

## **Staffing Considerations for Extension**

### **Middle Management Committee Southern Region – Program Leadership Network November, 2010**

In recent years, many state Extension organizations have gone through “restructuring” exercises due to budget deficits. Although the final decisions are the responsibility of the state Extension directors, input into this almost unprecedented process from different perspectives is extremely valuable. In addition, the benefits of proactively evaluating the various components of an effective Extension organization in changing times are innumerable. Due to the cyclic nature of public funding, it is helpful to set priorities based on what we think our organizations should look like in the future, but perhaps manage for the lean times. Therefore, when funds are relatively more available, we can invest in resources that we know will be eventually reduced, but the burden of these losses will be less painful.

The Middle Management Committee of the Southern Region Program Leadership Network (SR-PLN) decided to compile some insights that would be useful to future discussions and decision-making on this topic. The Middle Managers (i.e., District Extension Directors) decided to focus much of their discussion time on staffing models for Extension organizations during the August 2010 meeting held in Memphis, TN. To facilitate this discussion, a survey was prepared and sent by email to the SR-PLN Middle Management list serve. Surveys were also sent to select district directors in the North-Central and West Regions.

### **Results**

We received 18 responses (16 from 1862s and two from 1890s). Fifteen of these were from the Southern Region, two (Iowa State and Ohio State) were from the North-Central Region, and Oregon State is in the Western Region. Some responses were not complete. This report gives only a snap-shot perspective of very dynamic situations in Extension organizations.

#### Directors and Administrators

All 18 institutions had an Extension Director or Administrator, although this position in some cases had another title such as Dean, Associate Dean, etc.

#### Associate and Assistant Directors and Program Coordinators/Leaders

Nine institutions had Associate or Assistant Extension Directors in addition to the Director (Appendix A). Six included Associate Directors and Assistant Directors. The administrative responsibilities of these positions varied from providing leadership to program areas and or County Operations (Appendix B). All institutions had positions that were responsible for providing leadership to program areas; some had the title of Program Team Coordinators, and

others Associate or Assistant Extension Directors. Some had multiple program responsibilities, e.g., ANR&CRD, 4-H&FCS.

Most people in these positions had PhDs (Appendix C). Only Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana State, North Carolina A&T, Oregon State, Tennessee and West Virginia State filled any of these positions with people who have only Masters degrees.

#### District Directors

Fifteen of 18 institutions had some sort of district or regional positions providing leadership to County Educators/Agents (Appendix A). Alabama, South Carolina and West Virginia State had no District Directors (DEDs). Iowa State had 20 District Directors and no County Coordinators/Directors. North Carolina A&T had 3 Program Coordinators and one (1) County Coordinator. Five institutions (IA, LA, OK, TN, and TX) had Program Coordinators in each District. Oklahoma State also incorporated the use of Area Extension Specialists in each district.

Common responsibilities of District Directors were to provide leadership and administration within their respective district. Mississippi State and Louisiana State DEDs were also responsible for administering Experiment Station units (Appendix B).

Three (FL, MS and OH) of the fourteen institutions that had District Directors and provided data required them to have PhD when hired (Appendix C). North Carolina State required that a PhD be obtained within seven years. Kentucky and Georgia required a Masters degree and 5 years of Extension experience.

All DED salaries were paid from state funds (Appendix D). Some also receive administrative stipends, e.g., FL and NC – 15%, MS - \$12,000, and GA – \$10,000.

#### County Directors and Educators/Agents

All institutions except Kentucky, West Virginia State and Iowa State had County Coordinators/Directors (CEDs; Appendix E). Texas A&M had only seven County Coordinators/ Directors, but 254 counties. The County Educators/Agents in these situations reported to the District Director (KY & IA) or Associate Director (WVS). Four institutions (AL, IA, OH and OR) had more Multi-county or Regional Educators/Agents than Educators/Agents with single county responsibilities (130 and 10, 110 and 0, 219 and 0, and 135 and 18 respectively). The vast majority of institutions had fewer Multi-county or Regional Educators/Agents. Texas A&M had the greatest number of County Educators/Agents (561); Kentucky had 400, North Carolina State 364, and Florida 330.

