



**2020-2021 Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP)  
Action Plan Overview**

**Chair Christopher B. Watkins, Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension**

*My vision as Chair of the [Board on Agriculture Assembly Cooperative Extension Section](#) and ECOP is to ensure that the [ECOP Strategic Directions](#) is a living document. The [Strategic Directions document](#) will guide ECOP to enhance its relevance to the [Members of the Section](#) and provide outcomes for the Cooperative Extension System, advancing delivery evidence-based education to all.*

ECOP's 2020-2023 Strategic Directions are:

- 1) Increase visibility and recognition of the Cooperative Extension System as a provider of evidence-based education and services and as a valuable partner to federal and national non-federal entities through improved communications of program impacts and successes.
- 2) Support the professional success of Extension leadership through tailored professional development opportunities including training, webinars, in person meetings, networking opportunities and more.
- 3) Expand federal and non-federal resources available to Extension.
- 4) Identify ongoing and emerging CES priorities and national issues and provide mechanisms for collective action.

For 2020-2021, these Strategic Directions will be advanced through the following Action Plan.

**EMPHASIS AREAS**

*Increase visibility and recognition of the Cooperative Extension System as a provider of evidence-based education and services and as a valuable partner to federal and national non-federal entities through improved communications of program impacts and successes.*

1. Increase engagement with under-represented, marginalized, and non-traditional audiences across the nation.
2. Increase the impact of the Extension System by strengthening the role of [Urban Extension](#).
3. Improve communication of relevance and impact of Cooperative Extension to NIFA, USDA, and aligned national advocacy groups in support of Extension funding and programmatic support.
4. Increase knowledge and value of the Cooperative Extension System amongst staffers and members in Congressional committee and home offices.
5. Capture opportunities for collaboration and elevate the importance of Extension in LGU research enterprises by maintaining strong working relationships with ESCOP and appropriate ECOP committees.

6. Increase opportunities for student engagement with the Extension Educators/Agents.

***Support the professional success of Extension leadership through tailored professional development opportunities including training, webinars, in person meetings, networking opportunities and more.***

1. Provide opportunities for Extension Directors and Administrators to improve personal, organizational and System leadership skills. This includes but is not limited to, the annual conference (NEDA) and monthly Next Generation Extension -- Learning for Leaders webinar series.
2. Continue to develop and improve upon the on-boarding program for new Extension Directors and Administrators to inform about the role of ECOP and other groups under APLU.
3. Administer the National Cooperative Extension Awards found at [www.aplu.org/CESawards](http://www.aplu.org/CESawards).

***Expand federal and non-federal resources available to Extension.***

1. Work to maintain and increase NIFA capacity funding (Smith-Lever and 1890s Extension) via year-round advocacy strategies.
2. Support NIFA's continued efforts to build opportunities for Extension programming within AFRI-funded projects, either as stand-alone or integrated competitive grant programs.
3. Strengthen and expand partnerships with non-NIFA federal entities and private funding entities by demonstrating Extension's value to them on issues of common interest, such as nutrition, health and wellness, positive youth development, climate change, water and food security, community resource and economic development, urban agriculture, and workforce development. Explore potential partnerships with agencies such as NRCS, NSF, and the Departments of Health & Human Services.

***Identify ongoing and emerging CES priorities and national issues and provide mechanisms for collective action.***

1. Provide a structure and support for deliberative, forward-looking, result-oriented actions from ECOP committees.
2. Work with ECOP committees to ensure that the ways the System addresses nationally relevant issues including Agritourism, Broadband/Infrastructure, Community Health Systems and Consumer Literacy, are centered in principles of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
3. Ask each ECOP committee to conduct a self-review to assess effectiveness and identify opportunities to improve ECOP's ability to serve its members.