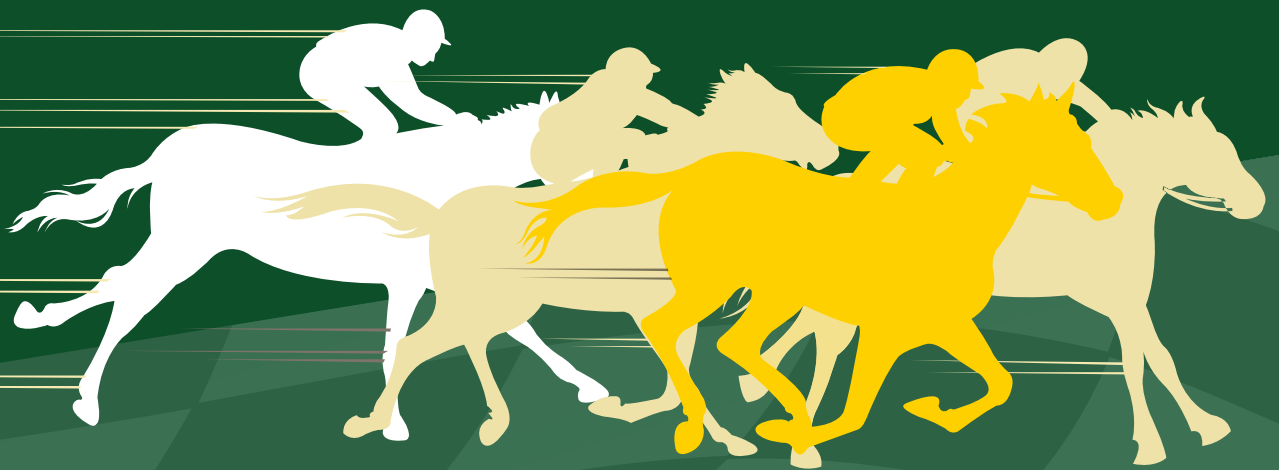




KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION PROGRAM

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2023

Transforming Kentuckians



Racing Toward Excellence

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Mission Statement	3
Vision Statement	3
Core Values	3
Priority Program Areas	
We will develop educational programs and document measurable change in the following priority areas by addressing local issues that affect Kentucky's residents:	4
A. Small Farm Development	4
B. Urban Agriculture	5
C. Environment and Natural Resources	6
D. Community Health	7
E. Nutrition	8
F. Youth Development	10
G. Family Well-Being	10
H. Financial Management	11
I. Community Leadership Development	12
Strategies and Indicators	13
Evaluation	17
Closing Comments	18

INTRODUCTION

Kentucky State University (KYSU) College of Agriculture, Communities, and the Environment (ACE) Cooperative Extension Program was created to develop educational programs that address relevant needs affecting underserved people in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. As we prepare for the future, we have developed a strategic plan, “Transforming Kentuckians: Racing Toward Excellence,” that provides a foundation for the Cooperative Extension Program to become a premier provider of educational programming in the Commonwealth. We will continue to engage the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, and local, state and federal partners to help underserved clientele reach their full potential in a rapidly changing society.

An internal program review was conducted with Extension specialists, agents and program assistants to determine their subject matter expertise, current programmatic efforts and issues. In addition, citizens gave interviews and completed surveys to identify needs and issues affecting their localities. “Transforming Kentuckians: Racing Toward Excellence” is based on relevant needs and issues identified by citizens and the expertise of Extension professionals as well as state and national program priorities.

“Transforming Kentuckians: Racing Toward Excellence” is a five-year plan (2018-2023). To stay abreast of changing needs and issues and ensure that the support we provide is relevant, we will conduct annual evaluations to determine whether stakeholder needs are being addressed and progress is being made toward achieving the goals. As needs and issues change, we will modify our strategic plan to reflect the change that is occurring.

We will use innovative delivery methods, strengthen and develop new partnerships, and seek external funding to attain the goals and objectives of “Transforming Kentuckians: Racing Toward Excellence.” We encourage Kentuckians to join us on our journey as we develop educational programs that will help transform the residents of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

MISSION STATEMENT

Kentucky State University (KYSU) Cooperative Extension Program strengthens underserved communities, families, farmers, individuals and youth to improve their quality of life with state-of-the-art research-based educational programs.

VISION STATEMENT

KYSU Cooperative Extension Program is recognized as a leading educational organization that provides inclusive services to diverse communities.

CORE VALUES

Accountability: We will provide quality and relevant research-based Extension education programs that fit the needs of stakeholders in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Inclusion: We respect and value the diversity of our audiences, staff and volunteers and will be intentional in our actions to create an environment that fosters equity, dignity, fairness and respect for all, including full participation in programs, development of policy and decision making.

Integrity: We will engage our farmers, customers, cooperators, researchers and partners in a clear and transparent way.

Partnerships/Collaborations: We are committed to building authentic relationships in our internal and external connections to create partnerships that will fulfill and sustain our mission and vision.

Service: We will work to identify the underserved and vulnerable populations through non-formal educational programs to enhance and advance their livelihood.

Relevant: We will respond to society's changing needs with timely information to strengthen families, farmers, and youth and to create viable communities.

Research-Based: We will utilize existing university-based knowledge to circulate factual information to the citizens of Kentucky through Extension programming.

PRIORITY PROGRAM AREAS

We will develop educational programs and document measurable change in the following priority areas by addressing local issues that affect Kentucky's residents.

A. Small Farm Development

Issue Statement: *Small farmers are searching for alternative enterprises to sustain farms through improved production, marketing, farm management practices and alternative enterprises.*

The 2012 Census of Agriculture reported 77,064 farms in Kentucky, 73,570 of which were small farms with gross farm sales of less than \$250,000; of these, 77 percent were limited-resource farms that had gross farm sales of less than \$25,000. There were 8,200 farms with women as the principle farm operators; of these, 87 percent were limited-resource farms. Beginning farmers numbered 13,595 principle farm operators of which 87 percent were limited-resource. The average age of Kentucky farmers was 55.6 years, with 13,388 of the principle farm operators and 24,098 total farm operators under 45 years of age.

Among minority farmers, 178 were Native Americans, 71 were Asians, 437 were African-Americans, and 708 were Hispanic farmers. Of the 95 percent of Native American farmers, 69 percent of Asian farmers, and 92.5 percent of African-American farmers were considered limited-resource growers. At Kentucky State University, we realize that the minority farmers were vastly undercounted in the 2012 Census of Agriculture, particularly African-American farmers. One goal of our program for small farmers is to get every farmer counted.

Kentucky State University assists small-scale farmers in making their farms more sustainable and resilient through improved management practices and the incorporation of alternative enterprises. KSU also assists these farmers in expanding their markets and marketing opportunities, in becoming active participants in local food systems and in their communities, and in improving the quality of life for their families through U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Extension and other opportunities.

Goal: *To develop and implement educational programs, demonstrations and experiences that increase the knowledge and skills of small and limited-resource farmers in marketing, farm management, sustainable animal and plant agriculture, and local food systems to ensure the profitability and resilience of their farms and communities.*

B. Urban Agriculture

Issue Statement: Lack of resources in urban localities serves as a barrier for successful urban agricultural production.

Urban agriculture is practiced by people around the world due to many factors. The reasons people turn to urban agriculture can be broken down into two main categories: food insecurity and economics. Food insecurity is an inability to access enough food to support an active and healthy lifestyle. Not only is this a problem for developing nations, but it is an issue that is widespread in the United States. The 2016 Map the Meal Gap report by Feeding America says 16 percent of Kentucky's population is food insecure, which is higher than the national average of 13 percent. Of the 120 counties in Kentucky, 41 have food insecurity rates that are higher than the state average. Individuals in food insecure areas may find it especially difficult to purchase healthy food because they must travel farther to find it available. This is particularly a problem if individuals live in a food desert, which is defined by the USDA as a census tract with limited access to fresh and healthy whole foods due to a lack of grocery stores. In some cases, the definition includes farmers' markets and other healthy food providers. The USDA has designated numerous Kentucky census tracts as food deserts, including portions of Louisville, Lexington, Frankfort, and Bowling Green. Even in areas where there are grocery stores, individuals may be unable to afford fresh food.

