



# **Adopt-a-Rancher Classroom Program**

*Ag Education for Uinta County Third Graders*

The Uinta County Conservation District facilitates the Adopt-a-Rancher Classroom Program for third graders to communicate with a local rancher to learn first-hand the importance of agriculture in their lives and community.

- Throughout the school year, students gain valuable knowledge about local agriculture through monthly letters and pictures from the ranch.
- Students respond by writing letters to the rancher during the school year.
- On years alternating with the Ag Expo, your adopted rancher will host a 'Meet the Rancher Day' for students to experience the ranch in person.
- The Uinta County Conservation District oversees this program and is available to assist in any way needed, including covering associated costs.
- The Conservation District is also available to teach Ag lessons in the classroom.

Enclosed please find the outline of the Adopt-a-Rancher Classroom Program.

If you have any questions regarding this program, please contact the Uinta County Conservation District.

Uinta County Conservation District  
P.O. Box 370  
204 East Sage Street  
Lyman, WY 82937  
307-787-3070  
Email: [klott.uccd@gmail.com](mailto:klott.uccd@gmail.com)  
[www.uintacountycd.com](http://www.uintacountycd.com)



# **Uinta County Conservation District Adopt-a-Rancher Classroom Program**

---

## **History**

The Uinta County Conservation District introduced the Adopt-a-Rancher Classroom Program in 2009 effort to provide a fun, interactive way for students to learn about agriculture in Uinta County. The program was first implemented in third grade classrooms because of the curriculum focus on communities, which includes agriculture. The Adopt-a-Rancher program has continued in third grade for the past ten years as letter writing also ties into the Language and Writing standards.

## **Overview**

Schools/classrooms who choose to participate in the program are paired with a local Uinta County rancher who volunteers their time to share their ranching experience with the students.

The program begins with an introductory letter to the classroom from the adopted rancher in October. Each subsequent month, the classroom receives a letter from the rancher. The topic of each letter varies depending on current ranch happenings from October to April.

Through the letters, students begin to understand the important role agriculture plays in their lives. They get to know the local rancher, his animals, and ranch happenings very well. Students write letters back to the rancher in November and February. We ask that the students and teachers respond to the rancher by asking three to five questions per class.

In the spring of the even-numbered years, students participate in a 'Meet the Rancher Day'. During this fieldtrip, students meet the rancher and see the animals and ranch they have learned about in the letters and pictures. During the spring of odd-numbered years, the students participate in the 'Ag-Expo' as a conclusion to their year of learning about ranching and agriculture.

Thanks to the dedication of the adopted ranchers and their families, this program has been a success and a great experience for everyone involved.

## **Responsibilities**

### ***Uinta County Conservation District***

The Uinta County Conservation District oversees this program and is available to assist in any way needed, including covering associated costs. UCCD will deliver letters between the rancher and the classroom. Upon request by the teachers, UCCD can plan an activity to share with students in the classroom to reinforce agricultural topics. UCCD is available to help plan or assist at the 'Meet the Rancher Day'.

### ***Teacher and Students***

Teachers are responsible for sharing the monthly letters and pictures from the rancher with their students. The teachers will make sure that each student is given the time and help needed to write a letter to the rancher in both November and February. Each student will write a letter individually to the rancher, and the class as a whole will write one letter to the rancher with three to five questions they want the rancher to address specifically. Letters can be written more often,

but due to time demands, ranchers may only address questions asked in the November and February class letter. Monthly letters from the rancher will be delivered to the classroom by the UCCD Education Coordinator. When letters from the students are written they will be picked up from the school and delivered to the rancher by the Education Coordinator.

In the spring, the students will either participate in the 'Meet the Rancher Day' field trip, or the 'Ag Expo'. Dates and time will be coordinated through UCCD. Teachers are responsible for scheduling transportation to and from the event.

### ***Adopted Ranchers***

The adopted ranchers/ranch families are responsible for writing one letter per month, from October to April, to their students. Letters should describe the what, how and why of the current happenings on your ranch. Write about specific animals that you have or use on your ranch, use names and be descriptive. Please include pictures for the students to look at. You will email or deliver the letters and pictures to the UCCD Education Coordinator who will then deliver them to the classroom.

'Meet the Rancher Day' held in the spring (usually in May) of even-numbered years. This field trip is planned and hosted by you at your ranch. The field trip can be as simple as having lunch with the students and taking a brief tour of the ranch, or the students can spend the entire day at the ranch rotating through stations that teach different aspects of ranching. In the past, ranchers have called upon the High School FFA and other ranchers/friends to set up stations that help the students better understand ranching and agriculture. UCCD is available to assist wherever needed.

Ranchers are welcome to do more than required for the students if they would like. In the past some ranchers have taken holiday treats to the students for Christmas or Valentine's Day. UCCD is available to help with ideas as well as cost and coordination.

The following is a list of topic ideas for your monthly letters, feel free to adapt to your ranch.

#### **October**

- History of your ranch
- Type of ranch
- Your family

#### **November**

- Transporting livestock (how, when, why, setbacks)

#### **December**

- Winter weather ranching
- Christmas
- Ranch traditions

#### **January**

- Calving /Lambing (babies, complications)

#### **February**

- Feeding
- Animal Health

#### **March**

- The business of ranching
- Market

#### **April**

- Haying
- Irrigation
- Branding/Sheering

#### **May**

- Meet the Rancher Day (even-numbered years only)

The following are ideas for 'Meet the Rancher Day' stations if you choose to have any.

- Branding/Sheep sheering
- Animal by-products
- Tractors and machinery

- Animal feed
- Horse rides
- Roping
- Animal health
- Plant ID; grasses, broadleaf, shrubs, trees, etc.
- Animals to pet and hold (even animals you may not normally have at your ranch)
- Tack and its uses; Western wear
- All about horses; colors, types, uses, etc.
- Hayrides pulled by a tractor or team of horses
- Four-wheeler safety and riding (with an adult on of course!)
- Any station including animals is perfect
- Anything else that pertains to your ranching operation

## **Participation**

We would love for all third graders in Uinta County to learn more about agriculture by participating in this program. All third grade classrooms and homeschool groups in the county are encouraged to participate. Ranchers and ranch families who volunteer their time to help educate our youth about the importance of agriculture in their lives and community are greatly appreciated.