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TO: NC Cooperative Extension Service
Employees

FROM: Jon F. Ort 
Assistant Vice Chancellor, Associate Dean and Director

DATE: February 17, 2006

SUBJECT: Departmental Merger –
Family and Consumer Sciences and 4-H Youth Development

In keeping with the spirit of our new Change Management and Marketing Initiative, I want to share some important and exciting news with you. Effective July 1, 2006, the Departments of Family and Consumer Sciences and 4-H Youth Development will become one department. This is a well-thought out and strategic decision, that we believe makes sense in our current environment. Drs. Zaslow and Stewart met with their faculties yesterday to share this news. Immediately following this meeting, an e-mail message was sent to their respective County Extension Agent lists.

We began strategic dialogue about the future of CALS Departments at the Dean's Retreat in October 2005. When Dr. Sandy Zaslow notified me of her retirement this Fall, it made sense strategically to think about how we might move ahead with bringing these two departments under one administrative umbrella.

From that dialogue and other conversations, the Dean and I along with Drs. Zaslow and Stewart agree that there are extraordinary benefits to both programs and faculties, in uniting two strong departments. Departmental size and critical mass of faculty and staff is strengthened, which is a positive step as the College and the University critically evaluate departments. The new department is enhanced by a stronger academic component. Family and Consumer Sciences brings to the department a master's degree program and 4-H Youth Development brings a Youth Development Leadership Specialization with the College of Education. Both programs share a commitment to strengthening and sustaining youth, families and communities. Both are fiscally sound and have established Foundations. As one department, the opportunity will be greater to leverage contracts and grants. Because youth and family issues are critical to the future of this state, the new department will have greater human capital and financial support to affect policy and address major issues of interest to families and youth.

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Effective July 1, 2006, Dr. Marshall Stewart will assume leadership as Department Head and State Program Leader for the new department of Family and Consumer Sciences and 4-H Youth Development. At the same time, Dr. Sandy Zaslow will be named Associate Director of Family and Youth Programs.

After Dr. Zaslow's retirement this fall, this Associate Director title will be added to the Department Head and State Program Leader of the Family and Consumer Sciences and 4-H Youth Development department.

I want to assure you that we will maintain program identity and integrity for Family and Consumer Sciences and 4-H Youth Development when these departments merge. There will continue to be distinct Family and Consumer Sciences and 4-H Youth Development units in the new department. The existing departmental names will be used in the department's new name. Campus faculty will retain current titles and academic rank, as will field faculty. We will continue joint endeavors such as EFNEP and the childhood overweight/obesity initiative, and such programs will become stronger.

I believe this is the right thing to do and the right time to do it. I ask for your positive support and dialogue in this endeavor, as we create the future we want for the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service and the people we serve.

JO/vp

CC: Vice Chancellor John Gilligan
Dean Johnny Wynne
Dean Alton Thompson
Dr. Sylvia Blankenship
Dr. Ken Esbenshade
Dr. Steve Leath
Dr. M. Ray McKinnie
Dr. Joe Zublena
Dr. Celvia Stovall
Dr. Ed Jones