Update on PLN Evaluation Using Focus Groups – Mitch Owen
- There will be five focus group sessions held during the PLN conference
- Nancy Franz gave an update on the focus group agendas
- An analysis of the data will occur after the conference
- A written summary will be used as a follow-up

ASRED Update – Gaines Smith and Ron Brown
- Farm Bill
  - Paul Coreil and L. Washington Lyons are serving on the Farm Bill implementation team
    - A great deal of discussion is being carried out particularly as the Farm Bill does not explicitly address the areas of Youth and Family
    - The implementation team is attempting to get recognition for 4-H Youth Development, Family and Consumer Sciences, and eXtension in the roadmap
  - A Roadmap for the Future is being developed to determine the new national direction – this Roadmap is mandated by federal statute
  - Southern Region recommendations have been submitted to D.C. Costen (Chair of the implementation committee)
- eXtension Strategic Plan
  - The eXtension strategic plan has moved forward
  - It is critical for all PLN Program Committees to talk about this plan
  - The new $30 million Specialty Crops Request for Applications (RFA) includes an acceptance of eXtension as a type of proposal
    - This RFA has recurring annual funding and it is classified as mandatory funding (it does not have to go through the appropriations process)
In 2010, the Beginning Farmer and the Organic Crops RFAs will also fall into the mandatory funding classification

- Colein Hefferan conference call with ASRED
  - On Thursday, August 28, Dr. Colein Hefferan (CSREES Administrator) will host a conference call with ASRED
  - Two key issues will be discussed on the call
    - The new definition of multi-state, integrated programs
    - The problem with getting personnel funded through current Federal Grant Opportunities regulations

- Personnel Changes
  - Tim Cross has assumed the role of Dean with University of Tennessee Extension, replacing Charlie Goan. George Smith has assumed the role of Interim Assistant Dean until a national search is completed.
  - Melissa Mixon has assumed interim roles as the Vice-President of the Mississippi State University Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine; Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences; Director of the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Experiment Station; and Director of the Mississippi State University Extension Service.
  - Margaret Hale will be retiring from her role as the Executive Associate Director of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service
  - Sam Fowler has stepped down from his role as Associate Director of the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service and moved into a faculty position with Auburn University.

AEA Update – M. Ray McKinnie and L. Washington Lyons
- The Farm Bill Implementation Committee will have a conference call on Friday, August 29, 2008.
- There is a great deal of money available in various competitive grants programs
  - The National Research Initiative has been renamed the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) with $700 million in funding

- AEA Activities
  - *Media Made Easy* Conference – Designed to assist Extension personnel in dealing with the media in crisis situations
  - Working with Southern University to hold a *Faith-Based Conference* that will be held September 24-26, 2008 in Shreveport, LA.
Jackie McCray has retired as Administrator of the Extension Program at the University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff.

Newcomer Orientation

A special thanks was given to Nina Boston for her role in organizing the newcomer orientation session.

PLC Term Expirations

Program Committees were reminded to fill expiring PLC Representative terms. These included:
- ANR – Paul Mask was replaced by Joan Dusky
- CD – Tony Windham was replaced by Joe Sumners
- FCS – Thelma Sanders-Hunter was replaced by Kasundra Cyrus
- 4-H – Lamar Nichols was replaced by Kellye Rembert
- MM – Joe Schaefer was replaced by Ray Rice
- ASRED Advisor – Paul Coreil was replaced by Ivory Lyles
- AEA Appointee – Ray McKinnie will be replaced by Albert Essel in November

Action/Information Items

Program committees were reminded that the PowerPoint templates for the Action and Information Items to be considered by AEA and ASRED at their joint meeting are posted on the srpln.msstate.edu.

Action and Information items are due to Alan Barefield by 3:00 on Wednesday, August 27.

Accomplishment Report

The Accomplishment Report template has been posted on the eXtension wiki (collaborate.extension.org)

This is a new report for the committees and it should highlight what the committees think they have accomplished over the past year as a result of participating in the PLN Conference.

Program Committees should notify Rachel Welborn when their report is finished.

Urban Programming Group

The overarching question is “How do we deal with urban programs as they expand?”
- IT was joint with the COMM committee – since the MM committee seems to be the de facto home for the Urban Task
Force, that committee should make the initial recommendation on whether Urban Programming should split into a separate committee.
  - The question was raised about creating a new committee simply to address a new focus area
- Each Programming Committee should encourage 1-2 members to participate in the UPTF planning meeting on Tuesday, August 26. The UPTF organizers didn’t have many registrants for this planning meeting.

