

Kansas State University

## Master of Agribusiness

*More than a decade developing agribusiness leaders*

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### **Student defends thesis, “Survey of Business Management Factors Associated with Mixed Animal Veterinary Practice Size and Growth”**

**MANHATTAN, KANS., May 26, 2009** – Amy Brusk, Manhattan, Kans., defended her thesis, “Survey of Business Management Factors Associated with Mixed Animal Veterinary Practice Size and Growth,” Tuesday, April 28, 2009. Brusk is a Grant Specialist at the K-State College of Veterinary Medicine in Manhattan, Kans. She graduated from Kansas State University in May with a Master’s in Agribusiness (MAB).

Due to a potential shortage of food animal veterinarians, Brusk conducted research regarding what types of business management practices may improve a practicing veterinarian’s income and the economic sustainability of rural veterinary practices. Her study focused on business management practices that are associated with economic growth of mixed animal practices.

Brusk surveyed veterinarians with an interest in bovine and equine health and found practices employing business managers tended to have a higher gross practice income. Using a business manager to handle the day-to-day operations to keep the practice running efficiently allows the veterinarian to focus on his/her practice and animal care. She also found that practices reviewing financial reports and adjusting prices as needed, as well as implementing marketing plans providing frequent contact with clients showed higher incomes and growth.

“Given the results, it will be important for veterinarians to consider the benefits a business manager could have for their practice, as well as reviewing financial reports, improving client communications, frequently adjusting prices, and utilizing a marketing plan,” Brusk said.

Implementing these business management practices could have a positive effect on practices for mixed animal veterinary clinics.

Brad White, Assistant Professor of Clinical Sciences in Veterinary Medicine and Brusk's thesis advisor, said, "This research illustrated a wide range of growth rates among mixed animal practices, and we identified several factors associated with high growth rates that provides valuable knowledge for mixed animal veterinary practices desiring to grow."

K-State's Master of Agribusiness is an award-winning, distance-education degree program that focuses on food and agribusiness management. Students and alumni of the program are located in more than 35 states within the United States and 25 countries abroad. They range in age from 25 to 55 and work in every sector of the food and agribusiness industry.

The program, launched in 1998 is now in its 12th year of agribusiness education. The executive-style, distance education delivery breaks down barriers associated with earning a master's degree, such as access to a university campus, job changes, relocations and job-related travel.

"We have developed a program that meets students' educational needs, and we deliver it in a format that meets their schedules," said Allen Featherstone, director of the Master of Agribusiness program in the K-State department of agricultural economics. "Students can access the program regardless of where they are."

The ability to grow and adapt, while offering an innovative curriculum has earned the program and its instructors numerous national awards including the University Continuing Education Association (UCEA)/Peterson's Award for most innovative distance education program and the Association of Continuing Higher Education's (ACHE) Distinguished Program Award.

The full thesis publication can be found online on K-State's Research Exchange at <http://hdl.handle.net/2097/1431>.

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