



# SPOTLIGHT

Growing Beginning Farmers & Ranchers in Wyoming



## 2022 Sam Warneke

**S**am Warneke joined the GrowinG Internship Program eager to expand his knowledge of ranching. “I had some experience with feedlot cattle but no clue how they were managed in open pastures,” he reflected on his first week. Over the summer, he developed vital skills in livestock management, sustainable practices, and equipment maintenance.

A significant lesson Sam learned was grazing management. By rotating cattle across pastures, he helped prevent overgrazing and preserved native grasses. “It’s important to control grazing times and watch how much water the cattle consume to avoid depleting resources faster than they can replenish,” he explained.

Sam also explored sustainable solutions, like repairing windmills and installing solar water pumps. “Windmills are becoming less efficient, but solar pumps can produce water faster on sunny days,” he noted. These systems demonstrated the balance between traditional and modern approaches.

Animal welfare was another focus. Tasks like vaccinating calves, branding cattle, and practicing low-stress handling emphasized the importance of calm and precise care. “Shouting or pushing too much makes calves nervous and less responsive. Moving slowly and calmly works best,” Sam shared.

Through projects like hay baling and fence repair, he discovered the value of resourcefulness. “Reusing old parts isn’t just economical but also environmentally friendly,” he said.

Reflecting on the internship, Sam expressed gratitude. “The knowledge and confidence I gained this summer are invaluable,” he remarked. Looking ahead, he plans to integrate sustainable practices into his career while contributing to the agricultural community.

*Sam Warneke*

