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PRESS RELEASE

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Sustainable Agriculture Research Shines on Capital Hill

Texas Tech University's research shined on Capital Hill as the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources displayed Texas Tech research at the 2003 Agricultural Science and Education Exhibition and Reception on Capitol Hill on March 4th. The research titled "Sustainable Crop/Livestock Systems in the Texas High Plains" displayed results of ongoing research since 1997. "With its focus on water and the importance of water to the Texas High Plains, this project drew a great deal of attention," Vivien Allen, a Thornton Distinguished Professor in forage research, who is the coordinator of the sustainable agriculture project, said.

Allen is excited about the research results and hopes that attending this exhibition will increase the awareness of the project. "Our participation in this exhibition greatly increased the visibility of our research and education program on sustainable agriculture for the Southern High Plains—more than 300 people stopped by to take a look at our project," Allen said.

Matt Baker, department chair of agriculture education and communications at Texas Tech University, also traveled to Washington to aide in the presentation of the project. "Clearly, we are interested in the attributes of livelihood for farm families on the adoption of similar systems on the Southern High Plains," Baker said.

Baker was encouraged by the visibility of the research while on Capital Hill. "Many of the congressional aides and staffers were very interested in discussing the human dimension of the project", Baker said.

Hopefully, awareness of the project will be raised and legislators will see just how important agriculture is to the Texas High Plains. "This presentation is the latest in a series of opportunities to highlight our progress and focus attention on the challenges of this region—we hope to raise the level of awareness about concerns driven by declining water resources and the impact on the regional economy", Allen said.

This research exhibition was sponsored by the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges.