



## Emphasis Areas and Ongoing Priorities for the Cooperative Extension Section

2019 Chair Edwin J. Jones, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

### ***Overall Theme: Science-informed decisions and policy***

The Cooperative Extension Section (CES) is led by 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. ECOP's work addresses four core themes:

- 1) building partnerships and acquiring resources,
- 2) increasing strategic marketing and communications,
- 3) enhancing leadership and professional development,
- 4) strengthening organizational functioning.

ECOP formed the Health Innovation Task Force following the white paper recommendations on innovation with a pilot project directed by Michelle Rodgers within the Well Connected Communities project.

## EMPHASIS AREAS

**Capacity Funding** (ECOP Budget & Legislative Committee-BLC Chair/ECOP Executive Committee) –

- Build on advocacy strategies to increase federal capacity funding (Smith-Lever and 1890s Extension)

Partnered with the Riley Memorial Foundation, Purdue University, Non-Land-Grant Colleges of Agriculture, and the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition in the production of the *Cooperative Extension and Public Outreach: Advancing Agriculture and Improving Lives*. Presented the report at annual Riley Memorial Board Meeting.

Supported BAA's FY20 unified ask request and engaged with the proposed America Grows Act by Sen. Durbin (Illinois).

- Promote and expand participation in the Public Issues Leadership Development (PILD) program as a major Extension advocacy tool.

BLC conducted a session for Extension Administrators and Directors on budget advocacy including overview of BLC, budget legislation overview by Cornerstone and examples of Administrator/Director advocacy strategies.

- Advocacy messaging will be focused on Cooperative Extension's value relative to:
  - **Science in action** – continue to leverage the research and engagement initiatives of Land-grant universities.
  - **Proactive, flexible and collaborative action** on disasters, threats, emerging opportunities, etc.

Partnered with the APLU Commission on Food, Environment and Renewable Resources (CFERR)'s Board on Oceans, Atmosphere and Climate on an opportunity brought to APLU by Sen. Whitehouse (Rhode Island). The initial conversations resulted in a collaborative effort with eXtension that has extended into 2020.

- **Extension's national** reach with the opportunity for meaningful local impact.
- **Opportunities to expand high impact programs** such as 4-H youth development or water or health.
- Mobilized support with the ECOP Budget and Legislative Committee (BLC) in partnership with National 4-H Council on expanding resources in the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) program.
- **Providing value for federal partners** (as the outreach/engagement arm of the federal government).

- Frequently shared announcements from USDA's Farm Service Agency and the National Agriculture Statistics Service in the *ECOP Monday Minute*.

**Private Resource Mobilization/Extension Resource and Partnership Development** – Establish and implement a model for private funding of national initiatives as a complement to public funding for Extension.

- Changing our World Foundation research – water, health and wellness, and community development; conducted and shared with EDA Team. Resulted in report that was submitted to ECOP distributed to the 76, 1862 and 1890 land-grant institutions.
- Sent letter to Dr. Martha Bernadett, Molina Foundation, in appreciation of her 2018 \$20,000 gift to 4-H Council which enable the hiring of Changing our World. The final report from the ERPD committee was included with that letter.
- Extension Health Director – partnered with the 4-H Council in finalizing Council's conversation with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation on a two-year grant to fund the newly created Extension Health Director position at APLU under ECOP to coordinate and lead a national health and wellness initiative. Roger Rennekamp was named to that position, which started on November 1.

**Collaboration with Federal Entities** (ECOP Chair/Chair-elects) – Focus on clarifying roles for Cooperative Extension with federal agencies. Specific examples include NRCS, NSF – Broader Impacts, the Departments of Health & Human Services (CDC, FDA/FSMA) and Housing and Urban Development as well as the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research. Frame these conversations around emerging opportunities in the following areas:

- Nutrition, health and wellness
- Positive youth development
- Water
- Food production and food security
- Community development

Sponsored and funded leadership by the North Central Regional Rural Development Center to address the opioid epidemic by curating resource materials, building multistate teams on common issues and partnering with USDA NIFA in grants funded by the Rural Health and Safety Education Program. Go to <https://opioidresponse.extension.org> for more information.

ECOP provided funding for the National Behavioral Health Extension Network located at Iowa State University to follow up on the opioid response work. The final report is due by August 31, 2020.

Priority outcomes for these conversations include collaboration opportunities as well as programmatic and/or capacity funding.

Co-sponsored 2019 FFAR Foundation Foster Our Future event on 2/5/2019. With eXtension Foundation. <https://foundationfar.org/2019/02/06/ffar-highlights-food-and-agriculture-innovation-at-inaugural-foster-our-future-event/>

**Farm Bill Initiatives** (BLC Chair/ECOP Representative to the BAA Committee on Legislation and Policy-CLP/ECOP Executive Committee) – Engage appropriate parties to address:

- SNAP-Ed/EFNEP:
  - Present a coherent argument to grow funding for SNAP-Ed and EFNEP.
  - Funding directed to LGU-based Cooperative Extension.
  - Seek increases to support 1890's and 1994's, as well as 1862s.
- Facilitated a conversation between SNAP-Ed PDT leadership and the American Society for Nutrition.

- 1890s - change carryover provision language of 1444 to be consistent with the Smith-Lever carryover provision.
- Clarify role of NRCS and Cooperative Extension relative to conservation education.
- Supported efforts by Jeff Jacobsen ESCOP North Central Region ED and Robin Shepard in their follow up work with NRCS.
- Extension Farm Bill training through Farm Service Agency
- Contributed to BAA effort regarding matching provisions of the Specialty Crops Research Initiative.
- Participated in initial CLP meeting on the 2023 Farm Bill.

**Strengthen our Working Relationship with NIFA** (ECOP Chair/Chair-elects/Past-chair) Seek a streamlined, impactful reporting framework that aligns state and NIFA needs.

- Strengthen collaborative relationships with NIFA leadership and NPLs with monthly on-site conversations and seminars (Extension Directors/Administrators invited).
- Explore and provide input on NPL priorities for AFRI-funded Extension projects as well as Extension Director/Administrator participation on these review panels.
- Work with NIFA leadership to strengthen state liaison roles.
- ECOP/ESCOP Chairs met with NIFA leadership and the newly established National Science Liaisons during 2019.
- Worked with NIFA on transitioning support for the National Health Outreach Conference (NHOC) from NIFA to ECOP. The newly developed Extension Health Director has engaged previous NHOC committee members on initial discussions.
- Worked with POW/REEport leadership to form an Extension working group of Administrators/Directors and Business officers to provide feedback on the revamped system being employed by NIFA.

### **Integration With Key Partners**

- Consider a reciprocal liaison relationship with the National Urban Extension Leaders (NUEL) to strengthen our engagement with urban Extension.
- Worked with the Commission on Economic and Community Engagement's Innovation and Economic Prosperity (IEP) program to engage Cooperative Extension to be integrally involved in a campus's IEP application process and engagement following approval.
- Invite our 1994 Tribal College Cooperative Extension Service partners to identify a liaison to ECOP.

## **ONGOING PRIORITIES**

- In collaboration with ESCOP, review the value of the ESS-CES-AHS Communications and Marketing (CMC) Project to Cooperative Extension and identify the most appropriate path forward (ECOP Chair/Chair-elect).
- ECOP discontinued Cooperative Extension Section funding for the ESS-CES-AHS Communications and Marketing contract and entered discussions of a new organization.
- Collaborate with ESCOP to strengthen the Land-grant message of accomplishment and impact. Enhance our visibility by strengthening participation in [www.landgrantimpacts.org](http://www.landgrantimpacts.org). And, work with NIFA to make the database more useful to our federal partner. (ECOP Executive Committee/National Impacts Database Committee)
- Continue a commitment to collaboration with ESCOP and the ESCOP Science and Technical Committee by establishing/maintaining a strong working relationship with ESCOP Chair. (ECOP Chair)

- NIFA funding lines strategic realignment collaboration with ESCOP occurred throughout 2019.
- Planned and implemented a series of Washington, DC meetings in February, March, May and August that involved meetings with USDA REE/NIFA, federal agencies, and agriculture/professional society organizations.
- Planned and conducted a Joint CES-ESS meeting in September 2019.
- Expand strategic alliances that benefit Cooperative Extension with national partners (e.g. NASDA, NC-FAR, NACo, SoAR, CFARE, ESCOP, APLU BAA, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine and others).
- Co-sponsored NC-FAR Hill Seminar series and the presentation by Bob Craven, University of Minnesota in June 2019 on Extension & Partner Response to Farm Financial Situation and Mental Health Stress. [https://www.ncfar.org/Hill\\_Seminar\\_Series\\_2019.asp](https://www.ncfar.org/Hill_Seminar_Series_2019.asp)
- Co-sponsored APLU annual meeting sessions with Urban Serving Universities, the Commission on Economic and Community Engagement, the Council on Research, and the Commission on Access, Diversity, and Excellence.
- Identify ways to support the Issues, Innovation and Impact programs led by eXtension. (ECOP Executive and Program Committees).
- Through the eXtension Foundation Board of Directors, assure that eXtension is an active contributor to the advancement of Extension education across the nation.
- Enhance leadership for and increase participation in 4-H positive youth development through collaboration among Extension Directors/Administrators, NIFA 4-H Headquarters and National 4-H Council through the work of the ECOP 4-H Leadership Committee.
  - Continued discussions on the 4-H name and emblem.
  - Developed relationship with the U.S. Soccer Foundation, 4-H Council, and SNAP-Ed state programs to develop a youth soccer team nutrition program pilot project.
  - Supported 4-H Council efforts to work with Cornerstone and USDA-NIFA in assisting the U.S. House of Representative's leadership in the formation of a 4-H caucus.

### **Specific Initiatives or Efforts Designed to Strengthen Cooperative Extension And ECOP's Operations and Value**

- On-board a new Executive Director for the Cooperative Extension System.
  - Delayed until 2020; search process initiated in late 2019.
- Establish Futuring of Extension, by using a systematic process to be ready for the future.
  - Engaged the National Academy's Board on Agriculture and Natural Resources (BANR) on a scoping study on the future of Extension. After several BANR conversations and a review of the proposal by ECOP, it was decided to not continue with the proposal.
- Demonstrate ECOP's value to the members of the Cooperative Extension Section.
- Strengthen ECOP functions by moving from a reporting model to a deliberative, forward-looking, action-oriented framework. Similarly, review the effectiveness of ECOP's committee structure and consider alternatives.
  - Initiated development of Strategic Directions 2020-23 to provide budget and national program guidance over next 4 years with each ECOP Chair providing updates that provide his/her perspective on actions to carry out strategic initiatives.
- Provide opportunities for directors/administrators to improve personal, organizational and system leadership skills, including an annual conference (NEDA) and a monthly Next Generation Extension – Learning for Leaders webinar series.
  - Conducted 7 Learning for Leaders events.
  - NEDA conference conducted in September 2019 as part of joint CES/ESS meetings. Agenda included design thinking capacity building, exploring evolving CES/ESS-NIFA partnership, building client loyalty, and exploring personnel best management practices.
- Implement national Excellence in Extension and Diversity Awards.
- Partner with JCEP to strengthen national leadership of Extension's professional associations.