The County Coordinator/ Directors were in charge of providing leadership and administration to their respective counties (Appendix B). Kentucky, which did not have County Coordinators/

Directors, divided administrative responsibilities (e.g., marketing, fiscal, and office staff coordination) among County Educators/Agents.

Of the fourteen institutions that had County Coordinators/ Directors, seven required Masters degrees (Appendix C). Florida and Kentucky required a Master degree plus five years of Extension experience. Ohio State and Texas A&M were the only institutions that required a Masters degree for County or Multi-County Educator/Agent positions. Some required the Educator/Agent to obtain a Masters degree within a few years after hire.

County Coordinator/ Director salaries in most institutions were jointly paid by the state and county (Appendix D). In South Carolina, Louisiana State, Oklahoma State and Oregon State most CEDs were 100% state paid. CEDs in FL, GA, LA, NC, and SC also received administrative stipends. Most Multi-County Educators/Agents in AL, FL and VT/VSU were paid by the state. At Ohio State, which has only Multi-County Educator/Agents, they were jointly paid. Arkansas paid \$60,000 for the first two agents in a county. At Oklahoma State, the state paid for the first two educators, and the county paid about 88% and the state 12% for any more educators hired above the base number.

A good measure of relative Extension accessibility to the public can be seen by comparing the state populations per local educators (Sum of all County and Multi-County Educators/Agents, and County Coordinators/Directors, Appendix E). Kentucky was the most accessible by having only 10,785 state residents per local educator (4,314,113/ 400). Florida was the least accessible with 46,114 residents per educator (18,537,696/ 402).

#### Program Assistants and Support Staff

In nine states (AL, FL, IA, MS, OH, OK, OR, TX and VT/VSU), Program Assistants were paid mostly by the county or federal grants, e.g., FNP (Appendix D). Support Staff in six states (FL, IA, KY, OH, OR and TX) were paid by the county. In AL, AR, LA, SC, VT/VSU, they were paid by the state. Oklahoma State paid for the first secretary and salaries for any additional staff were paid by the county.

#### Fiscal Support for County Operational Expenses

Buildings and utilities were paid by the counties in all states (Appendix F). Computers in eight states (FL, GA, IA, KY, NC, OH, OK and OR) were provided mostly by the counties. Travel for Multi-County Educators/Agents in IA, OH, OR and TX were paid by the counties. Travel for County Educators/Agents in most states were paid by the counties. Professional development expenses in most states were jointly paid. Kentucky allocated \$2,500/annum for professional development for each County Educator/Agent. At WVS and LA, professional development expenses were paid with state and federal grant funds. Printing costs in IA, NC, OH and OK were paid exclusively by the counties, and the state paid in MS. All institutions used grant funds to cover some salaries, equipment, travel, supplies, and computer expenses.

## Discussion

In-depth discussion of the data was conducted during the August, 2010 Middle Management Committee meeting at the SR-PLN held in Memphis, TN. Comments included:

District Directors:

- District Directors are a priority position to keep county funding. If we cut DED positions we could not maintain strong positive relationships with county governments and could lose funding.

District Program Leaders/ Coordinators:

- This role is important for leading programs within a district. They are not seen as supervisor but can help with agent development and motivation. Everyone agreed that these positions provide significant value for making connections between agents and specialists, but many states that utilize them are reducing the number of these resource positions.
- Most organizations start their reorganization by cutting district program faculty. Virginia just cut district positions in each district.
- District program positions are important to support agents in trouble. They can redirect agents and save organization turnover costs.
- Program subject matter expertise comes from state specialist in most states. Some states (OK) use area specialists to supplement state specialists. Some of these answer to the DED while others are accountable to the state program leader.

Specialist issues:

- Need to make them more accountable to agents. Some states ask agents to evaluate specialists.
- Specialists sometimes bypass the county system when client calls them directly.
- Need to have a more defined role for all specialists to train agents.
- The relationship between agents and specialists seems to be getting more cloudy with agents helping specialists with research and specialists going directly to clients.

Discussion - How do you distribute agents?:

- How do you balance the number of agents? TN used a computer program to put counties in groups and then used 20 variables to evaluate if counties were in the correct group.
- Which audience is more important? Do we reduce programming for middle income/non-ag clients? Do we rank programs areas?

Multicounty agent issues

- These positions are politically unattractive to local politicians and local funding.
- Difficult position for agents to be successful because every cooperating county wants 100% of their time.
- More political support for county based system. Less local support for regional agents or multicounty agents.
- Hard for multicounty agents to participate in the local fair, local events, which hurts local support.

- Reduces the “local county team” concept. Less teamwork or programming together. Less supporting each other.
- Windshield time takes away from programming time
- Alabama has been regional for 6 years. Agents answer directly to program leaders. Less team work. More difficult situation for county issues to bubble up in the system.
- One positive outcome is these positions usually result in a more specialized agent working closer to the client.

#### Advisory Committees:

- All states use advisory systems. Some are program area, some are county level, some states use a combination of both.

Paying faculty/staff with county dollars, discussion on pros and cons of county paid employees verses contract with university

- Which is the best way to fund employees?
- Texas collects money from the counties and pays all employees with one check.
- County employees do not always want to take leadership from the state because county ties are much stronger with almost daily contacts.

#### Urban issues:

- Job descriptions in urban areas need to be evaluated.
- We need to focus on funding and impact of urban areas because that is where the majority of state political leaders are located.
- Extension programs in Urban areas are different from rural areas.
- We need to identify what describes an urban county
- We need to be able to deliver to the citizens even though we have less agents
- We need transitional agents that can change with the changing educational needs of the community.
- In urban counties, we need full time administrators. Whatever program area is assigned to the urban coordinator suffers.
- There is no pattern among states as to the balance of state/county funding.
- Some states are trying to get funding from municipal governments in urban areas.
- In urban areas, the role of city government is growing.

Majority of state legislatures start in county government. Strong county relationships lead to strong state relationships.

The MM committee agreed to share these comments with administrators in their state. While the PLC would like a report, the MM committee believes that the most outcome of these discussions was that MM committee members are much more prepared to involve themselves in conversations with administrators in their home states.

## Appendix A.

### Upper Administration Organization

Institut.	1862 1890	Assoc. Ext. Dirs./Ad.	Assist. Ext. Directors	Prog. Team Coords./Leaders	District Directors	Prog. Coord./ Leaders/ per Dist.
AL	62/90	2	6 (1 - 1890)	0	0	0
AR	1862	1	0	3	3	0
FL	1862	1	NA	4	5	0
GA	1862	FCS, CoOps	ANR	4-H	4	ANR, 4-H & FCS x 4
IA	1862	3	1	1	20	3
KY	1862	0	Ag, FCS, 4-H, Co.Ops	FCS	7	0
LA	1862	1	1	2	5	2 (FCS & 4-H)
MS	1862	1	0	4-H, FCS, ANR	4	0
NC	1862	Co Ops 4-H/FCS ANR/CRD	0	0	6	0
NC A&T	1890	1	0	ANR/CRD 4-H/FCS	3 Prog. Coord.	0
OH	1862	0	0	4	3	0
OK	1862	0	0	ANR, CRD, FCS, 4-H	4	2/dist. (FCS & 4-H) <sup>a</sup>
OR	1862	1	0	5	2	0
SC	1862	1	Extension	7 (10%)	0	0
TN	1862	1	2	1	3	2 (ANR & FCS)
TX	1862	3	0	2	12	8
VT/VSU	62/90	4 VT/1 VSU	0	0	4	0
WVS	1890	1	0	4	0	0

#### Appendix A Footnote

a OK also has about 19 Area Extension Specialists; every district has a base of Ag. Econ, An. Sci and Agronomy

