**JCEP Meeting  
May 30, 2023 | Hardin County Extension Office**

**Members Present:** Leslie Workman, Christy Stearns, Eric Comley, Deanna Reed, Amanda Hardy, Tyrone Gentry, Cabrina Buckman, Lynnette Allen, Nicole Breazeale, Steve Musen, Mindy McCulley

**Introductions**

**Welcome**

**Administrative Update**

Dr. Laura Stephenson, Cooperative Extension Director at University of Kentucky and Dr. Allison Young, Cooperative Extension Director at Kentucky State University each gave updates on their respective programs.

Attached to these minutes is the question & answer session between associations and administration.

**Business Meeting**

Call to order: 1:45CT

*Reading of Minutes*

*Reports from Associations*

* KACAA – Annual meeting June 21-23 at KY Dam Village
* KAE4-HA – Annual conference held April 25-27 in Shelbyville, KY. Conference planning for 2024 has started and will be held in Georgetown, KY.
* KEAFCS – Annual meeting scheduled for November 14-17 in Lexington
* ESP – Had a great state meeting in March at the Meade County Extension Office. Planning for states night out September 25-28 at ESP National meeting in Billings, MT. Working on next years meeting. Goals for this year are to increase membership and encourage recruitment.
* KASEP – Met for annual meeting at KSU research farm in April. Gave annual awards and elected new slate of officers.

**Unfinished Business**

* *Report from ELC*: Amanda Hardy gave an update from Extension Leadership Conference. It was held in Kansas City February 7-9. Keynote presentation was on how to influence others, which was the theme of the conference. Tyrone Gentry announced that ELC for next year will be in West Chapel, FL at the Saddlebrook Resort February 12-16, 2024.
* *Report from PILD:* Eric Comley reported on the Public Issues and Leadership Development conference. PILD was held in Washington D.C. April 16-19. It was a fantastic conference and experience, 12 agents attended, many of whom were first time attendees of the conference. Speakers and sessions were great. Tuesday night was states night out at Bar Charley. Hill visits took place on Wednesday, meeting with staff and some legislators. It was beneficial to see Extension on a larger scale.

**New Business**

* *Invitation of Government Relations contact to attend January meeting* – it was suggested to invite Christ Crumrine to January meeting to meet him and understand what our organization is. Natalie will send the invitation. It was suggested he be invited to the October meeting, and that we invite the new group of JCEP members to attend that as well as a transitional meeting. The meeting will be in person at 11am ET at the Hardin County Office. Meeting date is October 31.
* *UK CAFÉ Transition* – We will invite the Dean to the August meeting to discuss the CAFÉ transition. Mindy will contact Dean Cox and we will work around her schedule. Meeting will take place in Lexington to make possibility of meeting with the Dean more realistic. Meeting is set for August 29th. More details to follow.

**05.30.2023 Administrative Update Q&A | Dr. Laura Stephenson and Dr. Allison Young**

*Are considerations and development plans being made for urban extension agents, from day 1, particularly agents with little program support? There is concern that with the influx of hiring, some new agents will slip through the cracks and good agents will be lost. Some agents have expressed concern about a lack of development from day 1, waiting weeks or months to know what their job entails. What can we do as professional development associations to support new agents from day 1? What can administration do?*

Dr. Young | KSU is hiring quite a few individuals and the majority of them do not have an Extension background. Communication from supervisors to AED and RED is essential to set the tone and give direction. KSU is trying to be more consistent in having an onboarding process for KSU Extension, something that hasn’t been done in the past. KSU has been more intentional in training new agents. ANR agents are being trained bi-weekly in grant writing. A new generation of employees are being hired, mentoring and support is needed to help new agents and keep the organization going. Associations need to look at needs assessments to prevent duplicate services and find the gap to address.

Dr. Stephenson | UK is working to provide more support to Urban Extension agents in conjunction with Dr. Jeff Young. Urban Extension has different resources and opportunities, it is not the same type of job from a more rural perspective. Associations can support urban agents by validating that urban programs are going to look different from rural programming. Give urban agent space to talk together about specific issues. Duplication of services is more common in urban areas. From an administrative perspective, make sure it is understood that Urban Extension has changed, clientele has changed, and as new people are hired, they may have to do things differently. We can be successful doing what we have done, but we can’t be relevant by leaning on what we have been doing in the past.

*As Extension is designed to meet the evolving needs of communities and the state, Extension Professionals are asked to be more intricately involved in things such as disaster preparedness, response, and recovery among other very important roles. However, as more detailed roles are added to our job responsibilities, it has not been communicated as to what other things it is appropriate to set aside or let go as these new responsibilities seem to take priority. What advice do you give to Extension staff to determine what things can be let go of or set aside in order to meet the increasing needs for certifications, trainings etc.?*

Dr. Young | Needs assessment and communication are very important. Make sure what you are doing is what is needed for your stakeholders. Organizations are trying to be more nimble in looking at disaster preparedness. Is what you are letting go of something stakeholders no longer need?

Dr. Stephenson | As we try to be proactive, natural disasters are coming about every 8 months. As you think about ‘is this something we have to put on our plate or take off’…it’s something that will come anyway. Trainings are based on prior needs assessments. Overarching needs assessments identified mental health, substance abuse, etc. which is where trainings are coming from. As for what to give up? Discuss with your AED. Plans of work can change on a dime and stay that way for years to come. The East KY Floods were used an example.