Growing fruits or vegetables in a backyard or on other neighborhood land increases access and affordability. While this can also generate extra income if fruits and vegetables are sold, one of the biggest advantages is that household income is freed up for purchases other than food. Community organizations—such as food banks and churches providing food aid, schools and libraries providing educational programs, and afterschool or summer programs for at risk youth—and the local food movement are also embracing urban agriculture in the United States.

Urban agriculture is not only shaped by an individual's reasons for participating, but by the barriers they encounter as well. Barriers for urban agriculture typically include economics, access to resources, and human health concerns. These obstacles center around the idea that individuals who wish to participate in urban agriculture may lack safe, uncontaminated land and water and other resources such as tools, labor or educational resources, money with which these things could be purchased, and/or access to markets to create revenue from their venture. This often leads to farmers using marginalized land and/or water resources and producing in very low-input ways. Although this generates innovation, it can lead to inefficiencies and inconsistencies in production. Urban farmers with more resources—such as money, land, buildings, or social capital—are able to diversify their crop selection and farming practices as well by exploring less traditional forms of urban agriculture such as hydroponics, aquaponics, aquaculture, vertical plantings, and rooftop gardening.

Cooperative Extension can help urban farmers, especially limited-resource farmers, overcome some of these barriers by developing educational programs that enable and allow them to make the best use of the resources available. Developing programs that connect these urban farmers to resources that would otherwise not be at their disposal should also be a priority.

Goal: Develop educational programs and partnerships with local, state and federal agencies to train individuals and groups in sustainable urban production, processing and marketing best management practices to increase access to fresh, healthy and local food.

C. Environment and Natural Resources

Issue Statement: The health and well-being of Kentucky communities and sustained agricultural systems depend on the protection and conservation of natural resources now and for the future.

Ensuring a healthy environment that includes protected natural resources is a critical issue throughout the country. In Kentucky, the state's economy and the well-being of all citizens are directly tied to the health of our forests, waterways, air and soil. The forests of the Commonwealth not only provide economic, recreational and aesthetic benefits, but also serve to provide a valuable habitat for wildlife and to provide improved air quality and erosion control along our many waterways. An estimated \$13 billion per year are spent in Kentucky on wildlife-related recreation alone. Kentucky has more the 12 million acres of forestland that cover 49 percent of the state; ninety nine percent of that acreage is considered to be available for timber production. The state's forests generate close to \$13 billion per year for the Kentucky's economy. Some major conservation issues with the forests are forest fragmentation and loss, non-native invasive plants and pests, and unlawful activity.

With over 91,000 miles of streams and 225,000 acres of ponds, lakes and reservoirs, Kentucky's waterbodies also have significant impacts on the environmental, economic and social well-being of our citizens. As of 2012, approximately 67 percent of assessed Kentucky rivers and streams were deemed impaired by the Kentucky Division of Water due to sediment from erosion and flooding, and runoff from fertilizers and pesticides. The Commonwealth has one of the most diverse fish and mussel populations in the U.S. as well as 20 frog, 25 salamander and 13 turtle species that require healthy water for breeding.

Kentucky State University's Cooperative Extension Program must provide strategies, workshops and information to all Kentuckians, whether in rural or urban settings, about the importance of protecting our valuable natural resources for economic, social, health, recreational and aesthetic purposes. Our role is to design innovative programming that

bridges the divide between scientific data and the general public's understanding of the importance of preserving Kentucky's natural resources so that Kentuckians can take action to ameliorate the environmental issues throughout the state.