**Appendix B.**

**Administrative Responsibilities**

<b>Institut.</b>	<b>Assoc. Directors</b>	<b>Assist. Dir. Opers.</b>	<b>Assist. Dir. Coords./Leaders</b>	<b>District Directors</b>	<b>Prog. Team Coords./Leaders</b>	<b>County Coord./Dir.</b>
<b>AL</b>	assist Dir.	Sup. 67 CECs	Sup. Reg. Ag.	NA	Sup. Reg. Ag. assist AD	<sup>a, b</sup>
<b>AR</b>						
<b>FL</b>	Co. Ops.	NA	NA	Admin & Lead. of Dist.	state program oversight	Co. Adm & Lead. <sup>b</sup>
<b>GA</b>	fiscal, pers.	NA	state ANR oversight	Admin & Lead. of Dist.	state 4-H oversight	Co. Adm & Lead.
<b>IA</b>	Admin., Ext. Prog. Lead.	Coll. Outreach, personnel, prog. Lead.	prog. Lead. & personnel	County Ext. Councils, prog. Awareness	state program oversight	NA
<b>KY</b>	NA	Co Ops	state program oversight	Admin & Lead. of Dist.	state oversight of FCS	NA <sup>c</sup>
<b>LA</b>	Ext. & Res.	Ext. & Res.	state program oversight	Dist & Ex Sta Admin	4-H & FCS	Co Adm & Lead <sup>b, d</sup>
<b>MS</b>	NA	NA	NA	Dist & Ex Sta Admin	state program oversight	Co. Adm & Lead.
<b>NC</b>	Admin	NA	NA	Admin & Lead. of Dist.	NA	Co. Adm & Lead.
<b>NC</b>	Admin	NA	NA	Admin & Lead. of Dist.	NA	Co. Adm & Lead.
<b>OH</b>	NA	NA	NA	Admin & Lead. of Dist.	state program oversight	Co. Adm & Lead.
<b>OK</b>	NA	NA	NA	Admin & Lead. of Dist.	state program oversight	Co. Adm & Lead.
<b>NC A&amp;T</b>	Admin	NA	NA	Coord. Progs.	state program oversight	Co. Adm & Lead.
<b>OR</b>	Assoc. Vice Provost Oper.	NA	NA	Hiring, evals, promotions, personnel	state program oversight	Co. Adm & Lead.
<b>SC</b>	Admin	Co Ops	state program oversight	NA	NA	Co. Adm & Lead.
<b>TN</b>	Admin	state program oversight	state program oversight	Admin & Lead. of Dist.	state program oversight	Co. Adm & Lead.
<b>TX</b>	Co. Ops, & prgs	NA	NA	Admin & Lead. of Dist.	Urban and 4-H	Co. Adm & Lead.
<b>VT/VSU</b>	Admin/Prog. Leadership	NA	NA	Admin & Lead. of Dist.	NA	Co. Adm & Lead.
<b>WVS</b>	Admin	NA	state program oversight	NA	NA	NA

Appendix B Footnotes

- a Administer the operations of the county Extension office, e.g., budget preparation; hire and supervise County funded para-professionals, County Agents and support staff; supervise county faculty; maintain relations with county government and public officials; implement EEO and other ACES and Universities Policy and Procedures.
- b Responsible for individual Extension program in addition to administrative
- c County agents are given admin. responsibilities, e.g., marketing coordinator, fiscal coordinator, and office staff coordinator
- d Some county directors serve in more than one county



