

# Responsibilities of County Extension Council

The County Extension Council and its supporting program/issue committees serve a vital role in developing, conducting, evaluating, and marketing the total county Extension program to the citizens of the county. The overall Extension educational program must be kept in tune with current interests and needs of local people. Rapid change in communities and the state requires review of existing programs and anticipation of new programming possibilities. The function of the County Extension Council includes:

## Six Major Responsibilities

1. Offer a relevant education program.
  - a. Stay informed of activities in all parts of the Extension program.
  - b. Select program priorities and establish needed committees.
  - c. Delegate responsibilities when a new area of programming is needed and set priorities.
  - d. Assist with and sponsor educational activities. Set up ad hoc committees.
  - e. Utilize special programs when appropriate. Occasionally, program opportunities of a special nature become available from outside sources to respond to some unexpected or emergency need.
2. Support program/issue committees.
  - a. Coordinate committees.
  - b. Provide resources (help secure or identify funding).
  - c. Promote events or educational activities.
3. Serve as an advocacy group in interpreting and strengthening Extension programs.
  - a. Inform the public:
    1. Distribute County Impact Report.
    2. Conduct program interpretation activities (addressing civic groups, etc.).
  - b. Communicate internally through:
    1. Regular Council meetings.
    2. Brief reports by chairs at regular county Council meetings.
    3. Timely newsletters as appropriate on Council activities.
4. Evaluate progress.
  - a. Review program accomplishments.
    1. Are programs effective?
    2. Are programs reaching intended audiences?
    3. Are programs moving toward objectives set by committee?
    4. Are other committees needed?
    5. Are other resources needed?
    6. Are program accomplishments shared with appropriate groups?
5. Maintain a strong organization.
  - a. Review structure. Dissolve ineffective committees or obsolete programs.
  - b. Develop calendar.
  - c. Use standing rules.
  - d. Rotate leaders.
6. Welcome and orient new faculty members to the county and to the functions of the County Extension Council.

## Responsibilities of County Extension Council Officers

1. Chair – Manage the organization’s operations.
  - a. Set schedules.
  - b. Prepare agendas.
  - c. Preside at meetings.
  - d. Appoint members.
2. Vice Chair
  - a. Serve as principle aide to chair.
  - b. Preside in absence of chair.
  - c. Carry out special assignments.
3. Secretary
  - a. Serve as recording officer and maintain groups papers.
  - b. Handle minutes of meetings, correspondence, membership records and other related assignments.

## Responsibilities of Individual Council Members

In order to provide coordination and leadership of the Extension program, council members will:

1. Maintain contact with other members and Extension agents to stay current with programs and activities.
2. Study the purpose, functions, and procedure of the County Council.
3. Attend Council meetings.
4. Be familiar with assigned program area responsibility.
5. Report program/issue committee plans and accomplishments to the Council.
6. Help Council review structure and suggest needed changes.
7. Assist in identifying leaders.
8. Complete pre-meeting assignments.
9. Participate in the county plan of work planning process.

10. Identify emerging issues and problems.
11. Review plans of various program/issue committees.
12. Assist in obtaining financial or material resources.
13. Help plan ways to explain and promote the Extension program.
14. Participate in conducting events and activities planned by the Council.
15. Evaluate accomplishments of the County Extension Council.

## Role of Extension Agents

It is the responsibility of the county Extension agent - staff chair to give guidance to the overall county Extension program. Specifically, the staff chair will:

1. Work with the entire county faculty to develop a list of prospective Council members.
2. Work with county judge to make his/her nominations.
3. Arrange for one member of the county faculty to serve as secretary of the Council.
4. Encourage all faculty members to attend Council meetings.
5. Encourage all faculty members to utilize members of the Council in program delivery and evaluation.
6. Ensure that Council membership meets civil rights guidelines and represents various geographical and program area interests.

The entire county Extension faculty will:

1. Provide input into brainstorming a list of prospective Council members.
2. One faculty member will serve as secretary of the Council with no vote.
3. Attend and participate in Council meetings.

4. Utilize Council members in delivery and evaluation of programs.
5. The county faculty member responsible for specific program areas will serve as resource person to that area's program planning committee. In the case of issue-based programming, the appropriate county faculty members will serve as resource persons.

## **Role of Program/Issue Chairs**

The entire county program planning process involves the use of the County Extension Council and several program/issue or ad hoc committees. The committees may be the traditional four program area committees: agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, community development, and 4-H and youth. The committees may be issue-based committees that work across traditional subject matter lines, representing various audiences working on a common issue. The entire county Extension programming process may be a combination of the two methods. Whatever the case, the chair and vice chair of each of these committees sits on the County Extension Council.

The chair's duties as a member of the overall County Extension Council include:

1. Offer a relevant educational program for assigned area.
2. Support program/issue or ad hoc committees.
3. Report, interpret, and market progress.
4. Maintain a strong organization.

The chair of each committee will perform the following functions relating to the committee:

1. Work with the County Extension faculty person assigned to the specific committee to appoint members. Consideration should be given to local

enterprises, racial-ethnic, or socioeconomic population segments, and local organizations having similar objectives.

2. Schedule meetings as appropriate for program planning and review.
3. Interpret findings and plans of the County Extension Council's overall recommendations for the county Extension program.
4. Report issues and subjects identified by committee to the County Extension Council; then interpret and market results of educational programs conducted for the County Extension Council.
5. Assist county Extension agents in developing evaluation methods for educational programs.

## **Responsibilities of Program/Issue Committee Members**

Each of the program/issue committees will:

1. Meet with the committee and examine county situation with respect to the committee's assignment.
2. Provide program planning input as to issues/problems/solutions.
3. Assist agents in carrying out planned programs.
4. Assist in providing resources when appropriate.
5. Review results of previous year's programs.
6. Help interpret and market program results to the public.