

Francis, Ronald - Salt Lake City, UT

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SALT LAKE OPEN HOUSES TARGET SMALL ACREAGE FARMERS

During the month of June, Murray District Conservationist Cindy Burton worked with a number of partners to host two afternoon open houses (one each in the Murray and Tooele field offices) to better inform underserved small acreage and backyard ranchette owners of conservation program services. Working with Salt Lake SCD Board Supervisor Ellen Trickler, FSA Administrative Assistant Jennifer Hicks, and NRCS FWP Manager Jessie Barrett, Burton reported the outreach activity achieved its goal. She said 15 visitors attended the events, seven of whom were women (46%)---many of which came alone in search of information on how to improve their small acreage property. The Murray staff is now scheduling field visits with the attendees to follow up on their interest in conservation programs.



Invitations to the open house were included in the Salt Lake Soil Conservation District newsletter that is sent with the FSA's bi-monthly newsletter to more than 1000 area residents. Another 350 Salt Lake County landowners received a direct mailing. Notices of the events were posted in feed stores in both counties and another 40 individuals were contacted through a very active local small farmer's network.

As a way of promoting locally grown and produced food products, they provided a tasting table of over 30 Utah products, representing nine companies. The tasting table was a way of tantalizing the palate while introducing visitors to the successful entrepreneurial ideas of other Utahns. In the accompanying photo, NRCS Area I Agronomist Marlon Winger talks with producers attending the Murray open house.

This successful activity also received support from the Great Salt Lake RC&D, the Utah Association of Conservation Districts, the Salt Lake County Coordinated Weed Management Area, and the NRCS Civil Rights Advisory Committee.

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