**Appendix C.**

**Educational Requirements**

<b>Institut.</b>	Assoc. Director	Assist. Dir. Oper.-	Prog. Team Coords./Leaders	District Directors	County Coord./Dir.	County Agents	Multi-Co. Agents
<b>AL</b>	PhD	MS/PhD	MS/PhD	NA	MS	BS/MS	BS/MS
<b>AR</b>					MS in 5 yrs		
<b>FL</b>	Full Prof.	NA	NA	PhD	MS + 5 yrs	BS/MS	MS
<b>GA</b>	PhD	PhD	MS	MS + 5 yrs	BS/MS	BS/MS	BS/MS
<b>IA</b>	Full Prof.	PhD	PhD	MS/MS	NA	NA	BS/BA
<b>KY</b>	NA	PhD	PhD	MS + 5 yrs	NA	BS	NA
<b>LA</b>	MS	MS	MS	MS	BS	BS	BS
<b>MS</b>	PhD		PhD	PhD	MS in 5 yrs	MS	BS/MS
<b>NC</b>	PhD	PhD	PhD	PhD in 7 yrs	MS	BS	BS
<b>NC A&amp;T</b>	PhD	PhD	MS	MS	NA	BS	BS
<b>OH</b>			PhD	PhD	MS	BS	MS
<b>OK</b>	PhD	PhD	PhD	MS	BS	BS	NA
<b>OR</b>	Full Prof.	NA	MS/PhD	MS/PhD	MS	BS/MS	BS/MS
<b>SC</b>	PhD	PhD	PhD	NA	BS/MS	BS/MS	NA
<b>TN</b>	PhD	PhD	MS	MS	MS	BS	BS
<b>TX</b>	PhD	NA	PhD	MS	MS	MS	MS
<b>VT/VSU</b>	PhD	NA	NA	MS	BS/MS	BS/MS	BS/MS
<b>WVS</b>			MS	NA	NA		BS/MS

**Appendix D.**

**Fiscal Support: Salaries**

<b>Institut.</b>	District Directors	County Coords.	County Agents	Multi-Co. Agents	Prog. Assist.	Support Staff
<b>AL</b>	NA	12 - 40% Co	100% Co, or Grant	100% St and Fed	100% Co or Grant or Fed	100% St
<b>AR</b>	100% St	\$60,000 St for first 2 agents	\$25,000 for each agent above 2	NA	St, Co & Fed	100% St
<b>FL</b>	100% St <sup>b</sup>	60% St, 40% Co <sup>b</sup>	most joint St & Co	most 100% state	100% Co. or Grant or Fed.	100% Co
<b>GA</b>	100% St <sup>c</sup>	St & min \$12k Co <sup>c</sup>	most joint St & Co	joint St & Co	most 50% St & 50% Co	most joint, \$6k min Co.
<b>IA</b>	100% St	NA			100% County	100% County
<b>KY</b>	100% St	NA	<sup>a</sup>	NA	joint	100% Co with St ben.
<b>LA</b>	100% St	state + stipend	60% St, 20% Co, 20% Fed	60% St, 20% Co, 20% Fed	40%St, 20%Co, 40%Fed	40% St, 20% Co, 40% Fed
<b>MS</b>	100% St	70% St, 30% Co	70% St, 30% Co	varies	100% State	70% St, 30% Co
<b>NC</b>	100% St <sup>b</sup>	St and Co varies <sup>b</sup>	St and Co varies	St and Co varies	St and Co varies	St and Co varies
<b>NC A&amp;T</b>	100% St	St and Co varies	St and Co varies	St and Co varies	St and Co varies	St and Co varies
<b>OH</b>	100% St	60% St, 40% Co <sup>d</sup>	60% St, 40% Co <sup>d</sup>	60% St, 40% Co <sup>d</sup>	100% C or Grant (FNP)	100% County
<b>OK</b>	100% St	100% St	St pays for first 2 <sup>e</sup>	NA	100% County	first secretary - State <sup>f</sup>
<b>OR</b>	100% St	100%St	85% St, 5% Co, 10% Other	St and Co varies	Mostly Co. and grant (FNP)	99% Co, 1% Other
<b>SC</b>	NA	most 100% St <sup>b</sup>	most 100% St	NA	100% St	100% St
<b>TN</b>	100% St	66% St, 44% Co	63%St, 46%Co, 1% O		90% O, 6% Co, 4% St	65% St, 29% Co, 6% O
<b>TX</b>	100% St	67% St, 33% Co	67% St, 33% Co	67% St, 33% Co	100% County	100% County
<b>VT/VSU</b>	100% St	67% St, 33% Co	67% St, 33% Co	100%St	Co./Grant/Federal	100% St
<b>WVS</b>	NA	NA	40% St, 20% CO, 40% Fed	joint St & Co	40%St, 20%Co, 40%Fed	50% St, 50% Fed

