Boosters, Playground Committee, Fair Board, Senior Advisory Council, First United Methodist Church, Southwestern Youth Leadership, Cowley County Leadership, July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration, and 4-H. Dean's family is a 4-Generation 4-H family!

Service has always been his top priority to customers and community.

***Jennifer Latzke—High Plains Publishers, Inc.***

Jennifer has been the Associate Editor for *High Plains Journal/Midwest Ag Journal* since August 2000. She writes about farming and ranching policy and issues in the 12-state coverage area of the High Plains, including production and management stories on wheat, cotton, sorghum, cattle and other commodities. Jennifer also writes a semi-monthly column, "Common Ground," which is a philosophical and humorous look on all things rural. She's a member of the American Agricultural Editors' Association, serving as its newsletter editor, and she achieved the title of Master Writer in 2007. Jennifer is also a member of the Livestock Publications Council. In 2010 she was named the Kansas

Professional Communicators Communicator of Achievement and is also a member of the National Federation of Presswomen, receiving numerous writing awards from all four organizations. Jennifer has her bachelor's degree in agricultural communications, with a minor in animal science from Kansas State University. She's a past national officer for Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow, a student organization for ag writers. She hails from Woodbine, Kan., in the north central part of the state, where her family farmed and ranched. She currently lives in Dodge City.

***Marci Penner—Kansas Sampler Foundation***

Marci Penner is the director of the Kansas Sampler Foundation.

In 1993, Marci and her father, Milferd Penner, formed the non-profit Kansas Sampler Foundation to help preserve and sustain rural culture. Some of the better known projects are the Kansas Sampler Festival, the *Kansas Guidebook for Explorers* for which Marci traveled to every one of the 627 incorporated cities in Kansas to research, the Rural Kansas: Come & Get It project, and the 8 Wonders of Kansas contests and guidebook.

Marci served as a co-chair for Governor Sebelius's Rural Life Task Force for a couple of years and was named Distinguished Kansan of the Year in 2005. Marci works daily focusing on the needs of volunteer-led communities.

***Becki Rhoades—KS Department of Parks, Wildlife and Tourism***

Becki Rhoades grew up on a row crop farm in Northwest Missouri and graduated from the University of Missouri with a degree in Agricultural Journalism. After college, she was a communications manager at the National FFA Headquarters in Indianapolis, then moved to Topeka to work for the Kansas Livestock Association where she wrote for the Kansas Stockman Magazine and the KLA Newsletter. Her varied background in farm broadcasting, newspaper and magazine writing, web design and public relations took her to the Kansas Department of Commerce Rural Development Division 10 years ago.

As the Team Leader for Ag Marketing, Becki worked with the Division's budget, coordinated marketing activities and specialized in working with small to medium-sized food manufacturers and agritourism businesses to promote their products and services to local, regional, national and international customers.

As part of Governor Brownback's reorganization in July, Becki joined the Kansas Dept. of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism as Agritourism Manager. She provides business coaching, marketing advice, networking and strategic product placement knowledge to agritourism entrepreneurs in the state and coordinates the agritourism business development activities. In her free time, Becki enjoys trapshooting, pheasant hunting, volleyball and playing with her nieces Katie and Molly!

*Lisa Roberts—Kansas Academy of Family Physicians*

Lisa Roberts is a marketing professional with more than 20 years' experience in a variety of industries from transportation to real estate to finance to business consulting. She has owned her own marketing firm and currently works in the world of non-profit and health care.

While she has numerous college degrees and is currently pursuing her Masters, she will unabashedly admit that she never learned more than she did growing up on a farm in the middle of Oklahoma.

She's passionate about not only protecting our Earth, but more so about making it possible for all of us to share the beauty of our part of the world with others. She currently lives in Derby with her husband, teenage son and a lot of free-loading squirrels living high off of the walnuts in the backyard. Her daughter Allison is attending Cowley College studying pre-med.

**Janet Siebert** is President/CEO of the Arkansas City Area Chamber of Commerce and is a member of the Arkansas City Rotary. Janet is a native of Great Bend and worked for the Great Bend Chamber from 1986-2006.

Janet is a past president of the Kansas Leadership Forum and currently serves as the marketing director. She is a recipient of the Ks. Health Foundation Leader-Full Community Award. She is a graduate of BLINK, (Building Leadership in Networking Communities) a Covey based leadership program, Ks. Health Foundation KCLI I & III.

Past President of the Kansas Chamber of Commerce Executives. Graduate of the US Chamber of Commerce Institute for Organizational Management. She currently directs and facilitates the Leadership Cowley County Program. Janet has worked with many rural communities through the Kansas PRIDE Program as a community evaluator and has participated in the Innovative Engineering Leadership Institute the past two years.

Through the many trainings and initiatives Janet has mastered learning styles, time lines, consensus building, team building, creative learning, managing self, personal development, creative learning and much more. She enjoys sharing these tools with youth and adults

*Becky Sullivan—Department of Agriculture*

Becky Sullivan is from a small hobby farm in Paola, KS where she was very involved in 4-H and FFA growing up. She graduated from Kansas State University in Agricultural Communications and Journalism, minor in Leadership Studies. 2007 - 2008 Becky took a year off of her college career to serve the National FFA Organization as a National Officer, traveling to 40 states in the U.S. and to Japan promoting Agricultural Education and leadership skills amongst middle, high and college aged students. From 2008 - 2011 Becky has worked part-time for the National FFA Organization as a conference facilitator

and has assisted in the writing of curriculum for different programs. Becky has interned with Cargill Meat Solutions as a corporate training, as well as worked during college for the KSU Foundation as a communications intern, working very closely with the campus-wide student philanthropy called K-State Proud to raise funds for students in financial need.

Becky joined the Department of Agricultural this past July as the department's education and event coordinator. Her current job entails serving as a board member for Foundation for Ag in the Classroom, coordinating the department's State Fair events, as well as coordinating all events agriculture related in the state for the Secretary and Governor. Another portion of Becky's job consist of the state's trademark program known as Simply Kansas. Currently Becky lives in Topeka, Kansas and enjoys traveling the state meeting the many hard working stakeholders in the agriculture community.