

SRPLN FCS State Report 2011

Reporting Institution: 1862 1890 (check one)

Name of Institution: Puerto Rico Agricultural Extension Service

Budget Status:

FCS's budget situation reflects the economic environment that prevails at the global level. The programmatic area fiscal resources have shrunk. Both federal and state fund allocations have slightly increased. But, the growth trend has been reduced and projections are towards an absolute decrease.

How is the Institution Addressing the Situation?

Budget adjustments have been made mainly by personnel attrition and operational costs reduction through efficient management. The use of new communication and information technologies has been increased as a cost efficient resource. Local offices in which personnel have resigned or retired have been physically relocated to "extended local offices" and staff responsibilities have been distributed to provide the expected level of services with fewer staff and faculty members.

Staffing Update (field and state office):

New recruitments for the general CFS program have been very difficult due to the fiscal situation mentioned above. For several years, since 1999, the number of subject matter specialist has been in a constant decrease. Even with the monetary constraints, three new specialists will be recruited before the closing of FY 2010-2011. Subject matter areas these specialist will be responsible for area: nutrition, health and safety, family resources management.

Top 3 Program Highlights of Current Year: (program, collaborators, and impacts):

FCS program continues its efforts in the general educational areas, EFNEP, Food Safety Certification program. The current work plan emphasizes National and State initiatives and responds to the expressed needs of our clientele.

This year most important (2010-2011) highlights are:

1. All food safety instructors have been re-certified as educators in the ServSafe course. All FCS faculty was certified in the Food Safety program. PRAES is the main institution in certifying food establishment managers in Puerto Rico. It also has the highest approval ratio of all certification providers. Food Safety program area has started an educational effort on in-home food canning. After many years in planning, curriculum has been implemented and clientele educational activities have

begun. In-home food canning has become of great interest to clients as a response to the economic conditions and the perceived and real threats to food supplies.

2. All FCS staff was trained in Children Obesity Prevention Curriculum. The curriculum is implemented in all local PRAES offices and at the State level. This is in response to the existing obesity problem and NIFA national initiatives. Also, physical activity is being integrated to all educational endeavors in nutrition education.
3. State Plan of Work has been revised as to emphasize clientele education and behavioral changes to prevent family violence and child abuse and neglect. Violence as its consequences is in an increasing trend in Puerto Rico. Significant activities have been two educational campaigns on Child Abuse Prevention and Family Values Strengthening. This has had a broad impact since it has established working coalitions with state and local government agencies and non-government institutions as well as improved family relations and parenting skills on the clientele. In addition the Family Relations and Child development subject matter area refocused into the concerns of the demographic changes occurring as baby boomers generation ages and the generational pyramid inverts. All FCS staff was trained in Aging Aspects curriculum and is currently implemented at the local level.

New or Unique Collaborations and/or Funding Sources:

As mentioned above, funding sources have been reduced and little nonfederal or state government funds have been allocated to PRAES.

But, as funds availability decreases, efforts to improve efficiency and effectiveness have resulted in new collaborations. PRAES's FCS program area has established strengthened or renewed collaborations with:

1. UPR-Rio Piedras' Campus Family Ecology and Nutrition School.
2. UPR Medical Sciences Campus' Public Health Education Department
3. State Departments of Health, Family Affairs, Education, Recreation and Sports, and Housing.
4. United Funds Foundation and other non-profit institutions.
5. FCS's related professional associations and boards.
6. Faith based groups
7. Local Municipalities Government.