Appendix D Footnotes

- a The county pays a portion of the first 3 agents based on ability to pay; above 3 - county pays 100%
- b FL and NC 15% Admin. stipend from state; SC - 10% and 15% if two counties; TN \$2,500; NC \$5,000 for Co Coord.;
- c GA - \$10,000 Admin. stipend for DED; MS - \$12,000 Admin. stipend for DED; GA Co. Coord. - \$1,500 to \$3,000 depending on # of agents in county
- d County pays first \$25,000 of salaries and benefits for the first agent and \$38,200 for each additional agent
- e State pays for first two educators; staffing above this base is shared with the county paying about 88% and state 12%
- f Additional classified staff is paid 100% from county funds

## Appendix E.

### County Organization

Institut.	Multi-County Ed./Agents	County Coord./Dir.*	County Agents	Population/ Multi-Co. + Co Dir. + Co Agent	Number of Counties
AL	130	67	10	22,747	67
AR					
FL	5	67	330	46,114	67
GA	ANR, 4-H, FCS	< 159	301	21,229	159
IA	110	0	0	27,344	99
KY	0	0	400	10,785	120
LA	60	64	125	24,682	64
MS		21		In flux depending on budget	82
NC	36	99	364	17,469	100
NCA&T	4	1	4	(includes both NCS and NC A&T)	
OH	219	88	0	37,598	88
OK	0	77	200	13,311	77
OR	135	252	18	20,137	36
SC	NA	41	110	30,207	46
TN	31	89	273	16,021	95
TX	18	7	561	42,291	254
VT/VSU	5	107	195	25,676	95
WVS	1	0	15		55

#### Appendix E Footnote

\* County directors in many states also have programming responsibilities and have been included in multi-county and single county agent numbers

**Appendix F.**

**Fiscal Support: County Operational Expenses**

<b>Institut.</b>	<b>Bldgs. &amp; Utilities</b>	<b>Computers, Copiers, etc.</b>	<b>Multi-Co. Agent Travel</b>	<b>Co. Agent Travel</b>	<b>Prof. Devel.</b>	<b>Printing</b>	<b>Grants &amp; Contributions</b>
<b>AL</b>	County	St or Fed	St or Fed	Co.	St & Co		yes
<b>AR</b>							
<b>FL</b>	County	mostly Co	100% St	mostly Co	St & Co	20% St, 75 %C, 5% F	yes
<b>GA</b>	County	County		St and Co	St and Co		yes
<b>IA</b>	County	County	County		County	County	yes
<b>KY</b>	98% Co	98% Co	NA	98% Co	\$2,500/agent		11% of budget
<b>LA</b>	County	County, state & Fed		90% St, 10% G	50%St, 50%F	40%St, 20%Co, 40F	yes
<b>MS</b>	County	75%St, 25%Co		State	State	State	
<b>NC</b>	County	County	NA	County	St and some Co	County	yes
<b>NC A&amp;T</b>							
<b>OH</b>	County	County	County	County	County	County	yes
<b>OK</b>	County	County	NA	County	County	County	yes
<b>OR</b>	County	99% Co, 1% Other	99% Co, 1% Other	99% Co, 1% Other		99% Co, 1% Other	yes
<b>SC</b>	County	State	NA	St and Co	St & Co		yes
<b>TN</b>							yes
<b>TX</b>	County	50% St, 50% Co	County	County	40% St, 60% Co	5% St, 95 % Co	yes
<b>VT/VSU</b>	County	State	State	Mostly State	Mostly State	State	yes
<b>WVS</b>	County	45%St, 10%Co, 45% F	50%St, 50%F/G	50%St, 50%F/G	50%St, 50%F/G	40%St, 40%Co, 20F	yes