Introduction

• The public does not trust science (Bauer, Allum & Miller, 2007).
• Consumers are demanding to know how their food is produced but do not know where to go for information ([AFBF], 2002).
• Scientists should seek out the media to become known and consistent sources of information (Eyck 2000).
• Texas Tech University Departments of Plant and Soil Sciences and Agricultural Education and Communications partnered with a multinational agricultural company to launch the Center for Agri-Science Communications (CASC).

Objectives Of The Program

• Train plant and soil scientists to engage through social and digital media channels
• Develop scientists’ personal communication skills
• Provide new techniques and tools for communicating science to the general public

How It Works

- Distilling the message
- Reaching out to the media
- Interpersonal communication
- Agricultural advocacy
- Academic communication
- Online portfolios
- Public speaking
- Etiquette training

Results to Date/Implications

“...I was able to approach other scientists without fear. I applied what I’ve learned this semester not only to my communication at conferences, but in my dissertation defense. I can now imagine the audience, work on my delivery and findings in a simple way, and make connections with my audience.”

Future Plans

• Train approximately 60 students
• Develop and teach a course open to all agricultural doctoral students at the university
• Expand program to aid in easing the apprehension that scientists have about public engagement

References