



Emphasis Areas and Ongoing Priorities for the Cooperative Extension Section Mark Latimore, 2020 Chair

The Cooperative Extension Section (CES) is led by the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP), a 15-member board representing the five Cooperative Extension regions. ECOP's role is to identify and implement member-driven opportunities designed to enhance resources, relationships, and recognition for Cooperative Extension nationally. Per ECOP's Operating Guidelines¹ ECOP addresses four core themes.

- 1) Build partnerships and acquire resources
- 2) Increase strategic marketing and communications
- 3) Enhance leadership and professional development
- 4) Strengthen organizational functioning

For 2020, these core themes are translated to the following emphasis areas and supporting work items.

EMPHASIS AREAS

Increase Resources for the Cooperative Extension System

1. Work to increase NIFA capacity funding (Smith-Lever and 1890s Extension) by building and implementing year-round advocacy strategies.
2. Support extension leaders and advocates to carry the extension message to Congress and state leaders to increase funding and understanding of extension's value. Involve Public Issues Leadership Development (PILD) program, the ECOP 4-H leadership committee, the BLC's 4-H Advocacy Sub-Committee, and appropriate advocates.
3. Explore and implement models for private funding for national extension initiatives as a complement to public funding.
4. Support new and expanded partnerships and funding pathways with Non-NIFA federal entities by demonstrating Extension's value to them on issues of interest. Possible federal partners include NRCS, NSF, the Departments of Health & Human Services, and others. Issues include
 - Nutrition, health and wellness
 - Positive youth development
 - Water
 - Food production and food security
 - Community development²

Provide Leadership on National Extension Issues & Policies

1. Provide input to address the implementation of Farm Bill programs including but not limited to
 - SNAP-Ed/EFNEP
 - 1890s - change carryover provision language of 1444 to be consistent with the Smith-Lever carryover provision
 - NRCS and Cooperative Extension relative to conservation education
 - Engagement in the Farmer Rancher Stress Assistance Network and other similar initiatives.
2. Work with NIFA to address system-wide issues including but not limited to

¹ https://www.aplu.org/members/commissions/food-environment-and-renewable-resources/CFERR_Library/ecop-operating-guidelines/file

² Issue bullets established through a section wide polling process in 2018.

- Seek a streamlined, impactful reporting framework that aligns cooperative extension and NIFA needs and facilitates the use of meaningful metrics that will help members tell the state, regional, and national extension story.
 - Explore and provide input to NIFA on priorities for AFRI-funded Extension projects as well as Extension Director/Administrator and extension professionals' participation on these review panels.
 - Work with NIFA leadership to strengthen state liaison roles.
3. Enhance leadership for and increase participation in 4-H positive youth development through collaboration among Extension Directors/Administrators, NIFA 4-H and National 4-H Council through the work of the ECOP 4-H Leadership Committee.

Strengthen partnerships and visibility

1. Continually improve ECOPs working relationships and communication with NIFA leadership.
2. Provide leadership to the CMCs effort to increase national knowledge and valuation of the extension system. (ECOP Chair/Chair Elect)
3. Improve the system's ability to show relevance and impact including considering the value of and strengthening participation in www.landgrantimpacts.org.
4. Maintain a strong working relationship with ESCOP and appropriate ECOP committees to capture opportunities for collaboration and elevate the importance of extension in LGU research enterprises.
5. Expand strategic alliances with national partners (e.g. NASDA, NC-FAR, NACo, SoAR, CFARE, ESCOP, APLU BAA, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine and others) to increase the knowledge of the value of investment in Cooperative Extension, to integrate Extension broader into advocacy strategies, to increase visibility and knowledge of the extension system, and to better impact national conversations of importance.
6. Work with the eXtension Foundation Board of Directors to ensure that eXtension actively contributes to the capacity of Extension professionals to serve constituents and advances extension education.

Enhance and provide professional development

1. Provide opportunities for directors/administrators to improve personal, organizational and system leadership skills including an annual conference (NEDA) and monthly Next Generation Extension -- Learning for Leaders webinar series.
2. Administer the national Excellence in Extension and Diversity Awards.
3. Partner with JCEP to strengthen national leadership of Extension's professional associations.

Support organizational functioning

1. Undertake a strategic planning process with the goal of improving ECOP's ability to serve members, align budget and organizational priorities, provide national leadership, and meet evolving needs of the cooperative extension system.
2. Provide a structure for and support deliberative, forward-looking, result-oriented actions from ECOP committees. As needed, review the effectiveness of ECOP's committee structure and consider alternatives.
3. On-board a new Executive Director for the Cooperative Extension System and other national staff as needed.