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To: County Extension Directors

From:   
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Associate Director for N.C. Cooperative Extension Service and Director of County Operations

Subject: New Option for Family and Consumer Sciences Agent staffing under the NCCES Vision and Strategic Plan

Dear Colleagues:

As you know, our original version of the NCCES Strategic Vision Plan introduced for the first time in our 100-year history a base staffing model. Most other states across the nation have had some type of base model for many years, allowing county partners to have a predictable investment from their 1862 land-grant university for a base amount of staffing. In addition, our plan included additional state resources invested in "ag add-ons" and Area Specialized Agents.

One element of the base plan ascribed having the Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) agents split across two counties, while simultaneously narrowing their program focus area to food, moving away from a county agent delivery model for parenting, energy and family resource management. Under this design, the pair counties would provide 33% each (66% total) and NC State would provide 34% of the funding (or 17% to each of the two pairing counties) for the 1.0 FTE position.

With this model, we didn't dictate which counties would be required to pair, leaving it up for natural partnerships to identify themselves and let the county partners select with whom they wanted to be in partnership for this programmatic area.

After many months of allowing the implementation to find its natural resolution, and after numerous requests originating from counties themselves, we are opening up a new alternative for individual counties for the FCS agent staffing model.

Specifically, we are open to individual single counties to request a single-county FCS agent, still focused on the food and nutrition program areas. In this model, NC State will still provide the 17% state funding, and a county would be able to fund a single-county FCS agent by providing 83% funding for the 1.0 FTE FCS agent position.

We still endorse and approve the 2-county FCS agent staffing model. This is simply a second option being made available because of numerous requests we have received from counties for this option.

We knew from the first announcement of the plan that we would have to remain open to adjustments along the way; this is a reflection of that reality that is inherent in good partnerships and all best-laid plans.

This option is available immediately. If you have questions, please first discuss with your respective District Extension Director, though of course I remain available for questions and ideas as well.

CC: Joe Zublena, Associate Dean for Extension, CALS, and Director, NCCES  
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