



Extension Directions

August 2006

“To individuals, families, businesses and communities of Pennsylvania, Penn State Cooperative Extension is the engaged educational system that helps maximize potential with research-proven knowledge.”

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Message from the Director

Cooperative Extension's Public Value

As extension educators, we understand the importance of our work, and those who take part in our programs are aware of the benefits they receive from participation. We get positive feedback through both formal evaluations and informal conversations and comments. We often, however, give less thought to the “public value” of our efforts. The concept of “public value” is the value of a program to those who do not *directly* benefit from the program (Kalambokidis, 2006). “Public value” is the improvement that our research and extension make in people’s lives.

The work that you do is very important, and the recent budget increase of \$2 million is a direct result of the quality and professionalism of your work and the impact it has on your communities and the Commonwealth. It is obvious that our state legislators understand that an investment in extension and research is generating new knowledge and skills that lead to people living more healthy and productive lives, increasing their economic well being, helping protect our

environment, and sustaining a safe and productive food system. They see that their investment benefits all of Pennsylvania by improving local and state economies, increasing participation in public issues, and reducing the burden on public assistance—the “public value” of extension. In other words, we are a good investment for state government.

There are always, of course, skeptics among our stakeholders who will question an investment of public resources in a program. We need to be able to answer their questions about why state or county funds should be expended and why participants should not always pay to attend. We need to be prepared to respond to their concerns; we need to remain vigilant in communicating not only the private benefit of our programs but also the “public value” of the programs we offer. It is our responsibility to make known our benefit to those who do not participate directly in our programs, as well.

Our challenges will continue, but it is our job now to build on the momentum of this year's budget increase and focus on the programs that make a difference and that have great “public value.” Thank you for your contributions to making Penn State Cooperative Extension a GREAT organization. Please also extend a thank you to the legislators and advocates who appreciate the value of extension and who continue to support our efforts.

Best wishes,
Daney Jackson
Director of Cooperative Extension

Reference: Kalambokidis, Laura. Creating Public Value with Extension and Research. Presentation at the 2006 Northeast Summer Joint Session, Geneva, NY, July 10, 2006.

News to Know

Congressman Holden Supports 4-H Caucus

The 4-H Congressional Caucus provides opportunities for 4-H youth to learn how the U.S. government functions, encourages greater involvement in the political process, and informs House and Senate members about the mission, activities, and accomplishments of the 4-H program. Volunteers recently met with Congressman Tim Holden, 17th Congressional District of Pennsylvania, as part of the extension Public Issues Leadership Development Conference held in Washington, D.C. The volunteers presented a 4-H commemorative basket to Congressman Holden in appreciation of his support for the 4-H Congressional Caucus.



Penn State Cooperative Extension volunteers Bill Roberts of Harrisburg (left) and Donna Ebersole of Duncannon, with Congressman Tim Holden.

The 4-H Task Force of the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) is working to increase Congressional 4-H Caucus membership. Educators are encouraged to learn about the 4-H Congressional Caucus and inform local legislators about how they might become involved.

CSREES Liaisons Visit Penn State

This spring, Daney Jackson and Dennis Calvin met with CSREES liaisons in Washington, D.C., and invited them to visit Penn State. In early July, Mary Ann Rozum, national program leader, Natural Resources and Environment, and Daniel Schmoldt, national program leader, Plant and Animal Systems, visited the University Park campus. They met with college administrators and faculty, took part in a research tour (aerobiology, biodeisel, Ag Analytical Services Lab, etc.), and toured various campus facilities—Animal Diagnostic Lab, dairy barns, Forest Resources Building, etc. Their visit has provided an opportunity for productive discussions with our partners as our efforts move forward in the new 2007-2011 plans of work cycle.

Southeast Region Director Candidate Interviews

Five excellent candidates will complete interviews by the end of the month for the position of Regional Director in the Southeast Region. The candidates are **Keith Diem**, College of Health, Education, and Human Development, Clemson University; **William Kleiner**, county extension director, Penn State Cooperative Extension, Adams County; **Robert Leiby**, county extension director, Penn State Cooperative Extension, Lehigh County; **Cheryl Lloyd**, county extension director/department head, North Carolina Cooperative Extension, North Carolina State University; and **Brenda Williams**, workforce development coordinator, Mellon Community Bridges Project, extension educator, Penn State Cooperative Extension, Chester County. We expect the results of the interview process to be completed soon.

Summer Research Tour

Approximately 90 people representing government and industry participated in the annual Summer Research Tour held at the University Park campus in July. The tour, sponsored by the Penn State Agricultural Council, provides an opportunity for participants to visit the college's facilities, meet with researchers, and become familiar with emerging issues and current programs at Penn State. This year, participants learned about research in renewable energy sources (plastics and crop plants), early warning systems for tracking plant diseases, soil analysis, and assessment programs to help states develop nutrient credit trading policies for managing nonpoint water pollution. The group also toured the new School of Forest Resources Building.