Goal: *Design and implement programming and build relationships with communities and organizations across Kentucky in order to share research-based information about natural resource conservation and environmental sustainability.*

D. Community Health

Issue Statement: *Low-income and minority populations are disproportionately associated with poor health outcomes.*

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP), one in two adults in the U.S. has a chronic disease and one in four adults has two or more chronic diseases. These illnesses include heart disease, cancer, chronic lung disease, stroke, Alzheimer's disease and Type 2 diabetes. These are the leading causes of death, disability and high health care costs for individuals in this country and the effects on low income and minority populations may be astronomical. The rates of mortality and morbidity in these populations continues to increase.

Health disparities are defined as the difference in health status among segments of the populations such as by gender, race or ethnicity, educational attainment, income, disability, or living in a specific geographic location. These differences are often preventable; therefore, communities have the opportunity to strive for equity by achieving the highest level of health for all people.

From 1999 to 2015, the death rate in the U.S. for African-Americans over the age of 65 decreased by about 25 percent. Even with these improvements, more young African-Americans are living with conditions that typically occur in white Americans at older ages. Some are even dying from these chronic diseases due to their early onset, which often leads to death. In addition, chronic diseases and some of their risk factors may be silent or not diagnosed during the critical early years meaning that many young African-Americans may not know they face these conditions.

Hispanics are the largest ethnic minority population in the U.S. Heart disease and cancer are two of the leading causes of death in this population, accounting for about two of five deaths, which is comparable to white Americans. Fewer Hispanics than white Americans die from the ten leading causes of death, but Hispanics have higher death rates than white Americans from diabetes, chronic liver disease and cirrhosis.

The Minority Health Status Report (2015) from Kentucky's Office of Health Equity is an important link to understanding the gaps in health outcomes in the state for various populations, the work currently being done in these areas, and the opportunities to address these disparities in communities of color in spite of the lack of data. Kentucky ranks first in cancer-related deaths, tenth in heart disease and third in chronic lower respiratory disease, and the state supersedes the national rates in each category. However, the Health Status Report cited a lack of racial/ethnic data available across public health programming, which limits the comparison of disparities of health outcomes in minorities to the population at large.

Data from research on health differences indicates disparities are often due to economic and social conditions and are more common among African-Americans and Hispanics than white Americans. Some social factors and health risks impact African-Americans at younger ages. This includes such factors as unemployment, poverty, lack of home ownership, costs associated with seeing a doctor, smoking, sedentary lifestyles, and obesity. Prevention strategies to address these social determinants of health and educational information can impact the health of the communities.

Social determinants of health are the conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. Good health outcomes are not only linked to the absence of disease, but also the presence of resources, access, better choices, policies that work for all, and the elimination of chronic stress. Although knowledge and information are important to all Kentuckians, additional consideration should be given to reduce the incidence of disease in low-income and minority communities.

Goal: *Improve the overall health conditions of individuals, families and communities through initiatives promoting healthy lifestyles.*

E. Nutrition

Issue Statement: *Families in the Commonwealth of Kentucky have poor nutritional habits including consumption of foods high in fats and sodium and low in fiber. In addition, many Kentuckians do not achieve the recommended amount of physical activity per week.*

Obesity prevalence has risen dramatically in the U.S. in the past few decades, particularly among young children from low-income and minority groups. In the last 40 years, obesity rates have almost doubled in children 2 to 5 years of age, quadrupled in children aged 6 to 11, and more than tripled in adolescents 12 to 19 years. Currently, over two-thirds of American

adults and one-third of American children are overweight or obese. According to the latest report from the National Council for Health Service over 34 percent of adults 20 years and older are obese; the increase in obesity rates over the last 25 years has resulted in a shift in the entire Body Mass Index (BMI) distribution and an increase in the prevalence of those who are extremely obese.

