



N.C. Cooperative Extension Service

A Summary of Our Strategic Vision for Serving North Carolina

What People in N.C. Say they Need from Extension

Our Strategic Planning Vision

The North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service at N.C. State University has launched a strategic plan to chart our future. This vision ignites a renewed organizational focus, invests in essential resources and creates an unprecedented level of service and access throughout the state to create economic, societal and intellectual prosperity for North Carolinians.

An essential objective throughout the process was to ensure that the public continues to receive trusted, research-based knowledge that helps them make better-informed decisions and improve their lives. We've served North Carolina for 100 years, and we plan to do it for another century.

www.ces.ncsu.edu/vision-initiative/strategic-plan



Charting the Future

We will implement the strategic plan during a 22-month period from August 2014 through July 2016.

The N.C. Cooperative Extension Service will always be an organization that exists to empower people, cultivate relationships and change lives. We're leveraging an opportunity to improve how we do business and to optimize our ability to add value to N.C.'s communities and economy.

To maximize Extension's impacts, our strategic plan:

- ✓ Drives a renewed organizational focus,
- ✓ Positions Extension for long-term sustainability and relevance,
- ✓ Creates a more equitable level of service and access to expertise across the state, and
- ✓ Cultivates valuable partnerships to fulfill the land-grant mission of education.



Extension's stakeholders spoke, and we listened. Our top priority is to continue providing North Carolinians with the resources, relationships and services they need. Now we will align our resources with our core program areas.

How did this planning process work?

We mapped our path to the future through an extensive planning process that illustrated where Extension is most needed and best equipped to provide research-based information and trusted expertise to the people of North Carolina.

We asked questions, engaged employees and stakeholders, and poured over data during a

10-month process to ensure that Extension will continue to deliver practical solutions that help strengthen families and communities.

We engaged a broad variety of employees, clients and stakeholders:

- ✓ Hosted 14 public listening sessions across the state with 2,000 attendees,
- ✓ Connected with more than 600 employees at our Annual State Conference,
- ✓ Polled 179 county commissioners/managers to assess their needs, and
- ✓ Consulted with 8 state Extension systems that have undergone change.

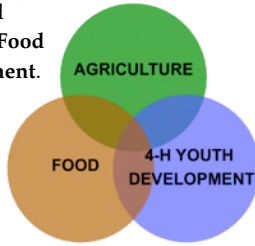
In addition, we:

- ✓ Appointed a "Visioning Team" made up of ~45 Extension employees, stakeholders & community partners to help craft our plan.
- ✓ Met with Government officials, Commodity groups, Community organizations, Advisory councils and other key stakeholders to discuss our future.

Renewed Focus, Unmatched Service

Identify Our Core Programs

We are focusing our resources where we are most needed, best equipped to provide solutions and can make the most impacts on the state's communities and economy: **Agriculture, Food & 4-H Youth Development.** Each Core Program Area includes multiple sub-programs.



Partner for Progress

Cooperative Extension is a century-old collaboration between federal, state and local governments, as well as land-grant universities across the nation. While we partner with N.C. A&T State University as our fellow N.C. land-grant university, this strategic plan reflects changes only for the Extension Service at N.C. State University.

Relationships remain the lifeblood of the Extension Service. We will continue to partner with N.C. A&T and local governments across the state to deliver and apply the world-leading research at N.C. State.

Position Extension for Long-term Success & Relevance

We are positioning Extension for long-term sustainability by addressing our strengths and the needs of the state to improve the lives, land and economy of North Carolinians. For example, agriculture is N.C.'s leading industry at \$77B. Extension is ideally positioned to step up and help grow N.C. agriculture to \$100B by 2020.

Key aspects of the plan include:

- ✓ Identify & focus on our core program areas
- ✓ Build High Tech, remain High Touch
- ✓ Bolster communications & branding
- ✓ Strengthen capacity & collaboration
- ✓ Enhance staff retention & expertise

From our strategic plan and vision, a modern Extension organization will emerge. This 21st-century approach to education and program development will help our people sustain existing relationships and engage new audiences with Extension's resources. In doing so, we can more effectively work with clients to transfer valuable knowledge and skills into practical application.

Optimize Access to Expertise Across N.C.

Going forward with partnerships with local governments and N.C. A&T, we will maintain our presence in each of our 101 local centers (including every county & the Eastern Band of Cherokee). Each local center will be offered a base staffing model with agents in Agriculture, 4-H and Family & Consumer Sciences, as well as a support specialist, to ensure targeted expertise and a friendly smile in every office.

At present, some counties are without the base level of access to Extension due to funding losses. Our new plan will address this issue at a local level, as well as add regional expertise through 15 additional area agents specialized in commodities and specific issues, to provide direct access to unbiased solutions involving agriculture, food and youth development.



Together, Our Journey Progresses

"The N.C. Cooperative Extension Service has a long, proud tradition of serving the citizens and communities of North Carolina. We have offices in every county and the Eastern Band of Cherokee, we live and raise families in every community, and we empower people and provide solutions across the state.



Extension achieved 100 years of service this year. Celebrating the centennial of one of the nation's premier Extension organizations presented a unique opportunity not only to recognize our historical impacts, but also to evaluate our operations and envision long-term goals to improve how we serve our clients.

Funding reductions created challenges, but they also presented opportunities and incentives to better ourselves going forward. We seized the opportunity and worked with employees and stakeholders to optimize our operations. As a result, Extension can continue to create economic, societal and intellectual prosperity for North Carolinians for many years to come.

From this endeavor we crafted a vision for our future, and we're excited, proud and confident with what lies ahead. *The next phase of our journey starts now. Together we move forward!*"

Joe Zublena
Director, N.C. Cooperative Extension Service | N.C. State University

Extension Leadership

Joe Zublena — Director, N.C. Cooperative Extension Service (NCCES) and Associate Dean, CALS

Tom Melton — Deputy Director, NCCES and State Program Leader, Agriculture & Natural Resources (ANR)

Sheri Schwab — Associate Director, NCCES and Director of County Operations

Mitzi Stumpf-Downing — Assistant Director, NCCES and Interim State Program Leader 4-H & FCS

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