National Extension Diversity Center Moves

A collaborative team of three institutions, Purdue University, New Mexico State University, and the University of Wisconsin, have won the bid to become the next host of the National Extension Diversity Center, www.ediversitycenter.net. The center moved to the new host in July. Purdue University will house the Web site, and Dr. Pamala Morris in the College of Agriculture is the new center director. The three-state team will host an organizational meeting this summer to review the goals and objectives for the center, design an operating model for the future, and make decisions about daily functioning of the center.

The center was created in 2001 by the ECOP Personnel Committee's National Extension Committee on Diversity to fill the gap after the closure of the National Center for Diversity (NCFD) hosted by Kentucky State University. Oregon State University served as the founding host of the Web-based center, which receives approximately 30,000 hits per month. It is designed as an interconnected web of collaboration linking all land-grant institutions' diversity efforts.

The center has an active volunteer staff of section editors and diversity contacts from every state. All of the volunteer section editors will continue on as the center moves to Purdue. The Center's Board of Directors has guided the growth and development of the center. Ted Alter of Penn State serves as one of nine co-chairs on the board.

Program Updates and New Directions

New Issue Team Co-Chair

Rick M. Bates, assistant professor, Department of Horticulture, will serve as co-chair of Issue Team 4, Horticulture and the Green Industry. Rick is extension specialist in ornamental horticulture, and his responsibilities include development of educational programs for county educators and woody ornamental producers.

Sports Turfgrass Programs

Fifteen million young people play organized sports annually in the United States, and one million are treated in emergency rooms annually. According to the National Safe Kids Coalition, 50 percent of those treated injuries are preventable. Several extension educators are working collaboratively with school personnel and sports field managers in the planning, construction, evaluation, and maintenance of athletic fields to improve surfaces and increase safety.

In the Capital Region, Jim Welshans offers workshops for sports field managers for high schools, colleges, and various athletic organizations. He works with managers and groundskeepers offering recommendations to help solve problems such as weeds, pests, and water to improve their playing fields. Jim also served as a resource person for the Little League World Series, and he and Jeff Fowler are members of the groundskeeping crew. Jeff Fowler has served approximately 50 school districts and 45 local Little League organizations in the Northwest Region. All of the participating schools reported making changes in their management practices as a result of the programs offered. For example, a new high school field had become unplayable after two years due to water problems. Jeff provided assistance, and the field is now in use and in condition that enabled the school to host district playoff games.

The educational programs offered by the extension educators not only benefit the youth and the school districts *directly*, but the school districts can make wise use of their tax dollars (public dollars) in maintaining a safe playing surface for their athletic programs. All Pennsylvanians benefit because tax dollars are used wisely—the “public value” of these efforts. This public benefit of extension, as well as the benefit to individuals, needs to be communicated to our stakeholders.

Did you know that...

- Forest Stewardship Program volunteers reported contributing an estimated 38,000 hours (about 19 FTEs) of time. Conservatively, using \$40,000 per year contributed, this represents more than \$750,000 of service. These volunteers indicated that they personally contacted 12,400 forest owners. An important contribution by these volunteers is the support they provide to the 23 county Woodland Owners Associations (WOAs) in Pennsylvania. These WOAs cover about two-thirds of the state's 67 counties and provide educational programs to thousands of forest owners and stakeholders.

Well Done

Thank you to all of the volunteer advocates who participated in the College of Agricultural Sciences Capitol Day event in Harrisburg in March and who made subsequent efforts to communicate to the legislators the importance of the college's research and extension programs in their communities, businesses, and lives. The recent state budget increase in the amount of \$2 million each for the college's agricultural research and extension line items is due in large part to the efforts of our external stakeholders. Thanks also to Mary Wirth, director of college relations, for managing this process.

We Are Penn State Extension Proud

Congratulations to **Emelie Swackhamer**, extension educator in Lehigh and Northampton counties, and **Don Fretts**, county extension director in Fayette County, recipients of the Distinguished Service Award, and to **Andrew Frankenfield**, extension educator in Montgomery County, recipient of the Achievement Award of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA). These educators were recognized at the 2006 Annual Meeting of the NACAA held in Cincinnati, Ohio, in July.