In Kentucky, obesity and related chronic diseases have also dramatically increased in the past several years, particularly in children. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 66.2 percent of the adult population in the state is either overweight or obese (Kentucky ranks fifth in the U.S. for obesity rates). Nearly one-third of Kentucky children are either overweight or obese. Historically, low-income families are more vulnerable to obesity and related chronic diseases primarily due to poor diets, limited resources, and total lack of or limited access to health care and health-related education information. All of these factors contribute to an increased incidence of obesity, chronic disease, co-morbidities and mortalities. According to the American Heart Association, cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of death in all Americans. CVD occurs at a disproportionately higher rate in African-Americans. Furthermore, the average age of African-American individuals with CVD and related mortality is significantly lower than other ethnic groups. This phenomenon is partly explained by the occurrence of a cluster of risk factors in which Kentucky ranks in the top 10 in the U.S., such as obesity (fifth), hypertension (sixth), Type 2 diabetes mellitus (seventh). All of these factors increase the risk of CVD and stroke four-fold. Because of these cluster factors, Kentucky also ranks in the top 10 for CVD (sixth) and stroke (eighth).

Recent data demonstrates that Kentucky adults and youth rarely achieve the recommended amount of physical activity every week. Current research demonstrates that less than half of adults achieve at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week and nearly 30 percent report no activity at all. Similarly, youth are also deficient in their activity level. Despite many efforts, the prevalence of obesity remains unchanged in a substantial portion of the population, especially in minority communities.

Goal: *Provide participants with necessary nutrition- and fitness-related educational programs and resources to reduce adult and childhood obesity, improve knowledge and skills, and promote lifestyle changes.*

F. Youth Development

Issue Statement: *Minority and low-income youth lack access to programs and resources that prevent risky behaviors.*

4-H Youth Development programs play a vital role in helping youth to be successful. Research shows that youth who participate in structured, out-of-school extracurricular 4-H programs have positive outcomes in academic achievement, cultural and social development, healthy living, civic engagement, and leadership skills. 4-H Youth Development programs provide learning experiences outside the classroom situation and a positive and sustained relationship with an adult mentor, which leads to positive growth during adolescence.

Expanding access to afterschool and other extended learning programs and addressing the diverse and changing needs of youth and their families is essential. 4-H programs can offer solutions that create pathways to opportunities in leadership, personal development and careers for youth and families. Stable families, supporting communities and caring professionals allow youth to avoid risky behaviors, build important life skills and provide opportunities to use their skills in the community.

Goal: *Expand 4-H Youth Development educational programs, particularly those focused on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) as well as agriculture, healthy living and citizenship to reduce risky behaviors and promote positive youth development.*

G. Family Well-Being

Issue Statement: *Limited-resource families face numerous challenges that affect every aspect of life related to their social health and well-being.*

Living in relative poverty is a key contributing factor that adversely impacts family well-being. High unemployment and underemployment affect the economic security of families. Economic security is important to ensure that all family members have the opportunity to thrive. However, in Kentucky 26 percent of children live below the federal poverty threshold and 41 percent live in areas of concentrated poverty. Poverty rates tend to be higher in single-parent households, households with large numbers of children, and for minorities, women, the disabled, young families and senior citizens. Growing up in poverty threatens a child's physical and mental health, social-emotional development and educational attainment. In addition, poverty creates stress, which can have an adverse influence on parenting skills and practices. Single-parent households often have lower incomes and cannot share parental responsibilities. Low-income families face higher levels of marital stress, which may contribute to marital dissatisfaction and dissolution. Poverty is also associated with higher health risks, since people in poverty are more likely to suffer from poor nutrition, chronic health problems and a lack of adequate health care.

The federal government poverty guidelines for 2017 are defined as \$24,600 for a family of four or \$12,060 for an individual. According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, 18.5 percent of the Kentucky population lived in poverty in 2015. Poverty rates in Kentucky by racial and ethnic groups in 2015 were: 17.4 percent of white Americans; 31.5 percent of African-Americans; 29.4 percent of American Indians; 15.8 percent of Asians; and 31.8 percent of Hispanics.

Family and Consumer Sciences focuses holistically on the well-being of families from the cradle to the grave. Family well-being is an important part of our efforts to build strong communities. Emphasis must be placed on educational programs focusing attention and resources on family wellness. Programs will facilitate the development of knowledge and skills to improve family wellbeing of families facing poverty and others who wish to enhance their learning.

Goal: *To strengthen family relationships and improve family well-being in economically distressed communities in targeted areas of Kentucky.*

H. Financial Management

Issue Statement: *Individuals, limited-resource families, young families, senior citizens and others may lack the skills that lead to self-sufficiency and financial security.*

The importance of the development of knowledge and skills in financial and resource management cannot be underestimated. Limited-resource families, small and limited-resource farmers, minorities and others can benefit from educational programs designed to increase their skill and confidence in securing financial stability. While financial management programs are important, multi-pronged activities may be needed to assist with some of the issues facing low-income families.

A 2009 publication by Kentucky Youth Advocates, "A Cycle of Debt," highlighted experiences of Kentucky families with payday lending and other high-cost financial services. The research indicated that Kentucky families need adequate income to support their children, yet many struggle to make ends meet. Families need reasonably priced financial services to pay bills and provide for their families. Families used high-cost financial services including payday and refund anticipation loans because they felt that they had no other immediate credit options.

Great emphasis has been placed on financial capability by a variety of groups and organizations. Cooperative Extension personnel have the training and experience to assist individuals and families in better managing their financial situation through educational

programs that are designed to reduce poverty and promote self-sufficiency. While no program can make an inadequate income adequate, educational efforts can provide training and financial management strategies that work in households with low and volatile incomes and ultimately help families feel greater control over their financial situation. Both rural and urban low-income families face monumental challenges with regard to becoming financially stable such as unemployment, underemployment, volatile incomes, credit and debt management, high cost credit (for example, payday loans), poor consumer decision making processes, competing financial priorities, uncertainty due to the increased cost of health care and health insurance, and very often, inadequate income and resources. Families face many challenges in their pursuit of financial security, including issues with credit card debt, student loan debt, and personal loans. Extension programs will need to work with consumers to help them through the various steps to move towards financial stability.

Goal: *Encourage the viability of families using best practices and new discoveries in financial and resource management programming.*

I. Community Leadership Development

Issue Statement: *Leaders from low-income communities struggle to address evolving challenges faced by their communities.*

We work in an age of transformative change. The ability to deal with the fast-paced changes impacting communities' social, economic, natural and political environments is very important to the clientele of the Cooperative Extension Program. The challenges brought by these changes require that existing and emerging leaders are able to mobilize individuals with a diverse set of interests, perspectives and cultures effectively to work together and solve problems faced by their communities. The leadership development initiatives will be rooted in commitment to community, shared leadership, adaptive change, mastering technology and embracing of diversity and cultural differences.

Minority populations are either underrepresented in leadership roles or under-recognized for their leadership contributions. Many leadership development programs function under the sole assumption that if knowledge and skills are provided to individuals who have demonstrated leadership potential or ability, they will then strengthen their performance and ability to serve the community. This approach does not take into account the structural and systemic issues that inhibit true empowerment. Increasing representation and contributions of minority leaders requires having a systemic perspective, a focus on leadership as a process, and a plan to support these new leaders as they face systemic inequities embedded into the culture of organizations, networks and communities.

Given the complexities of evolving issues faced by communities, leadership development activities will be undertaken within the cultural, historical and social context, and the needs of the community, and they will focus on enhancing capacities that broaden perspectives and encourage life-long learning.

Goal: Increase the capacity of existing and emerging leaders to strengthen and promote resilient and thriving communities in a rapidly-changing society.

