



## National AgrAbility Project Regional Workshop includes QPR info for suicide prevention

By Donna Sullivan,  
Editor

Much like CPR training gave non-medical persons skills to aid someone in cardiac arrest and possibly save their lives, there is now a training designed to intervene in a situation where someone is considering suicide. The extra minutes and hours it affords could get the suffering individual through the crisis point and even save their life.

A National AgrAbility Project Regional Training Workshop was held November 16 and 17 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Manhattan, and the opening session took participants through QPR Training. Question, Persuade and Refer—three simple steps that have the potential to save the life of someone considering suicide. Created in 1995 by Paul Quinnett, QPR is an emergency mental health intervention for people considering suicide, working to identify and interrupt the crisis and assist the person in finding the help they need.

It was a pertinent topic for the AgrAbility workshop, because according to a January 2020 study published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, farmers are among the most likely to die by suicide compared to other professions. A 2017 study at the University of Iowa found that



Tawnee Larson of Kansas AgrAbility and Tess McKeel of the National AgrAbility Project discussed QPR training for suicide prevention at the National AgrAbility Project Regional Training Workshop in Manhattan November 16 and 17 in Manhattan.

Photo by Donna Sullivan

agriculture producers had a suicide rate of 3.5 times that of the general population from 1992-2010.

"QPR is not intended to be a form of counseling or treatment," emphasized Tess McKeel of the National AgrAbility Project, who led the training. "It's more of a First Aid type of thing, intended to offer hope through positive interaction." She further described it as an emergency mental health intervention that teaches lay people and professionals to recognize and re-

spond positively to someone experiencing suicidal thoughts and behavior. Just as someone trained to administer CPR rarely is expected to perform heart surgery, the one giving emergency help in that moment to keep the person alive. Like CPR for cardiac patients, QPR is part of what is referred to as a "Chain of Survival."

A Gatekeeper, as identified by the QPR Institute, is someone in a position to recognize a crisis and the warning signs that some-

one may be contemplating suicide. They may be parents, friends, neighbors, teachers, ministers, doctors and others. Research has shown that individuals considering suicide rarely self-refer to mental health professionals. So having someone with whom they interact in their daily lives be able to recognize the signs, is a critical first step in prevention. "In QPR the general public is educated about the known warning signs of a suicide crisis: expressions of hopelessness, depression,



Question, Persuade and Refer are the components of QPR, a program modeled after CPR with the goal of helping a suicidal person get beyond the crisis point and pointed towards mental health resources

giving away prized possessions, talking of suicide, securing lethal means, and then taught how to respond," says the QPR Institute website, where online QPR training can be accessed. The website address is [www.qprinstitute.com](http://www.qprinstitute.com). "We believe that quality education empowers all people, regardless of their background, to make a positive difference in the life of someone they know," it reads. The online training takes sixty minutes and the certification lasts for two years. In-person trainings are also available. Key components include: How to Question, Persuade and Refer someone who may be suicidal; How to get help for yourself or

learn more about preventing suicide; The common causes of suicidal behavior; The warning signs of suicide; How to get help for someone in crisis.

The QPR Institute has a goal of one in four persons trained in the basic gatekeeper role. Because suicides happen in families, they believe at least one person per family unit should be trained in QPR. Just as many people trained in CPR will never have the need to actually perform it, just might save the life of someone they love at the moment of their deepest crisis. Rather than feeling helpless watching a loved one in the throes of despair, there is empowerment in guiding someone to the resources they need.

Question, Persuade and Refer—three simple steps that could save a life.

## Father-son duo from Meade tops Kansas entries in the 2021 National Wheat Yield Contest

By Julia Debes

Tyler Ediger and his father Darwin are seasoned veterans of the National Wheat Yield Contest, having submitted entries from their farming operation near Meade since the start of the contest six years ago. That experience—combined with informed management and near-perfect growing conditions—made it no surprise that the father-son duo took first and second place for the state of Kansas in the 2021 contest.

In the dryland winter wheat category, Tyler took the top Kansas slot with a final yield of 125.66 bushels per acre. The entry also earned Ediger the fifth-place "bin buster" award in the national winter wheat-dryland category. Darwin took second with a final yield of 123.48 bushels per acre. Both entries were WestBred WB4792.

"I don't know what else I could have done to make it a more perfect growing season," Tyler said. "It all came together." The Edigers' operation is all dryland and has been fully no-till for close to two



Tyler Ediger and his father Darwin topped the Kansas entries in the National Wheat Yield Contest.

decades. As seed dealers as well as wheat growers, they focus on variety selection to maximize yield potential. They also do comprehensive soil testing, which allows them to apply nutrients by the acre, not just by the field.

"We focus hard on varieties, so when we're plant-

ing, we know which fields are probably going to end up being a contest entry," Ediger said. "You have your everyday performers that just do good, but then you have your varieties like 4792 that you know can blow the lid off."

The Edigers have planted WB4792 for three

years on their farm, and Tyler said it has some of the best yield potential he has seen. It's been a high yielder with high test weight, but it needs to be sprayed for head scab if it's a concern in the area.

"It's a higher management wheat, and it's got great straw strength," Tyler said.

