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- News from the SD Section of the Society for Range Management

By: Jessalyn Bachler

Jessalyn Bachler Joins SDSU as the New Range Field Specialist, Lemmon Regional Center

I was raised on a multigeneration farm/ranch near Almont, ND, a little over an hour north of Lemmon, SD. My dad works on the operation and my mom is a preschool teacher. I have two older siblings, both whom are married with kids. I currently reside near a small town west of Hettinger, ND, that has a little acreage with enough room for a few cows, horses, chickens, a cat, and a bulldog.

I received my bachelor's degree in ranch management from Dickinson State University and my master's degree in animal and range sciences from North Dakota State University. During the time that I was working on my masters, I also worked full-time for NDSU at the Central Grasslands Research Extension Center as a livestock technician. For the past three years I taught introductory agriculture and animal, range, and soil science courses at a community college in Williston, ND as the agriculture instructor and program coordinator.



Jessalyn Bachler, SDSU Range Field Specialist (Photo courtesy of Jiyoung Kim).

I am the new range field specialist out of the Lemmon Regional Center. My position is 100% extension where I facilitate public education on South Dakota rangelands.

Some specific areas that I am interested in include: drought and whole ranch/grazing planning, multispecies grazing systems, winter grazing/feeding systems, youth education in range, women's range programming, and partner collaboration on range projects. Overall, I want to produce relevant range-related, research-based programming that can help operations be more successful. I enjoy working one on one with producers, helping them find innovative ways to increase grazing efficiency and reduce related costs. In our area both the sheep and cattle industries are very strong, so I hope to look into finding ways that both species can work together for the best use of the range while grazing. There is also opportunity to graze late in the season in our area, and I want to look into the best way to do so without it being detrimental to rangeland. Working with youth and young producers in range management has always been a passion of mine, as I have many mentors that have helped me along the way! I look forward to working collaboratively on many projects with extension colleagues, producer groups, stakeholders, and

other conservation partners.

Growing up on a farm and ranch, I understand that the lifestyle isn't always easy. I hope to help producers live sustainably and be able to hand over their operations to the next generation in better condition than when they started. My love for the land was instilled in me at a very young age and has since grown into a passion for rangeland and grazing management. I believe viewing the vast array of grasslands throughout South Dakota as a system that incorporates soil, plant, wildlife, and livestock interactions as one is beneficial for all involved in range management. Keeping these natural ecosystems intact is challenging with the ever changing agriculture industry. I think it is our role as managers of the land to educate the public on the importance of rangelands and the role that they play in not only food production but also their vitality as a natural resource.