

Report of the Personnel and Organization Development Committee's (PODC) Agriculture-Urban Interface Subcommittee, 2000

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Introduction

The Personnel and Organization Development Committee (PODC) is a subcommittee of the Extension Committee on Policy (ECOP). PODC's purpose is to address issues that affect the Extension organization and its personnel. The assignment of this work group of PODC was to address the question of “ why should Extension maintain agriculture programs in urban areas?”

This assignment was a follow up to the paper by Jim Christianson, entitled “Top Ten reasons for Cooperative Extension to Have Highly Visible Programs in Urban Areas” They are:

- Agriculture issues are not rural or urban issues, but policy issues.
- Historically, many special appropriations by Congress for Cooperative Extension have targeted urban areas (EFNEP, Urban 4-H, etc.)
- Most taxpayers and most consumers live in urban areas
- Many value-added agriculture enterprises are located in urban areas
- There are 22 million farm and farm related jobs, 16 million are located in metropolitan areas.
- 25 % of gross farm sales come from urban areas
- Most political leaders live and work in urban areas
- Most agriculture commodity/agency heads live and work in urban areas.
- We need to focus more on forks than fields
- Urban residents have significant unmet needs for which Extension has relevant, research-based programs and education

The PODC's intention is to disseminate this report to Extension professionals.

The work group developed this document to be used as a tool to provide information for Extension educators in agriculture, but not limited to agriculture. Agriculture bridges 4H and Family and Consumer Sciences to find definition to the urban and rural interface, identify strengths and positive outcomes in some existing programs, and illustrates the many connections between the rural and urban interdependencies to either justify, enhance or expand their agricultural programs in an urbanizing county, state or region of the country. The resources and information provided in this report may be helpful when working with stakeholders, agribusiness, community leaders and others in the development of work plans, and in other ways where a resource for support and program justification is needed. This report is a complement to the 1999 National Profile of Cooperative Extension Urban programs developed by James Reaves, Extension Fellow, USDA Economic and Community Systems, which details Extension's urban programs in various states.

James Reaves' report, titled "Making a Difference Through Urban Programs", was the product of a USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) fellows Program in August 1999. This report represents several initiatives/efforts to examine urban program successes nationwide and to gather related information and ideas for urban Extension. This report is available by contacting their website: mdorsey@reeusda.gov or writing to USDA Economic and Community Systems, Room 3909, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W. Washington, DC 20250-2220.

Background and Situation Statement

The mission of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service is to achieve significant and equitable improvements in domestic and global economic, environmental, and social conditions by advancing creative and integrated research, education, and extension programs in food, agricultural and related sciences in partnership with both the public and private sectors.

County and state legislators, university administrators and even some long-time supportive clientele in various regions of the country ask serious questions regarding Cooperative Extension's involvement in conducting

agricultural programs in urbanizing states. Many supporters interpret any type of Extension agricultural program in an urbanized area as a major diversion from the original intent of Cooperative Extension as outlined in the Smith-Lever Act. This is very unfortunate. Much of our society does not know or understand the source of their food and fiber products, the marketing, costs and labor involved. The once well-known connection between the farm and the table has eroded to the point that traditional support for agriculture by urban and suburban people is weak. The same traditional-minded people do not consider the many very successful and visible Extension programs for home/consumer horticulture, the federal urban gardening program, commercial horticulture and small-scale agriculture production as being a part of agriculture.

According to James Reaves, “Most people think of rural America when you say the words ‘Agriculture Extension.’ The truth is that extension has been providing educational programs to urban America for many years. The Cooperative Extension system is a dynamic, ever-changing organization pledged to meeting the nation’s needs for research-based knowledge, and educational programs that will enable people to make practical decisions to improve their lives. To accomplish its vital mission, the Cooperative Extension system is constantly changing to meet the shifting needs and priorities of the people it serves.”

