

To: All College of Agriculture Personnel

From: Scott Smith

Subject: Ag Futures: Volume 3

This issue of "Ag Futures", as in the past, deals with a wide variety of current issues and developments in the College of Agriculture. Field staff and Extension personnel will be particularly interested in the Re-envisioning update at the end of this communication, yet this is an issue of importance to all of us. Input from the Faculty is specifically solicited on the first item, incentive and appointment policies. However, comments and ideas from all personnel on any of these subjects are welcome at any time. You will find links to more detailed information on several of these subjects at the internal web site for my office (<http://dobson.ca.uky.edu/admin/>).

Developing Flexible Incentive and Appointment Policies

The College of Agriculture is considering innovative ways to provide rewards and incentives for our employees. Several factors contribute to a revisiting of this issue at this time. The College chairs group has been studying faculty rewards and incentives for over a year, and the College administration has been investigating reward systems at other universities. Also, the flat state budget indicates that creative strategies are needed to recruit and retain excellent employees. Finally, the University goals of increased competitiveness for research support suggests that these funding sources should be encouraged. The chairs and the College administration have discussed three strategies and would like to informally poll the faculty to assess support for the various options. These three strategies are different, and it is possible that all three or two of three could be incorporated by the College. Be aware that any of the plans below would require further administrative review at both the college and university level.

A draft outline of three options has been developed: 1) direct, partial return of grant-generated salary savings to the investigator, 2) options for conversion to 9 month appointments, and 3) grant-generated salary savings broadly distributed as merit awards. These are described in the document "Potential College Incentive and Reward Systems", to which you will find a link at <http://dobson.ca.uky.edu/admin/>. These strategies would represent a significant change in policies and philosophy in the College of Agriculture. Please respond to Nancy Cox by November 4, 1) indicating if you support each option, 2) providing comments on these options and, 3) forwarding any new suggestions.

The College Diversity Task Force

Task Force members are completing a preliminary draft of their report. This internal draft will be reviewed internally by the full Task Force; subsequently by the College administration. Plans are being developed for open forums and web-based input in November and December. The final report with recommendations is scheduled for release in January.

Food Science and Technology Planning Committee

I and the College administration believe that food science/technology is a core area of opportunity for the College and is critical to the needs of the Commonwealth. I am further convinced that the College is under-invested in this area and has not adequately defined our focus and plans for the future.

A recently formed committee, chaired by Mike Barrett, has been asked to provide a strategic action plan for development of food science and technology in the College of Agriculture. (View

the full membership of the committee and its charge at “Food Science and Technology Planning Committee” (<http://dobson.ca.uky.edu/admin/>) Their charge will include:

- Evaluating and describing model programs at other institutions,
- Writing a vision or mission statement regarding the College’s role in food science and technology,
- Assessing existing strengths and assets at UK,
- Recommending program areas within the broad field of food science/technology which could build on existing strengths and that provide targets of investment opportunity.

Some specific questions they may consider are:

- Can we achieve national prominence without a Department of Food Science?
- If so, what organizational structures would be recommended?
- If not, are there transitional steps that might be feasible and affordable now to continue our progress?
- Should we seek to develop a food science/technology incubator or tech transfer facility?
- What are the opportunities and needs for Kentucky in food processing and related economic enterprises?
- What faculty positions are recommended for addition if funding becomes available?
- What other resources or facilities limit our progress in research, teaching or extension?

College Lands

As the steward of large and far-flung land holdings, the College will unavoidably be involved in difficult decisions about the use of these assets. Recent reports about the planned sale of property at South Farm generated some local controversy. The College asked for and received authorization from the UK Board to sell approximately 22 acres. This section, west of the railroad and south of Man of War, is inaccessible and of minimal research value to us. It was not clear in the reports of this proposed transaction that the proceeds will be used to enhance and sustain horticulture research and education operations on the remaining property, thus preserving a rare bit of green space on Nicholasville Road.

The Board has also approved the sale of the “Pin Oak” mansion and adjoining acreage at Woodford County. This property was never actually controlled by the College, having been transferred to the University by gift at the time the farm acreage was purchased with designated state funds. The bid and sale process for both South Farm and Woodford Co. properties is still in the early stages.

Several of you have asked about the status of Robinson Forest. You may have read that the UK Board of Trustees mandated an evaluation of resources at the Forest and an analysis of its long-term use. President Todd subsequently asked that I participate and assist in this process. I urge you not to assume that any hidden agenda lies behind the BOT action. Rather, I conclude that it indicates the university will attempt to deal thoughtfully with potentially conflicting interests in the Forest. I will make every effort to represent the research, education and inherent conservation values of Robinson Forest.

