



Southern Region Program Leadership Committee Meeting
February 18, 2010

MINUTES

Program Leadership Committee Members Present

ANR	Joan Dusky (FL)	
COM	Debbie Archer (AR)	Bob Reynolds (AR)
CD		
FCS	Shirley Hastings (TN)	
4-HYD	Dorothy Wilson (OK)	Charles Cox(OK)
IT	Lalit Rainey (NC)	Jim Segers (TX)
MM	Ray Rice (AL)	
PSD	Demier Richardson (SC)	
Assn Reps		
Admin Advisors	Gina Eubanks (LA)	
Ex-officio	L. Washington Lyons	Ron Brown
SRDC	Alan Barefield	Vicki Vaughn
	Rachel Welborn	

1. Welcome – Dorothy Wilson, PLC Chair
 - Opening comments
 - Approval of December meeting minutes – approved as presented
2. Update from AEA - L. Washington Lyons and Gina Eubanks
 - The 1890 Universities have gotten off to a good start this year. Albert Essel (Delaware State) is continuing as chair of AEA in 2010. Gina Eubanks (Southern) is Vice-Chair.
 - Ray McKinney (North Carolina A&T) is chair of ECOP and Gina Eubanks is the 1890 Representative for the Board of Agriculture Assembly.
 - AEA has increased emphasis on AFRI this year. On January 20th, AEA hosted a webinar focused on the programs with over 125 participants. A face to face meeting is planned for April 6-8 to further enhance grantsmanship skills among the 1890 faculty.
 - ARD and AEA met jointly on Feb. 2nd. Topics included the 2011 Budget Process, NIFA structure and priorities, and the future Farm Bill language.
 - The 2011 Budget request for the 1890's will be 50 million, up from 42.6 million currently.

- Cornerstone has assisted in creating a 2 page document to inform the Appropriations Committee and delegates of the 1890's work.
 - AEA met in Savannah on Feb. 5th with program chairs and vice-chairs. The "hottest topic" among the group was budget cuts. Key federal guests providing timely insights: Debbie Sheely, Linda Benning, and others.
 - Emphasis is given this year to the ECOP Excellence in Extension Award to ensure that the 1890s have quality applications.
 - Clyde Chesney is working to document the history of the 1890 Extension work.
 - The summer AEA meeting is planned for Baltimore
 - 1890s had a successful round of submitting capacity building proposals. This is the first time that Extension has led in submitting these. We are eager to see what is funded.
3. Update from ASRED - Ron Brown and Paul Coreil
- Dr. Ort (North Carolina State) has retired and Joe Zublena will serve as Acting Director while a national search is conducted. Dr. Ort's replacement on PLC will be named at the April ASRED meeting.
 - Dr. Trapp (Oklahoma State) is Chair of ASRED; Dr. Gaines Smith (Alabama) is chair elect.
 - The Smith-Lever budget proposal is \$350 million, up from \$297 million currently. \$5 million of that will go to eXtension. Historically Smith-Lever funds have increased less than other APLU lines.
 - ASRED is working to learn as much as possible about how states are dealing collectively with the tightest budget times we have ever had in Extension. Earmarks are disappearing, so we need to show the value of Smith-Lever funding. James Wade (APLU) has posted about 30 fact sheets showcasing the impact of Smith-Lever in each of the states (<http://www.aplu.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=1487>).
 - NIFA has proposed to zero out 406 funds (water quality, pesticide, etc.) and move these to competitive funds through AFRI. RFAs will be released in March.
 - ASRED is working to help influence AFRI priorities to lend themselves to Extension work.
 - Specialty Crop Research Initiative pre-proposals have been submitted. There were only two proposals that would establish new eXtension Communities of Practice. There is a great opportunity with money available for eXtension proposals.
 - The CARET meeting is next week. It will focus on promoting 1862/1890 priorities.
 - The ASRED spring meeting will be April 6-8 in Oklahoma City. The week of March 15th will be the National Extension Directors & Administrators Meeting and the ECOP meeting.

- Dr. Tony Windham was named Associate VP for Agriculture and Extension Director at the University of Arkansas.
- ECOP is continuing the work of the National Communication Task Force on branding Extension nationally. This is a critical task during tight budget times. Currently, the Task Force is seeking the 2-3 best/most effective communications tools from Extension service. We all need to collectively assist in this effort.

4. Conference Planning:

Review Agenda – Alan reviewed the agenda with the committee

- Ray will check with Joe Schaefer to see what the plans are for the Urban Task Force.

Conference Theme: ***Affecting a Changing Economy***

- Cover the subthemes that have been suggested:
 - Funding options
 - Programming priorities
 - Staffing priorities
 - Partnership opportunities

Progress on Speaker: Dorothy/Alan

- Dr. Chandra Reddy would be the appropriate administrator to offer a welcome from Tennessee State and he has accepted.
- Dorothy sent an invitation letter to Jim Richards but has not heard an answer yet. Dr. Brown will follow up with a phone call. (Jim Richards confirmed later in the day).
- Dorothy also sent a letter to Dr. Beachy. Dr. Lyons offered to follow up with him.
- Alan's first pick for the economist presenter declined, but offered some other possible presenters. Alan will pursue these.
- PLC will need to flesh out the response questions for the committees following the keynote presentations.