The traditional rural agricultural scene is rapidly changing in many regions of the country as farms are sold and the land developed. However, in spite of the development of prime agriculture land, many new types of smaller scale, yet high profit, specialty crops, organic producers, viticulture and related agricultural enterprises have appeared. In these developing regions, the trend is towards smaller-scale, often part-time business, of a niche market catering directly to the increased urban population. These include diverse operations such as direct marketing of herbs, aquaculture (fish and shrimp farming), produce, cut flowers, landscape plants, turf production, pleasure horses, agro-tourism and others.

Based on their numbers, small, part-time farmers, those with gross incomes of less than \$50,000, comprise 74 percent of the 1,911,859 farms in the United States according to the 1997 U.S. Census of agriculture. Extension’s future existence could very well depend on its success at assisting small farms to become profitable as the number of traditional farms declines. Small farms represent a real opportunity for agriculture to make

economic inroads into new, diverse markets. Consumers in today's marketplace are looking for diversity in the products they purchase, and with their strong purchasing power, can attract producers interested in supplying the unique items they seek.

These diverse operations reflect a rapidly growing trend of marketed products that contribute to the local, state, and national economy and have environmental impacts as well. This clientele want access to research-based information and seek Cooperative Extension's help. Extension agriculture programs already serve many of these new enterprises successfully. ***

From its very beginning, Cooperative Extension was meant to promote change and to keep pace with the needs of people in all program areas. Therefore, it is appropriate and necessary that Extension programs continue to evolve and work with the many changes in agriculture. This expanded program direction is in addition to, but not in place of, education and research-based information for traditional agricultural clientele. It is noted that in many situations it is the traditional agricultural producers who have diversified into non-traditional pursuits and sought help from Extension with their new endeavors.

Agriculture's Image

There is a growing problem with the image of agriculture as perceived by the general public in our country. The problem is due in part to the continued urbanization and the decreased presence of farms in our communities. Many of our nation's consumers and youth do not truly realize or even appreciate the vital connection between agriculture (food and fiber producers) and their own daily lives. The concept of society benefiting and depending on agriculture has greatly diminished over the past several years.

Another important part of this problem is the increased 'urbanization' of new local and national elected officials. Because of redistricting and changes in congressional lines, many legislators from urban areas come with little experience dealing with agriculture and their needs, as did their predecessors. Their unfamiliarity with agriculture can be an unintentional threat to all types of agriculture. Elected officials need to be kept informed on a regular basis regarding agriculture so they can better understand it.

Benefits: Cooperative Extension and the community benefit from the presence of agricultural programs in urban areas. One of those benefits is future funding. The presence of agriculture programs in urban areas helps to create a solid base of support for both Cooperative Extension and

Resources

Many state Cooperative Extension systems have successfully initiated and maintained innovative programs in states experiencing a growth in diverse agriculture in addition to its traditional programs. These diverse programs include urban horticulture, small-scale farming, commercial horticulture, master gardening, agricultural awareness and other innovative programs. Program details can be received by contacting the following:

A partial list of Internet sites focusing on Extension and Urban Agriculture

USDA <http://www.reeusda.gov/1700/programs/programs.htm>
(alphabetical listing by program title, listing by base program and/or base initiatives)

SEVERAL STATES LIST COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WEB SITES AROUND THE COUNTRY

<http://www.colostate.edu/Depts/CoopExt/LINKS/linkexte.html>
http://ceinfo.unh.edu/state_sites.html
<http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/netlinks/ces.html>

INDIVIDUAL EXTENSION WEB SITES AND PROGRAMS (some programs are co-sponsored by non-extension organizations)

Alabama Extension
Ag in the Classroom <http://www.alabamaitc.org>

Arizona Extension
Ag in the Classroom <http://ag.arizona.edu/agliterac>

Arkansas Extension
Pick-up Arkansas <http://www.uaex.edu/natural/Pick-up/PUA.htm>

California Extension
Master Gardeners <http://cedar.ca.gov/employment/uc-ext.html> (list of eb sites for CA ext.)
Common Ground Garden Program <http://cmgn.ucdavis.edu/> (various programs in each county)
<http://celosangeles.ucdavis.edu/garden/>

