

# FACULTY IMPACT STORIES

Dr. Shannon Arnold  
Professor  
Agricultural Education

## EXPANDING AGRITOURISM IN MONTANA



### Get to Know the Fellows

SEEING AGRITOURISM IN ACTION  
AT THE MAHLSTEDT RANCH

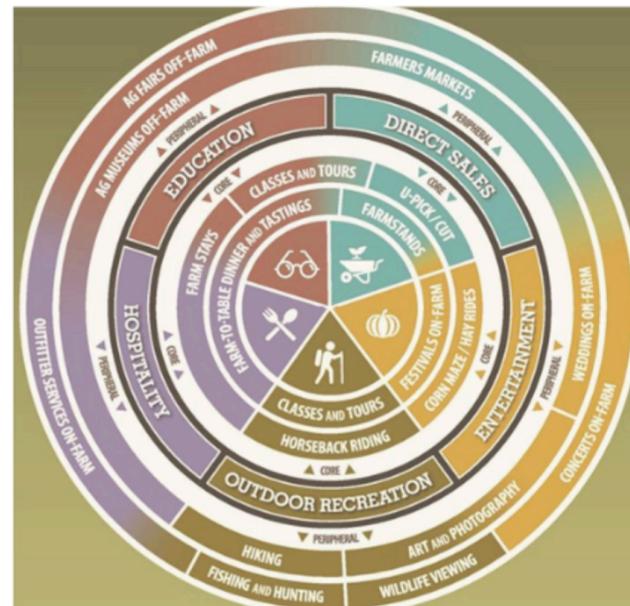


During Seminar Two, fellows had the opportunity to visit one of their own: Tana and Tienna Canen at the Mahlstedt Ranch. Well-known for their Quarter horses and Saters/Angus Cattle, the operation has introduced agritourism as a way to share the story of agriculture with others.

By integrating the use of outbuildings as venues and places to rent, the Canens hope to welcome hunters, stargazers, birdwatchers, wedding parties, hikers, and visitors of all kinds to the Mahlstedt Ranch. The fellows experienced the welcome atmosphere created by the Canens as they were served lunch and given a hayride tour of the more pasture. Tienna's puppy, Oakley, also helped greet the fellows, keeping several of them company throughout the afternoon.



Photos: (Top) Fellows watch the mares and take in the scenery of the Mahlstedt Ranch (Circle, MT). (Bottom Left) Fellows enjoy the hayride tour of the ranch. (Bottom Right) A foal tries to steal a quick snack.



## SHAPING THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE

Dr. Shannon Arnold has become a driving force in shaping the future of agritourism in Montana. What began as a passion for expanding non-formal education among agricultural professionals has grown into a statewide movement—one fueled by her vision, leadership, and relentless commitment to the people who feed and sustain our communities.

Recognizing the potential of agritourism to strengthen rural economies and create meaningful connections between producers and the public, she has secured multiple grants to push the industry forward. As a Principal Investigator, she led pivotal projects supported by Montana Department of Agriculture's Specialty Crop and Western SARE Grant Programs to cultivate leaders ready to advance sustainable agritourism across the state. Most recently, her work on "Expanding Montana's Agritourism Industry from the Ground Up" continues to build momentum and opportunity for producers statewide.

But her impact doesn't stop with research and grants. Seeing the need for a unified voice, Dr. Arnold spearheaded the formation of the Montana Agritourism Association and now serves as its Treasurer. She has co-hosted two statewide agritourism conferences—bringing producers, educators, and experts together to learn, collaborate, and innovate. She has also developed an undergraduate agritourism course, inspiring the next generation of leaders, and continues to deliver research-based educational programs that help producers grow their businesses with confidence.

Through each project, partnership, and classroom experience, Dr. Arnold is not just studying agritourism—she is helping to build its future, one producer, one student, and one community at a time.



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