

How SDSU Extension Leveraged PEARS for Effective Reporting

South Dakota State University (SDSU) Extension serves communities statewide through a team of dedicated staff members. The mission of SDSU Extension is to empower South Dakota citizens with research-based knowledge and education to improve their lives and communities.

What SDSU Extension Needed

For years, SDSU Extension needed a user-friendly online reporting platform that would integrate smoothly with the varied needs of SDSU Extension staff, promote effective program development, and document report accountability. The goal was to streamline reporting processes while maintaining flexibility to accommodate the diverse needs of staff and administration. Key priorities included:

- **User-Friendly Online Reporting:** An intuitive, easy-to-use platform for efficient data entry and retrieval.
- **Flexibility to Accommodate State-Specific Reporting Needs:** Customizable modules to fit the state's unique reporting processes.
- **Easy Data Export and Sharing with Administration:** Seamless data export for quick sharing and decision-making.

The search for a modern, flexible solution led them to PEARS, a web-based data management platform specifically built with Cooperative Extension's data collection and reporting needs in mind.

Why PEARS Was the Right Choice

PEARS stood out for SDSU Extension due to its customizable modules, which could be tailored to meet specific state reporting needs. The ability to easily export data made it an ideal fit for sharing information with administration.

After transitioning to PEARS, SDSU Extension began by using just a couple of modules. They gradually expanded and now use a total of four modules, including: Program Activities, Indirect Activities, Quarterly Efforts, and Direct Contacts. This gradual integration made the transition smoother and more manageable.



A User's Perspective

Ann Schwader, SDSU Program Assessment & Reporting Specialist, reflects on the positive impact of PEARS:

"The transition to PEARS went well. Starting with two modules and gradually expanding to four allowed for a smooth transition. The platform's user-friendly design and reliable customer support made the process easier."

She adds, *"I would highly recommend that any Extension organization utilize the PEARS online reporting system. It's user-friendly, offers ample customer support, and is highly credible."*

A Reliable Solution for Efficient Reporting

PEARS has proven to be a valuable tool for SDSU Extension, providing the flexibility and efficiency needed for data management and reporting. The system's ease of use, reliable support, and customization options make it a worthwhile choice for other extension programs considering a similar transition.

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