Gardening Angels program	http://celosangeles.ucdavis.edu/garden/
Community Gardens	http://celosangeles.ucdavis.edu/garden/
Master composting program	http://commserv.ucdavis.edu/ceplacer/
Colorado Extension	http://www.colostate.edu/Depts/CoopExt/
Field Extension Web sites	http://www.colostate.edu/Depts/CoopExt/LINKS/linkfiel.html
Young Entrepreneur Gardening	http://www.agcom.purdue.edu/AgCom/cgi-bin/us98impct-qry.cgi
Connecticut Extension	http://www.canr.uconn.edu/ces
Community horticulture	http://www.canr.uconn.edu/impact/ces.pdf
Urban tree program	http://www.canr.uconn.edu/impact/ces.pdf
Delaware Extension	
Master Gardeners	http://bluehen.ags.udel.edu/deces/ncc/mg.html
Environmental Education	http://bluehen.ags.udel.edu/deces/ncc/mg-school.html
Brookmont Farms Community	http://bluehen.ags.udel.edu/deces/ncc/comm-strength.html#brookmont
District of Columbia	
Florida Extension	http://www.ifas.ufl.edu/www/extension/index.htm
Master Gardeners	http://hort.ufl.edu/mg/
Yards & neighborhoods program	http://hort.ufl.edu/fyn/
Environmental Landscape Mgmt program	
Community Gardening	
Georgia Extension	http://www.ces.uga.edu/
Master Gardeners	http://gardening.about.com/homegarden/gardening/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http://www.ces.uga.edu./Agriculture/horticulture/Master%2520Gardener/home.html
Environmental Ed. Prog.	http://www.agcom.purdue.edu/AgCom/cgi-bin/us98impct-qry.cgi
Atlanta Urban Gardening Program	http://www.reeusda.gov/ecs/urban/urbanprg.htm
Idaho Extension	http://www.uidaho.edu/ag/extension/
Master Gardeners	http://www.uidaho.edu/ag/mastergarden/main/main.html
AG in the classroom	http://aee.ag.uidaho.edu/aitc/
Learn to Conserve	http://www.uidaho.edu/ag/extension/
Youth Display Garden	http://www.uidaho.edu/ag/extension/
Illinois Extension	http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/programs/programs1.html
SOUL: Save Our Urban Land	http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/programs/soul.html
Community gardens	http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/programs/sucasa.html
	http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/programs/dscigarden.html
Master Gardeners	http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/programs/mg.html
AG in the classroom	http://www.agintheclassroom.org/
Prison Garden	
Indiana Extension	http://www.ces.purdue.edu/
AG in the classroom	http://www.indag.org/county.html
Urban programs resource network	http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/hort/index.html (web page covering variety of topics)

Iowa Extension
Teacher's Academy on
Agricultural Awareness
AG in the classroom
Neighborhood Outreach Park Project

<http://www.exnet.iastate.edu/>
<http://www.agcom.purdue.edu/AgCom/cgi-bin/us98impct-qry.cg>
<http://www.agaware.iastate.edu/>
<http://dbs.extension.iastate.edu/calendar/ShowEventDetail.asp?programID=23685&sessionID=35503>

Kansas Extension
AG in the classroom
Urban & Community Forestry
Wildlife awareness and damage control
Turf and home landscaping
Home gardening
Urban forestry

<http://www.ksagclassroom.org/>
<http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/FORST2/1797.pdf>
http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/dp_prev/1999/99NREM/GECONrem.htm

Kentucky
AG in the classroom
AgrAbility Program

<http://www.ca.uky.edu/coopext/>
<http://www.kyfb.com:80/aged.htm>
<http://www.uky.edu/Agriculture/AgPrograms/AgrAbility/index2.html>

Louisiana
AG in the classroom

<http://www.agctr.lsu.edu/lces.html>
http://www.lfbf.org/aitc_home.htm

Maine
AG in the classroom
Master Gardeners

<http://www.bairnet.org/organizations/agclass/homepage.htm>
<http://www.ume.maine.edu/MGMAINE/welcome.htm>

Maryland
AG in the classroom

<http://www.agnr.umd.edu/CES/>
<http://www.mda.state.md.us/maef/default.htm>

Massachusetts
AG in the classroom
The Earth Connection

<http://www.aginclassroom.org/>
<http://www.umass.edu/umext/annual98/nrec.html>

Michigan
AG in the classroom
Master Gardener
United Growth for Kent Co.