5. Joint Committee Work Matrix

- Rachel will be sending a note to ask committee chairs to identify other committees with which the group would like to meet during Wednesday's cross committee time. From this input, the SRDC will coordinate a meeting matrix.

6. Marketing Strategies

- Communications wanted to develop a position paper on the value of integrated and strategic communications. A key to marketing is having something to market. Bob reported that the paper was not yet completed.

- The COM committee would like to have time during the conference to present to the whole group. Wednesday lunch is one option allowing about 30-45 minutes for the presentation. Bob will take that option back to the committee for confirmation.
7. PLN Structural Study and Operational Guidelines – Discuss changes needed, develop committee to draft Operational Guidelines changes. Committee includes: Ron Brown, L. Washington Lyons, Jim Segers, Dorothy Wilson, Bob Reynolds, Rachel Welborn, Alan Barefield
 - A draft of the guidelines was presented to the PLC for consideration. Please submit comments to the team by the end of next week. Plans are to make changes, post for final review, and ratify at the next PLC call.
 8. 2009-2010 Plan of Work updates and corrections – The POW is complete except for the conference and for on-going efforts to involve all members actively in the calls. Please contact those from your committee that were not on the call today to encourage their participation.
 9. Logic Model Discussion - Decision from the December meeting:
To apply the logic model concept to one program or program area per subject matter Program Committee. This process will include developing common measures (key indicators) that could be used across the Southern Region. Outputs of this process include common terminology and key indicators that states.

Dr. Brown: ASRED is not going to push the logic models unless the PCs think there is value. However, a recent memo from Dr. Beachy(see end of document) stated that Extension would be responsible for reporting against the five national NIFA goals. A few common indicators that match these goals will become more and more important. We need to pay more attention to those 3-4 indicators that each state can subscribe to and use across the Southern region to show impact. This would not involve a formal process for synthesized reporting across the region, but would allow for the state reports to be summed to show regional impact if consistent measures are used.

Alan and Rachel will draft a document outlining this discussion and will submit to Dr. Brown and Dr. Lyons for review/comment. This will then be forwarded to the four program committees for consideration.

Charles Cox, Alan and Rachel will work on developing a matrix that can be used by the committees to identify what is already being done under the priorities.

Dr. Brown indicated that a national team of PSD professionals are working with NIFA on some common indicators. If they are making progress, it might be good to use what they have identified rather than create our own.

10. Program Committee Reports

- ANR –Joan Dusky: No report
- COM – Debbie Archer and Bob Reynolds: Work is continuing on the Extension brand research. The representatives will go back to the committee with a proposal about presenting at PLN during Wednesday lunch.
- CD – Alan Barefield: The team has a number of multi-state projects going on including regional strategic planning efforts and poverty reduction.
- FCS –Shirley Hastings: The annual face-to-face meeting is approaching. A presenter will be outlining the new NIFA priorities at that meeting.
- 4-H Youth Dev – Dorothy Wilson and Charles Cox: The national program leaders' meeting is in March and bi-annual meeting in two months. The National 4H Council has partnered with local tractor supply companies to work with outlet stores on a 4H visibility and fund raising campaign. They will have a paper clover project similar to March of Dimes where customers can purchase a paper clover for a small donation and post it in the store. It is a good opportunity for 4H
- IT – Lalit Rainey and Jim Segers: Committee conference call was last week. They are on track to work with IT on some cross committee issues. In November, the committee partnered with MM on joint webinars.
- MM –Ray Rice: The bi-annual conference is scheduled for April. MM from outside of the south will be invited to attend either in person or via distance education technology. The purpose will be to discuss common issues, one of which is Advisory Boards
- PSD – Demier Richardson: PSD and MM are working jointly to develop training modules targeting MM. The committee is working to update its directory and to survey PSD needs at each of the universities. The committee held a two day virtual conference in December.

11. Other Business

12. Adjourn

REMINDER – The next conference call will be held Thursday, April 15, 2010 at 9:00 CST. The call-in number will be 605-475-4860. Participant code 235023#.




United States
Department of
Agriculture

Research,
Education, and
Economics

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To: Cooperative Extension Service Directors and Administrators
Agricultural Experiments Station Directors

From: Roger Beachy, Director 

Subject: National Priorities for NIFA Funds and Guidance for Plans of Work and Annual Reports

As the first Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), I believe that Congress and the agricultural community has given us a charge for transformational change in how we design and implement agricultural research, education, and extension. Many have told me that we need to sharpen our focus – not to try to do everything, not to be afraid to take on big, bold issues like food safety or global food security, and to pick a reasonable number of topics to tackle as NIFA is an agency with limited financial and human resources.