Committee Updates
- **ANR**
  - Focusing on a better understanding of the Farm Bill and the CSREES reorganization
  - Wanting to work on getting the PLN information updated
- **COMM**
  - Roundtable discussion on cost recovery systems and utilizing e-commerce
  - Discussion on preliminary results from the ECOP survey that is targeted to building a better Extension
- **CD**
  - Wants to discuss participating in the Urban Task Force
- **FCS**
  - Spring meeting was held in May and focused on partnerships and multi-state teams
  - Survey of Southern Region curricula on obesity
  - Continued work on CECP modules
  - Launched the eXtension Food, Families and Fitness CoP
  - Developing a summary report on health disparities
  - A caregivers conference will be held in Tennessee
- **4-H**
  - The committee plans to accomplish everything that they’ve been working on for the past year
  - The 4-H National Program Leader has resigned
  - In light of the changes in the new Farm Bill, Ron Brown suggested that the 4-H committee develop a list of concerns and recommendations that could be presented to Colein Hefferan in her teleconference with ASRED on Thursday afternoon.
• IT
  o The last conference call was held on July 9 and most of the discussion centered on this meeting
  o Another critical issue is the migration of CECP to eXtension

• MM
  o Professional Development Meeting will be held in Athens, GA on April 7-10, 2009. Conference theme will be centered around “Succession Planning.”
  o There is a national planning committee for Galaxy that is using the wiki to create an agenda

• PSD
  o The first biannual staff development conference began as a Southern Region meeting, but turned into a national conference. It demonstrated the lack of professional outlets for staff development faculty.
  o The eXtension Professional Development Community Steering Committee has developed a national list of Program and Staff Development contacts.
  o An inventory of new worker orientation modules has been developed
  o The PSD committee hopes to finish planning work on the upcoming SEAL conference

PLC Officer Elections
• Dorothy Wilson (Langston University) accepted the nomination for PLC Chair-Elect and was elected by unanimous consent.

PLC Work Plan
• Develop a draft job description for administrative advisors. Should get feedback from AEA/ASRED.
• Develop recommendations on PLN structure given the guidelines provided by Ron Brown (see Appendix 1).
• Increase the marketing effort for newcomers
  o Have this session highlighted on the Save-the-Date card
  o Mitch Owen (PLC Chair) should send an RSVP card to newcomers and committee chairs regarding their attendance at the newcomer orientation.
  o Mitch Owen should also send a note to the Administrators and Directors encouraging them to encourage their newcomers to attend the orientation
A newcomer orientation announcement should be prominently displayed on the PLN registration form.

The workplan should continue to recruit and educate newcomers.

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the accomplishment report.

Potential 2009 PLN Conference Themes

1. Farm Bill reorganization with REEO offices
2. PLN Restructuring Study
3. Going Green
4. Extension Organizational Issues
   a. Succession
   b. Retention
   c. Ensuring long term leadership
5. Remaining relevant in a changing, global, virtual world
6. Benchmarking and reporting – how do we tell our stories effectively?
7. Funding streams for Extension Services/Programs
PLC Representatives (new representatives are in *italics*)

- **Agriculture and Natural Resources**
  - Joan Dusky (University of Florida)
  - Nelson Daniels (Prairie View A&M University)
- **Community Development**
  - Joe Sumners (Auburn University)
  - Jenny Fertig (West Virginia State University)
- **Family & Consumer Sciences**
  - Shirley Hastings (University of Tennessee)
  - Kasundra Cyrus (Southern University)
- **4-H Youth Development**
  - Kellye Rembert (Clemson University)
  - Dorothy Wilson (Langston University)
- **Communications**
  - Frankie Gould (Louisiana State University)
  - Debbie Archer (University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff)
- **Middle Management**
  - Ray Rice (Auburn University)
  - Ellen Smoak (North Carolina A&T State University)
- **Program and Staff Development**
  - Mitch Owen (North Carolina State University)
  - Demier Richardson (South Carolina State University)
- **Information Technology**
  - Nina Boston (University of Arkansas)
  - Chris Rogers (Southern University)
- **ASRED Representative**
  - Ivory Lyles (University of Arkansas)
- **AEA Representative**
  - M. Ray McKinnie (North Carolina A&T State University); Dr. McKinnie will be replaced by Albert Essel (Delaware State University) on December 1, 2008
- **Advisors**
  - Gaines Smith (Auburn University)
  - Gina Eubanks (Southern University)
- **Ex Officio**
  - Ron Brown (ASRED)
  - L. Washington Lyons (AEA)
  - Rachel Welborn (SRDC)
  - Alan Barefield (SRDC)