STRATEGIES AND INDICATORS

Our mission and vision remain the foundation on which our strategies, goals and objectives are built. Our strategies and indicators are aligned with our goals and objectives under our developed priority areas.

The following five strategies are designed to accomplish our goals:

- Incorporate and design teamwork with cross-functional collaboration among priority areas
- Increase access to appropriate technologies that enhance program delivery
- Effectively increase Extension credibility among clientele and all stakeholders
- Collaborate and partner with existing Extension systems
- Alignment and strategic placement of Extension professionals

Strategy 1: Incorporate and Design Teamwork with Cross-Functional Collaboration Among Priority Areas

Extension professionals are trained to work in their area of expertise. However, with more complex issues emerging, the Cooperative Extension Program must move towards a more collaborative approach to solve problems. Given the opportunity for possible collaborations, program teams have been developed to focus on strengthening Extension professionals, increasing collaboration, and to design effective educational programs that address the needs of our underserved clientele. This approach will help to garner collaborative efforts and to combine strengths and skills among Extension professionals that can lead to successful and effective program implementation. In addition, future efforts will support and promote increased collaboration between different priority areas.

Objective:

To strengthen and increase productivity of Extension professionals toward delivering effective services to underserved clientele.

Indicators:

- Number of interactive meetings among Extension professionals in various priority areas to create and foster collaboration
- Number of developed curricula with collaboration
- Number of programs that incorporate content from other priority areas
- Number of Extension professionals that collaborate towards solving issue-based problems
- Number of educational materials with elements on cross-tea, collaboration developed

Strategy 2: Increase Access to Appropriate Technologies that Enhance Program Delivery

The world is constantly changing, and the use of digital and web-based tools for the delivery of Extension programs has grown extensively. These technological advances will continue to increase, and this places a burden on people who cannot access or stay abreast of current technologies. As a result of this, Kentucky State University Cooperative Extension Program will build capacity for Extension professionals to increase their knowledge with various technologies. In turn, Extension professionals will incorporate modern technology and work to develop Extension programs that will reach underserved communities. We will increase efforts toward closing digital gaps by empowering Extension professionals with skill-based trainings associated with the use of technologies in program development and delivery.

Objective:

To increase Extension professionals' and stakeholders' access to technology and decrease the digital divide as a constraint to reaching underserved communities.

Indicators:

- Number of Extension professionals who make use of instructional technology and materials effectively during program implementation
- Number of electronic fact sheets developed for online use
- Number of Extension professionals using face-to-face and online tools to engage clientele
- Number of webinars created by Extension professionals to reach Extension agents
- Number of webinars created by Extension professionals to reach stakeholders
- Number of Extension professionals reporting the use of innovative technology in their plans of work

Strategy 3: Effectively Increase Extension Credibility Among Clientele and Stakeholders

A variety of information is readily available through web-based tools, but it is becoming difficult for the public to distinguish what is relevant and valuable to them. Therefore, Kentucky State University Cooperative Extension Program will continue to promote research-based programming by incorporating several communication methods to ensure that information remains relevant, user-friendly, accessible and accurate.

Objective:

To continue to build the brand of Kentucky State University Cooperative Extension Program with credible and trusted sources for the stakeholders.

Indicators:

- Number of applied-research Extension programs and workshops
- Number of research-based brochures
- Number of informative videos produced to reach all stakeholders
- Number of promotional materials produced to aid program delivery

Strategy 4: Collaborate and Partner with Existing Extension Systems

Communities continue to face life-altering issues related to health, social and economic well-being. Therefore, it is important to align ourselves with other educational programs that provide solutions for communities and families that suffer from these problems. The aim of collaborating with other Extension systems is to share curricula, research results and educational programs that have provided solutions to issue-based problems of common interest at state and regional levels.

Objective:

To create state and national change on areas of common interest among Cooperative Extension Programs.

Indicators:

- Number of Extension and applied research partnerships among other land-grant universities and community partners
- Number of joint publications based on collaborations with other land-grant universities and community partners
- Number of multi-institutional outreach programs developed with other land-grant universities and community partners

- Amount of funding received from grants that address issue-based problems with other land-grant universities and community partners

Strategy 5: Alignment and Strategic Placement of Extension Professionals

Within Extension, professionals have different specializations and levels of experience. The needs of stakeholders are constantly changing and their interests in innovative practices have led to an increased pressure on Extension professionals to remain abreast of the changing needs of our underserved clientele and have updates skills. We will develop a hierarchy of professional development tracks that consist of training skills for traditional face-to-face delivery, workshops or field days, webinars and electronic web-based programming. We will continue to train and develop our Extension professionals on core competencies needed to serve to our clientele effectively. We will also assess current positions and job descriptions to gauge alignments.

Objective:

To develop various trainings on core competencies needed by Extension professionals.

Indicators:

- Number of Extension professionals adopting the recommended practices suggested in training sessions
- Number of Extension professionals empowered through specialized training
- Number of success stories reported by Extension professionals each quarter
- Number of Extension educational programs evaluated and reported
- Number of plans of work influenced by core-competency training
- Number of new stakeholders participating in Extension programming

EVALUATION

To evaluate the overall effectiveness of the strategic plan, “Transforming Kentuckians: Racing Toward Excellence,” portions of the strategic plan were divided into two sections. In section one, nine priority program areas were selected based on a specific issue that needs to be addressed. Section two outlines the five strategies, five objectives and 22 indicators. The outcome indicators will be used to develop a performance criterion. The performance criterion will be developed by the Kentucky State University Cooperative Extension Program (KYSUCEP) leadership team to evaluate the priority areas, strategies, indicators and objectives. Through this criterion, the KYSUCEP leadership team can actively measure and capture all levels of progress in the strategic plan.

Throughout the five-year strategic plan (2018-20223), KYSUCEP leadership team will follow an evaluation hierarchy approach to assess individual programs within the plan: (1.) need for the program, (2.) program design and theory, (3.) process and implementation, (4.) program outcome and impact, and (5.) program cost and efficiency. This will be monitored and measured by conducting regular, ongoing formative evaluation to measure the progress towards, “Transforming Kentuckians: Racing Toward Excellence.” The KYSUCEP leadership team will also work to create a baseline measure that will allow quantitative and qualitative data comparison to study change throughout the five years.

Each year, Extension professionals will develop an individual plan of work that focuses on supporting the overall strategic plan goals and objectives. The leadership team will evaluate and measure each plan of work using the program performance outlined in the performance criterion. Extension professionals will also create a plan of work for program teams to monitor and measure if priority program areas are being accomplished within the team setting.

A progress report will be created by the KYSUCEP leadership team to identify whether progress has been made towards program unit goals. Extension professionals and program teams will complete the annual form as a part of their yearly evaluation.

An overall assessment of the organization and current conditions is critical. Therefore, to help establish a clear direction, the use of stakeholder surveys, focus groups and listening sessions will serve as the baseline. In addition, each area listed in the strategy will serve as an item in the rubric to measure the overall success from year to year.

At the beginning of year five (2022-2023), a team of internal and external Extension professionals, advisory council members and stakeholders will conduct a summative statewide evaluation to determine the overall effectiveness, strengths and areas for improvement of “Transforming Kentuckians: Racing Toward Excellence,” as well as opportunities for growth.

CLOSING COMMENTS

“Transforming Kentuckians: Racing Toward Excellence,” outlines the goals and objectives that the Kentucky State University Cooperative Extension Program will utilize to help underserved Kentuckians improve their lives. Our extensive network of partners will play a pivotal role in helping us move the organization forward. We are committed to people, priorities, programs, professional development and performance. Please join us as we help to transform Kentuckians.

Kentucky State University
Cooperative Extension Building
400 East Main Street
Frankfort, KY 40601



**COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION PROGRAM**

WWW.KYSU.EDU/AG

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating. 2019