The New Extension: Agriculture and More, Making Our Communities Stronger

2013 Southern Legislative Conference
Mobile Alabama
• Impact of Extension
  Ag, FCS, 4-H, Community Development
• Strengths and Advantages of Cooperative Extension System
• Challenges
• Adapting to a Changing Landscape
Southern Region Agriculture

- $107 Billion sales
- 880,000 farms
- >50% of land area
- 24% of ag exports

1 Battelle, 2012
Forestry in the Southern Region
Forestry in the Southern Region

- 49% of US timber growth
  - from 24% of land area
- 62% of annual US production
- Net gain in standing timber inventory (2012)
Value Added by Ag Businesses

- Manufacture and supply of inputs
- Processing (milling of grain, lumber)
- Manufacture of food, nutrition and health products
- Green Industries
  - Landscaping, Consumer Horticulture
- Textiles, biofuels, paper
Agriculture Beyond the Farm

- 82,000 companies in the value added chain
  - 2.2 million jobs
  - 7.5% of private sector employment
Extension Contributions to Southern Region Communities

• Local connect to 30 LGU
  – Including 1862, 1890’s

• National Network

• Cooperative Model
Extension Contributions to Southern Region Communities

- Research-based solutions
- Locally driven
  - System of councils, volunteers
Extension Contributions to Southern Region Communities

Prevention/Intervention
Nutrition
Physical Activity
Health

Builds local human capital
Extension Impacts

Response to Critical Issues

– Soybean Rust
Extension Impacts

Response to Critical Issues

Spotted wing drosophila

Proactive Education on Environment

Discovery Farms (AR)
Extension Impacts

4-H programs proven to improve academic performance/college/civic engagement and reduce risky behaviors

Alabama estimates $377,280 saved due to programs to reduce risky teen behavior and strengthen families
Extension Impacts

Master Gardener Community Projects
(Whitley County SC, Clemson Extension)
Extension Impacts

• Strengthening Economies Together (Region Wide, SRDC, Mississippi State)
• Entrepreneurial Coaches Institute (KY)
Extension Impacts

• GAP Training for Farms (Virginia Cooperative Extension)
  – Trained over **550 individuals** representing **250 farms** growing and selling fresh produce
  – **82.8% of the farms** in VA listed on the USDA GAP-certified database had gone through VCE
  – The need for education and support continues to grow
Extension Challenges

• Growing Clientele Demands
  – Breadth of expectations
  – Rapid response
  – 24-7 availabilities
Extension Challenges

• Urban Programming
Extension Challenges

• Rising costs and declining budgets
• Federal preference for competitive over capacity funding
Adapting to the Future

• Being true to core values
  – Research-based
  – Relevance to local issues
  – Relationships
Adapting to the Future: eXtension.org
Adapting to the Future

• Sharing Expertise
  – Shared specialists
    • Fruits, irrigation, small ruminants, tobacco
  – eXtension Communities of Practice
Adapting to the Future

- Rapid diagnosis of problems
Adapting to the Future

Webinars Leverage
People Resources
Extension and Social Media

Hickman County Cooperative Extension Service is on Facebook
Sign up for Facebook to connect with Hickman County Cooperative Extension Service.

Hickman County Cooperative Extension Service

Wall Info Photos Discussions Boxes Events

Hickman County Cooperative Extension Service + Others
Just Hickman County Cooperative Extension Service Just Others

257 People Like This
Cletus Murphy Marisa Fitzgerald Id Aull Sandra R. Wood

Hickman County Cooperative Extension Service

Extreme Couponing with Lisa Schraw
Location: First Baptist Church, Clinton, KY
Time: 7:00PM Thursday, February 17th
Adapting to the Future

Online training for 6000 urban ag businesses (GA)
Summary

Extension’s service to Agriculture has large economic impact
Summary

Extension is locally driven, with a national network for solutions
Summary

Extension serves farms, families, youth and communities
Summary

Extension faces challenges but is positioning itself for the future.