

Strauch to focus on ag business, profitability

Brian Strauch grew up dreaming of owning a farm or ranch, but wasn't fortunate enough to inherit an operation, so he became an extension educator instead.

He started his new job with the University of Nebraska–Lincoln on Dec. 1, in Red Willow County where his appointment focuses on agricultural business and agricultural profitability. Strauch's responsibilities extend beyond the county into the 20 counties of UNL's West Central District, which includes Chase County.

Strauch said his initial goals include meeting local producers and other members of the community. He wants to become familiar with the county before he tries to assess needs of the district. He plans to develop programming based upon need and current research.

Strauch said his desire to farm led him to investigate careers that would allow him to connect with production agriculture. He wanted to provide assistance to producers, so the job of extension educator seemed to fit. Since he grew up in Gering, he was "ecstatic when the opportunity arose in southwest Nebraska."

Strauch received his Bachelor of Science Degree in ag business, farm/ranch management in 2004 and his Master of Science Degree in agricultural economics in 2008 from the University of Wyoming at Laramie.

Although he did not grow up on a farm, Strauch spent weekends during the school year helping his paternal grandparents on their farm near Mitchell. During the summers, he worked on his maternal grandparents' ranch south of Rushville.

He brings some non-family ranch experience to his new position, as well as feed mill labor and management. He served as a graduate assistant in production economics in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at the University of Wyoming.

Strauch invites people in West Central Nebraska to drop in whenever they're in the area so he can become acquainted.