HES Update

Intensive discussion on the future of Human Environmental Sciences continues within that college. Over the next month or so, we are planning a series of meetings and forums to begin answering questions about organizational structure. A variety of configurations involving affiliations with Agriculture remain under consideration. You can view a communication from

me to HES personnel, dealing with general process issues, at “HES Reorganization” <http://dobson.ca.uky.edu/admin/>.

Re-envisioning Extension

Following the submission of the Re-envisioning Extension Report, the College administration and Extension administrative group began a second phase of activity. This now begins to provide more specific information about implementation of the general concepts in the report. Very briefly, significant changes in both the Extension council system and “middle management” operations of Extension are described; these are outlined below. This outline and additional information, including maps of the new Extension Districts and Regions, are on the Re-envisioning web site. (http://ces.ca.uky.edu/extensionadministration/re_envisioning_ces/) and the outline is accessible at <http://dobson.ca.uky.edu/admin/>.

RE-ENVISIONING STRUCTURAL OUTLINE

October 9, 2002

The following outline of structural changes in Extension builds upon concepts and recommendations presented in the Re-Envisioning Report. Specifics are presented for geography, administration, and the council system. Some aspects will be further developed, and comments and reactions are welcome, prior to the State Extension Conference in January, 2003.

GEOGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION

Districts

- Seven districts, each generally consisting of two of the current areas
- Primary organizational unit for county staff support, coaching and supervision
- Closely linked to a couple of the scenario options in re-envisioning, particularly Option D
- Fairly balanced on agent numbers; transportation and geographical features considered
- See attached map for the proposed district geography

Regions

- Three Regions: West, East, Central
 - Districts won't fit exactly within regions, but since agent numbers don't need to be comparable across regions for regional programming, is less critical; e.g. split of District 5 (Lake Cumberland and Lincoln Trail areas) in map
- Region is primary organizational unit for issues and programs
 - Flexibility offered in development of regional issues or program teams or task forces; options for multi-county, regional, multiple regions or state groups to function
- Regional “development” emphasis will be attractive, inside and outside UK, a link to community/economic development (CED)
- See attached map for the proposed programming regions; lines are intentionally blurred at the boundaries because many counties will work on programs across regional lines

Areas

- Areas receive no formal administrative support under the new structure for staff supervision, etc.; all folded into districts
- May continue to function as desired for multi-county activities and programming
- Some minor relocation of lines (e.g., Powell, Estill moved east); but primarily districts contain “old” areas

ADMINISTRATION

District Directors (7 DD'S)

- Coaching, mentoring and primary evaluation of agents
- Increase focus on staff support, decrease on programming and issues
 - Continue to work with county council development
 - No district councils
 - Transfer more autonomy to agents for clerical and facilities, but DD's still back up
- Report directly to Extension administration, not to Regional Program and Development Coordinators

Regional Development and Program Coordinators (3 RDPC's)

- Administer Regional Issues and Programming Committees (RIPC); these are a slight modification of RIC concept in Re-envisioning Report
 - Chair of RIPC is selected by the committee; RDPC is Executive Director
 - Assistant Directors involved from all program areas and KSU on each RIPC
 - RIPC's do administrative operations/coordination
- Work closely with Asst Directors and DD's, administrative team approach needed
- RDPC's report to Extension Administration
- Develop and coordinate region-wide initiatives
- Funding and resource development responsibilities, grants
- Coordinate agent training at regional level, (teaming with DD's and through RIPC's)
- Provide focus and coordination of CED programming, with Asst Director, join core of existing CED planning group

COUNCIL SYSTEM

- Focus on county council development as recommended in Re-envisioning Report
- Leadership involved in other ways beyond county; current Area Extension Councils replaced with the emphasis on county Extension councils, and a new structure for state (and regional) groups
 - Each county designates 1 state rep., they only meet all together every other year
 - State reps asked to indicate committee preference: Possible committees:
 - CARET, Ag, FCS, 4H, CED advisory
 - They may or may not replace some of the program area advisory functions (Ag Advancement?)
- Establish Regional and State Councils of Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching (CARET), linked to national organization
 - Instead of Stakeholder Support Committees in Re-envisioning Report
 - Include selected council state reps: alumni, members at large, ag leaders
 - Also replaces Legislative and Advocacy Committee
 - One regional and one state meeting per year
 - CARETs meet with Dean and all Assoc. Deans; Asst to Dean provides staff support