<http://www.msue.msu.edu/>
<http://www.mda.state.mn.us/maitc/>
<http://www.msue.msu.edu/mastergardener/>
<http://www.msue.msu.edu/unitedgrowth/>

Minnesota
AG in the classroom
Master Gardener

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/>
<http://www.hort.agri.umn.edu/MG/mastgard.htm>

Mississippi
School Days on the Farm
AG in the classroom

<http://www.agcom.purdue.edu/AgCom/cgi-bin/us98impct-qry.cg>
<http://www.msfb.com/aginthe.htm>

Medallion program http://ext.msstate.edu:80/srdc/plcsite/plc/98rep_directors.htm

Missouri

AG in the classroom

Montana

AG in the classroom

Nebraska

AG in the classroom

<http://www.fb.com/nefb/ag-ed/ag-ed.html>

Nevada

AG in the classroom

<http://pubpages.unh.edu/%7Epcj/aitc.html>

New Hampshire

AG in the classroom

<http://pubpages.unh.edu/%7Epcj/aitc.html>

New Jersey

AG in the classroom

<http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/agsociety/classroom.htm>

New Mexico

AG in the classroom

New York

AG in the classroom

<http://ed.cornell.edu/education/programs/AITC/Default.asp>

New Farmers/New Markets, New York City

Taqwa Community Farm

North Carolina

AG in the classroom

North Dakota

AG in the classroom

Ohio

AG in the classroom

Oklahoma

AG in the classroom

<http://www.clover.okstate.edu/fourh/aitc/>

<http://www.reeusda.gov/ecs/urban/urbanprg.htm#agriculture>

Oregon

AG in the classroom

Pennsylvania

AG in the classroom

<http://www.cas.psu.edu/docs/CASPROF/agclassroom/agclassroom.html>

Community Gardens

<http://cityfarmer.org/Phillyurbag9.html#Philly>

South Carolina

AG in the classroom

South Dakota

AG in the classroom <http://www.sdaclassroom.org/>

Tennessee

AG in the classroom <http://www.tnfb.com/specialprograms/agclass.htm>

Community Gardens <http://www.tnstate.edu/cep/overview.htm>

Texas

AG in the classroom <http://www.txfb.org/educate/aitc.htm>

Utah

AG in the classroom <http://www.ext.usu.edu/aitc/>

Vermont

AG in the classroom <http://www.state.vt.us/agric/AITC/>

Virginia

AG in the classroom

Washington

AG in the classroom <http://www.eburg.com/~waic>

West Virginia

AG in the classroom <http://www.wvu.edu/~exten/depts/co/berkeley/aitc/wvaitc.htm>

Wisconsin

AG in the classroom <http://www.wfbf.com/classroom>

Wyoming

AG in the classroom <http://www.wyoagcenter.com/waic/classroom.html>

The AgrAbility Program

The AgrAbility Program is a consumer-driven USDA-funded program that provides education, assistance, and support to farmers and ranchers with disabilities. Through the combined effort of the Cooperative Extension System and nonprofit disability organizations, AgrAbility helps thousands of individuals overcome the barriers to continuing their chosen professions in agriculture. The activities of the AgrAbility Program demonstrate the ability of Extension to respond to local needs and make a difference through collaborative partnerships.

Home*A*Syst

In every home--large or small, new or old, city or country--there are potential risks to your family's health and the environment. Home*A*Syst helps you identify these risks and take action.