I believe the same call for transformational change and focus extends to NIFA's partners and to the work done through formula grants.

USDA has developed five national priority areas to tightly focus NIFA and other USDA science funds on solving specific problems and demonstrating results. We are seeking to secure the funding necessary to properly address *solving* these agricultural issues, not just working on them. I believe that we need to demonstrate the true costs of agricultural research, education, and extension. We will no longer spread our funding thinly but instead will focus our resources on the following priorities.

- (1) **Global Food Security and Hunger** – NIFA supports new science to boost U.S. agricultural production, improve global capacity to meet the growing food demand, and foster innovation in fighting hunger by addressing food security for vulnerable populations.
- (2) **Climate Change** – NIFA-funded projects generate knowledge to develop an agriculture system that maintains high productivity in the face of climate changes. This will help producers to plan for and make decisions to adapt to changing environments and sustain economic vitality, and can take advantage of emerging economic opportunities offered by climate change mitigation technologies.
- (3) **Sustainable Energy** – NIFA contributes to the President's goal of energy independence with a portfolio of grant programs to develop biomass use for biofuels, designing optimum forestry and crops for bioenergy production, and to produce value-added bio-based industrial products.
- (4) **Childhood Obesity** – NIFA-supported programs ensure that nutritious foods are affordable and available, and provide guidance so that individuals and families are able to make informed, science-based decisions about their health and well-being.
- (5) **Food Safety** – NIFA food safety programs work to reduce the incidence of food-borne illness and provide a safer food supply by addressing and eliminating causes

of microbial resistance to contaminants, educating consumer and food safety professionals, and developing food processing technologies to improve safety.

Over the next few years, many grants that will be awarded competitively will place greater focus on these five high priority areas. I believe that it is vital in ensuring the relevance of the formula grants that Plans of Work and Annual Reports also be able to show how these grants contribute to the five high priority areas.

Beginning with the FY 2012 – 2016 Plan of Work Update and 2010 Annual Report, due on April 1, 2011, NIFA is requiring that all Plans of Work add each of these high-priority areas as Planned Programs. However, we need to show evidence of performance on these five high-priority areas much sooner than the 2011 submissions. Therefore, I ask that you add these immediately as Planned Programs for the upcoming 2011 – 2015 Plan of Work Update and 2009 Annual Report, due April 1, 2010, if you are able to do so. I understand this may be short notice for this year, but it would help us demonstrate the value and currency of the formula grants.

I understand that not all institutions may be working in each of these five areas. If you are not spending formula grant dollars on one or more of these priorities, still include them as a planned program with zero as a valid number for funding and “not applicable” as a valid narrative response.

More detailed guidance regarding accomplishing this task is attached.

NIFA will continue to work with you to get the best evidence of performance for all the grant funds awarded and distributed by NIFA as we invest in science and secure our future through research, education and extension.

Attachment

Instructions for aligning the upcoming 2011 – 2015 Plan of Work Update and 2009 Annual Report to the Five High-Priority Issues.

Including the Five High-Priority Issues in the 2011 – 2015 Plan of Work Update

In the Planned Programs section of the Plan of Work you have two choices:

1. Choose to **“Add new program”**; change the name to one of the five high-priority issues by choosing one of them at the Planned Program title page; then complete the process as you would for any new Planned Program.
2. Choose to **Edit** a current planned program, and change the name to one of the five high-priority issues by choosing one of them at the Planned Program title page. Then complete the process as you would for any Planned Program to add relevant data. You would most likely want to choose this option if you already have a current Planned Program which closely aligns with a high-priority issue.

Including the Five High-Priority Issues in the 2009 Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results

In the Planned Programs section of the Annual Report you also will have two choices:

1. Choose to **“Add previously unplanned program”**; then complete the process as you would for any new previously unplanned program. If you choose this option and have relevant outcomes situated in one or more other Planned Programs, please transfer that data to this high-priority issue Planned Program and use the option to choose to “Not Reporting on this Outcome Measure” in the original Planned Program.
2. The software will be changed to allow you to edit the titles of Planned Programs in the Annual Report. Thus, you may choose to **Edit** a current planned program, and change the name to one of the five high-priority issues by choosing to **“Edit Name”** on the Planned Program title page, and then by choosing one of the five titles. Then complete the process as you would for any Planned Program. You would most likely want to choose this option if you already have a current Planned Program which closely aligns with a high-priority issue. While in this edited Planned Program, you may also “Add Cross-cutting Outcome/Impact Statement or Unintended or Previously Unknown Outcome Measure” to include a related outcome.

If you have further technical questions regarding how to use the software to include the new high-priority issues as Planned Programs, please contact Bart Hewitt or the IT staff at pow@nifa.usda.gov, or you can call Bart at 202-720-0747.