

# Personnel and Organizational Development Committee

Keith Niemann, Chair (kniemann@unl.edu)

## Action Requested:

### *What does ECOP see as PODC's role in this issue?*

Background - PODC recently discussed the erosion of the federal/state partnership and how this erosion impacts all states. Questions included:

- What does the federal partnership mean?
- What are the elements leading to the conclusion that this partnership is eroding?
- What started the erosion and can further erosion be prevented or corrected?
- How much has federal support (dollars) eroded in the last 5-10 years?
- Is erosion programmatic or monetary?
- How has this erosion affected smaller states?
- How effective are we in communicating that Extension is serving today's population?
- Are federal employees doing a good job of representing Extension to federal lawmakers?

## Information Items:

PODC last met in Tucson, Arizona, January 18 - 21, 2000, and continues to divide the work of this Committee into three smaller work-groups.

### Training - James Smith

ECOP recently asked PODC to examine the opportunities available for developing leadership among staff within the System. Based on a conversation with Linda Benning, this Work Group decided to focus on the following questions: Is the System helping "our people" develop leadership skills sufficient to lead the System in the future? If not, should we? And if we are, how are we performing this task? Are these opportunities available to all? Is it NELD that should be providing this Leadership Training? The training Work Group will review the findings/results of a recent survey completed by Myron Johnsrud, and then proceed.

Given the move by the Federal partner to make more formula funds available through a competitive grant process, the Group will revisit its prior work on grant writing/management, emphasizing how to write a proposal that will be successful in this new funding environment. Niemann will contact CSREES to determine existing resources and coordinate specific directions.

The ?New Director/Administrator Briefing Book? is now available at the following web site: <<http://www.reeusda.gov/hrd/podc/PODC.htm>>. It is designed to compliment the CSREES New Administrator Workshop and the USDA Administrative Resource Guide (being updated by Nancy Hicks – see draft at: <http://ag.arizona.edu/~merrigan/>). Suggestions/comments can be sent to Keith Niemann, PODC Chair (kniemann@unl.edu). Thanks to Curtis Clark and his CSREES section, for

making this document an electronic reality. A promotional flyer will be placed in the registration packet for the next National Directors/Administrators meeting in New Orleans.

The Training Work Group is updating the National Policy Guidelines for Staff. The revised document will be presented to ECOP during the July 2000 meeting. Mentoring, core competencies and technology will be new additions.

#### Organizational Culture and Change - Bill Peterson

The Organizational Culture and Change Work Group of PODC is bringing to conclusion its scenario process initiated in 1998. We wish to thank all those who initially submitted scenarios, Dorothy Martin from Colorado State University for her training and technical help, and those individuals who were surveyed on scenario preferences. We have prepared a summary of responses from the three scenarios developed by PODC. This report will be on the CSREES web site. The PODC Work Group found scenario building to be a useful tool and encourages groups to use it. Recent NELD participants have been trained in its use and could be valuable resources. An article is being prepared for submission to the Journal of Extension and the national publications for NAEFCS, NACAA, NAE4-HA and ESP.

In light of ECOP's request of PODC that we study "Benchmarks of Excellence for The Cooperative Extension System", a Work Group will be conducting this study and plans to have a position paper/report by fall of 2000. We plan to ask states for any benchmark information and do some research into existing benchmark information from other sources such as University Outreach and private sectors and discuss these results during the May PODC meeting in Baltimore. Following that meeting the preliminary plan is to conduct a benchmark study for the Cooperative Extension system using Delphi or other appropriate techniques.

#### Value of Agriculture ? Rural/Urban Interface ? Ray Bosmans

This work group is developing a tool to help Extension faculty that work with agriculture in urban areas justify why they have or want to develop educational programs focusing on agriculture. In addition to a short written report, the work group will prepare a compilation of successful agriculture programs in urban areas. They are using "Making a Difference Through Urban Programs" - a document by James E. Reaves, USDA/CSREES Fellow as a starting point. The work will be completed by the end of this year. Distribution plans include the USDA website.

#### Other Issues Discussed:

- Joint Meeting with SPC and PLC in Baltimore in May - spirited discussion centered on the need for topics useful to all three ECOP Committees.
- The future of NELD was discussed. Are participants getting the necessary experience in the current program? Some of the states are doing their own leadership programs planned by NELD graduates. Instead of seeing the regional ones as threats, we should look at NELD as a program that has succeeded with spin-offs. Is it possible to do NELD in a less expensive way?

- A subgroup of SED will meet with people in Washington concerning the Change Agent States project. There is less than two million dollars for three years. SED is looking to ARS and CES for seed money. A proposal is being written and SED is looking for grant partners. Each state agrees to create a catalyst team to do diversity training within the state with help from a consultant team.