*Can you explain the process for updating MAP titles in KERS?  How can agents and other professionals be involved in the process for creating these so that they more closely align with emerging needs?*

Dr. Stephenson | We rely on specialists and faculty to develop MAP titles. Each association can talk to program leaders and let them know we would like to be more involved. Faculty are looking at MAPS and indicators on an annual basis (January – March) for tweaks. Updates are made in April. These can change during Plan of Work time.

*Is there a process for vetting outside trainers or resources that are pushed out to agents?  Extension programming is built on a firm foundation based on rigorous research.  When we use outside people or share resources that don't have this same foundation, it dilutes OUR message.  How can we help ensure that the trainings and materials provided to our staff meet only the high standards to which we have all become accustomed?*

Dr. Young | For KSU programming has always been from Extension Professionals. Outside programming is typically from the University with well-recognized programs.

* *Question from Mindy | KSU trainings in the past have been opened to UK employees, will that be reinstated.* There is a plan for that to be reinstated.

Dr. Stephenson | In-service training has to be guided by Extension Specialists. Extension specialists are recruiting the outside speakers for in service training. Dr. Stephenson will start with specialists to see where the concern from this question is coming from.

*With the new director of Ag Communications, will there be a point person in each program area to coordinate marketing efforts of our Extension mission?  While some program areas have already done that, it would be beneficial for us all to have equal support.*

Dr. Young | Ashley Bates is no longer in the Extension Communications department at KSU. Ag Communications positions is posted for KSU. KSU has one communications position, but would like to have a position to promote all areas of extension exclusively.

Dr. Stephenson | Derrick Meads is looking at this in a different way. Restructuring to have more support but not by program areas, but Extension as a whole. Working with program areas to find what needs are. So is not a plan that will support a single person for each area, but a reframing and adding to the team in a way that will enhance their ability to react quickly.

*What messaging do you feel is most effective to communicate program impact to your AED? If one feels there are differing expectations for the programs (ANR, FCS, 4-H, FA) in an area, how can the idea of equilibrium be achieved?*

Dr. Stephenson | There are many ways to share with an AED impact of programs. Success stories are extremely important for the system and to communicate your program impact. Also letting them see and experience programming when possible, volunteers and participants sharing their stories, and helping them understand why you are focusing on a specific issue or need and then what results have occurred.

There will always be different perspectives within the state. Program Leaders work with AEDs on program expectations and REDs work with them on the broader CES expectations.

*How can we help our AEDs value the quality of the work we provide over an expectation of quantity?  An ag agent and specialist may work with one producer over the course of a year to enhance efficiency and productivity, which will result in greater yield, more income, less waste, and less pollution.  An FCS agent may work with a health council to enhance the quality of snacks and beverages offered at local sporting events.   While these two examples might not generate huge contact numbers, the value of the efforts can potentially enhance the community as a whole.  While the time commitment might be significant for either example, there might be a limited number of actual "programs" involved.  If AEDs have a number expectation with regard to programming, they are devaluing the PSE work that takes place.  How do we help them recognize the value of this type of programming?*

Dr. Young | Balance of one-on-one programming with group programming and out-reach. Enhance collaborations.

Dr. Stephenson | Program Leaders and REDs work with AEDs to ensure there is a fair approach to programmatic expectations. There will be differences program to program and county to county. In regard to PSE programming we recognize and value this method of programming and will continue to help AEDs understand the value. *Discussion was had and this question was explained further by agents. Some agents are hearing from their AED that FCS, 4-H, and AG have program milestones for evaluation each year (example: FCS agents need to implement x number of programs a year and AG agents need to implement x number of programs a year) and those milestones are not the same or comparable. It is like a rubric of expectations for each program area, but it is not equal among the areas. Dr. Stephenson will check into this issue and see where it is coming from, and hopefully clear up the confusion or miscommunication. The agents present have never seen such a “rubric” for agent programming.*

*A significant amount of professional time on campus is spent on duties that could easily be performed by staff support if only we had enough staff support to complete those tasks.  Is there any hope of finding funding to augment budgets so that positions that have been eliminated in the past could be reinstated to support professional staff?*

 Dr. Young | At KSU if there is a position we don’t have a line item for, grant funding is used. Only problem is the sustainability of that position. The last few years we have been successful in bringing in positions on soft money that can often be moved to more permanent positions. What specific staff support is being referred to?

Dr. Stephenson | On campus, this area has been cut the most. Looking at recurring and non-recurring funds…non-recurring funds need to be focused on programmatic support. It’s hard to put support staff on grant funding because they can only work on that grant. They aren’t able to work elsewhere, so it defeats the purpose.

*With the significant funding and impending name change coming to the college, what are the potential implications for Extension?*

Dr. Stephenson | The Dean shared 4 pillars – student learning/success, companion animal program across campus, economic development, rural community engagement. All of these pillars include Extension components. The funding will not be received as a lump sum – it will be given over 20 years. The question is, how do we frame ourselves for the future so we are not doing the same old things? Needs assessment needs to be real.

*There was discussion about the needs assessment process. The new need’s assessment process builds on the lessons learned in the past to gain ownership and buy in. Making questions relevant is important, and some questions will seem odd, as they are trying to get that engagement piece from participants. Situations arise outside of our scope of practice, then it can be passed to hands that can address it. Agents present asked if there is a timeline for the needs assessment. The last needs assessment was rushed, and agents didn’t feel that they had adequate time to get good data. It was suggested that the administration give agents ample time to prepare for the assessment, so they are able to gather significant focus groups and schedule interviews with key leaders and stakeholders in a timely manner, so they are not rushed. It was also asked that the needs assessment be scheduled at a time when agents can commit more time to it. Not sure there is a better time of the year, but it will be taken into consideration.*