The national winners of the NACAA Communication Award in the team newsletter category were extension educators **Gregory Straight**, Fulton County; **Robert Goodling**, Lebanon County; **Philip Wagner**, Franklin County; and **Dan McFarland**, York County. **Melanie Barkley**, extension educator in Bedford County, was a national finalist in the fact sheet category. The regional finalists included **Donald Fretts**, county extension director in Fayette County, and **Lee Miller**,

county extension director in Beaver County, radio; **Thomas Butzler**, extension educator in Clinton County, published photo and caption, feature story, and video; **Robert Goodling**, extension educator in Lebanon County, computer generated graphics; **Dwane Miller**, extension educator in Schuylkill County, and **Donna Grey**, associate extension educator in Luzerne County, direct mail piece; **Melanie Barkley**, extension educator in Bedford County, personal column; **Susan Alexander**, extension educator in Jefferson County, and **Carol Schurman**, extension educator in Indiana County, individual newsletter; **Donna Grey**, associate extension educator in Luzerne County, team newsletter; and **Paul Craig**, extension educator in Dauphin County, publication. Kudos to the award winners for their outstanding efforts!

Congratulations to **Jim Ladlee**, county extension director in Clinton County, and **Dwane Miller**, associate extension educator in Schuylkill County, this year's winners of the **Ruth and Robert O'Connor Scholarship**. The scholarship will help support Jim's work in the doctoral program in higher education at Penn State. Dwane plans to use the scholarship to support his work toward the completion of a master's degree in business administration at Kutztown University.

Congratulations, also, to **Denise Continenza**, extension educator in Lehigh County, and **Katherine French**, extension educator in Mercer County, the 2006 recipients of the **Pennsylvania Extension Home Economics Scholarship** in honor of Dr. Helen E. Bell. Denise is pursuing a master's degree in Youth and Family Education at Penn State, and Katherine is working toward a master's degree in human nutrition at the University of Alabama via distance education.

The Extension Spirit

Are You Positively Infectious?

by Nina L. Redding, county extension director, Cumberland County

It all started innocently enough one rainy Saturday afternoon when we were out shopping. On the way home, my family decided to go to the movies. The boys, ages 11 and 12, announced they wanted to see "Pirates of the Caribbean," and my husband agreed. No problem for mom. I had my heart set on seeing "The Devil Wears Prada," and surely with the theater playing what seemed like 600 movies at the same time, we all could come out happy.

It was not until we arrived at the theater, nearby where we were shopping, that I realized the clerk at Wal-Mart forgot to give me the significant amount of cash I requested on the transaction. So back I went to Wal-Mart and was late for the movies. Once I arrived at the theater, I couldn't get into Prada and had to opt for Pirates and all their glory! After two-plus hours of sword fights, gross undersea sort of dead guys chasing the good-guy living pirates, I was in a miserable mood. I had a choice. On the way home, I could enjoy and join in the fun as the boys recalled all their favorite scenes over and over again, or I could be short with them and be irritable which would put a damper on the afternoon.

I chose to be positively infectious and join in the fun. Do you regularly choose to be positively infectious in your extension work? Being positively infectious to me means projecting a positive, friendly attitude that can have an influence on those we come in contact with, even when life around us is trying. I personally tend to gravitate toward people and organizations that are positively infectious. My theory is that in extension, we're in the relationship business, and our success with clientele and stakeholders hinges on our ability to be positively infectious. Never underestimate the power of the positive outlook on our life's work and its capability to spread rapidly to others. I feel that our clientele are most successful in learning environments where people are positive and encouraging. As we all know, these experiences leave people with the feeling that they are successful and can be even more successful in the future.

Having trouble at times seeing and projecting the bright side in our ever-changing world? First, pledge to come to work each day wearing a smile and looking for the good in the circumstances and those around us. Second, expect and let others know that you prefer the positive side of life. Third, remember the power of your attitude on others.

Extension changes regularly, which gives us an opportunity to try new things and meet new people. Let's continue to send the message in all we do that Penn State Cooperative Extension is the provider of choice because we're positively infectious!

Leadership Thoughts

"The success of creativity and innovation depends upon a collaborative exchange of viewpoints and ideas. It used to be possible for one person to invent a better mouse trap. In today's world of information, technology, and highly specialized work groups it is almost impossible to do it alone. It takes a constant flow of ideas and information to come up with something new."

Reference: Karrass-Negotiating Inside Your Own Organization, July 20, 2006. www.karrass.com

The **Well Done** section highlights a particular noteworthy extension education effort by an individual or team.

The **We Are Penn State Extension Proud** section recognizes an extension employee's outstanding accomplishments.

The **Extension Spirit** section enables Penn State Cooperative Extension employees to share meaningful work experiences, articulate the values and goals behind their efforts, and present inspirational ideas.

Send your suggestions for the **Well Done**, **We Are Penn State Extension Proud**, and **The Extension Spirit** sections to Margaret Koble, mak10@psu.edu. Nominations will be reviewed and selected by the director. The deadline for receiving nominations for the next issue of the newsletter is **September 15**.

NOTE:

After being distributed, issues of **Extension Directions** will be archived at: <http://www.extension.psu.edu/Newsletters/archives.htm>.

Please sent submissions to Margaret Koble, mak10@psu.edu.

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

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