Beyond variety selection, Tyler credited the growing season's weather as a substantial factor in the success of this year's entry and their overall crop.

In fall 2020, the Edigers planted wheat a week or so earlier than normal to take advantage of available moisture. The Edigers also utilized seed treatments to protect the wheat seeds, including fungicide and insecticides—the latter to address threats from grasshoppers and aphids.

The Edigers also topped their wheat in October, perfect timing before snows fell in October. More snow in November helped carry the wheat through the winter, important as little moisture fell until April.

funding from the Commission. The free event takes place at Hotel Topeka at City Center (formerly known as the Capitol Plaza

"We were able to get our nitrogen in, which I think proved pretty beneficial for us," Tyler said. "That gave us the tillers we needed, and the plant had everything it needed when it was ready to green up in the spring."

April showers arrived following a winter with no freeze damage or winterkill concerns. The Edigers also applied a split application of a generic foliar fungicide for stripe and leaf rust at flag leaf. He said the varieties that yielded really well this year held up to the stripe rust and leaf rust. They also put down a Prosoaro fungicide for head scab following, which Ediger said paid off this year.

Wheat harvest finished before summer rains delayed harvest progress in other parts of the state. Harvest went well, but Tyler admitted picking which part of the field to use for the final entry is one of the hardest parts of entering the yield contest.

The yield contest is hard because we're trying to get wheat out and then to try and single out a spot, and then the combine

drivers are saying, 'Hey, it's good over here' and 'No, it's better over here,' Tyler said. "You don't ever get the best part of the field, but you try."

Harvest stress aside, Tyler said entering the wheat yield contest has made them examine their production practices from start to finish and break down which factors they can adjust to improve next year's crop.

"It's a good exercise to the farm, to learn what it takes to make yield and where those yields can be found," Tyler said. "It doesn't just benefit those acres; it benefits your whole farm."

As Tyler pointed out, continuous learning is the best part of entering the National Wheat Yield Contest, so a flawless entry is not the goal.

"Don't stress out about it; just harvest your wheat," Tyler said. "Don't strive for perfection, but just do your best."

For more details on the winning entries and to review the official rules and entry details for the 2022 contest, visit [yieldcontest.wheatfoundation.org](http://yieldcontest.wheatfoundation.org).

Show. Visit [kansassoybeans.org/expo](http://kansassoybeans.org/expo) to pre-register for Expo and reserve your seat.

## Kansas Soybean Expo 2022 to include comedy, research, markets

Individuals planning to attend the Kansas Soybean Expo January 12 have much to look forward to. After a year hiatus,

the Kansas Soybean Association and Commission boards are excited to bring soybean farmers across the state together for a day full of intriguing presentations and networking opportunities.

Registration and exhibits open at 8:30 a.m. The program is scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. with a welcome from KSA president Teresa Brandenburg and KSC chairman Bob Haselwood.

Comedian Larry Weaver keynotes the event during the morning session, preceded by Commission partner reports from the U.S. Soybean Export Council and International Grains Program Institute.

According to his website, Weaver grew up in the rural village of Saxapahaw, NC and started performing at a young age. After majoring in accounting at the University of North Carolina, Weaver left his CPA dreams behind to pursue a career in stand-up comedy. He is the president of Trusted

Speakers, author of *101 Funny Employee Awards*, and a recognized expert in online marketing.

Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly is expected to provide the luncheon address with Greg Akagi, a farm broadcaster for the Kansas Agriculture Network, serving as master of ceremonies. The luncheon also features an American Soybean Association report from Kansas director Charles Atkinson and the Kansas Soybean Association Annual Meeting led by Brandenburg.

Results from the 2021 Kansas Soybean Yield and Value Contests kick off the afternoon schedule. Ed Anderson of the North Central Soybean Research Program and Darrell Holaday with Advanced Market Concepts/Country Futures are then lined up to share important industry updates. Beginning at 4 p.m., a reception with KSA and KSC leaders concludes the event.

KSA organizes this annual event with checkoff

funding from the Commission. The free event takes place at Hotel Topeka at City Center (formerly known as the Capitol Plaza

Hotel). This is a change in venue from previous Expos, but the event remains in the same complex as the Topeka Farm

## Beef Council reaches producers through pair of BQA events

The Kansas Beef Council (KBC) and Kansas State University hosted two advanced beef cattle care and health training sessions this month, one in Eureka and the other in Washington. K-State extension veterinarian A.J. Tarpoff led the trainings, which included information on Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) recommendations for animal husbandry, downed animal care and low-stress handling. During the session at Eureka, Tarpoff also conducted a necropsy to showcase the causation of different animal health issues. Producers who attended these sessions earned their BQA certification.



KBC director of industry relations John Sachse also was on hand at each location to discuss how producers' checkoff investment is serving the industry and bridging the gap between those who produce beef and those who consume it.

Producers who were

unable to attend one of the in-person trainings, but still are interested in becoming BQA-certified, can go to [www.bqa.org](http://www.bqa.org) and go through the online course. For more information on how the beef checkoff is serving the beef industry, visit [www.kansasbeef.org](http://www.kansasbeef.org) and click on Beef Hub.