

**AGRICULTURE, NATURAL
RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN

“PROGRESS ALWAYS INVOLVES RISK;
YOU CAN'T STEAL SECOND BASE AND
KEEP YOUR FOOT ON FIRST.”

F.W. Dupee

INTRODUCTION

This plan outlines the internal structure and procedures to support University of Tennessee and Tennessee State University Extension Agriculture, Natural Resources and Community Economic Development (ANR/CED) educational programming. This plan is intended to be an operational framework to better facilitate educational program planning, delivery and evaluation. The primary goal of this plan is to guide ANR/CED Extension programs to achieve true excellence in topics that can significantly improve the lives of Tennesseans. An effective county-based Extension program requires a cadre of county agents, area specialists and state specialists that work together as an integrated team to meet local needs. The *Leadership Teams* defined in this plan are designed to provide a formal opportunity for agents and specialists to work in collaborative teams to plan and implement excellent educational programs. *Leadership Teams* will play a key role in identifying the resources needed to achieve excellence in specific *Focus Areas*, as well as setting up and providing oversight for *Workgroups* that advance specific programs within those *Focus Areas*. This plan can be considered a business plan because it provides operational guidance for *Leadership Teams* and *Workgroups* that will plan and deliver our educational programs across Tennessee. This plan is also strategic in nature because it is designed to guide our program planning and to assist in the completion of several key items in the UT Extension Strategic Plan over the next decade.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS

Extension Agriculture, Natural Resources and Community Economic Development¹ (ANR/CED) programs help Tennesseans improve their quality of life and solve problems through the application of research and evidence-based knowledge. The ANR/CED Strategic Business Plan is based on a structure of **Knowledge Areas, Focus Areas, Leadership Teams** and **Workgroups** in relation to educational program development and delivery.

Figure 1 provides a graphical representation of how *Knowledge Areas, Focus Areas, Leadership Teams* and *Workgroups* are interrelated.

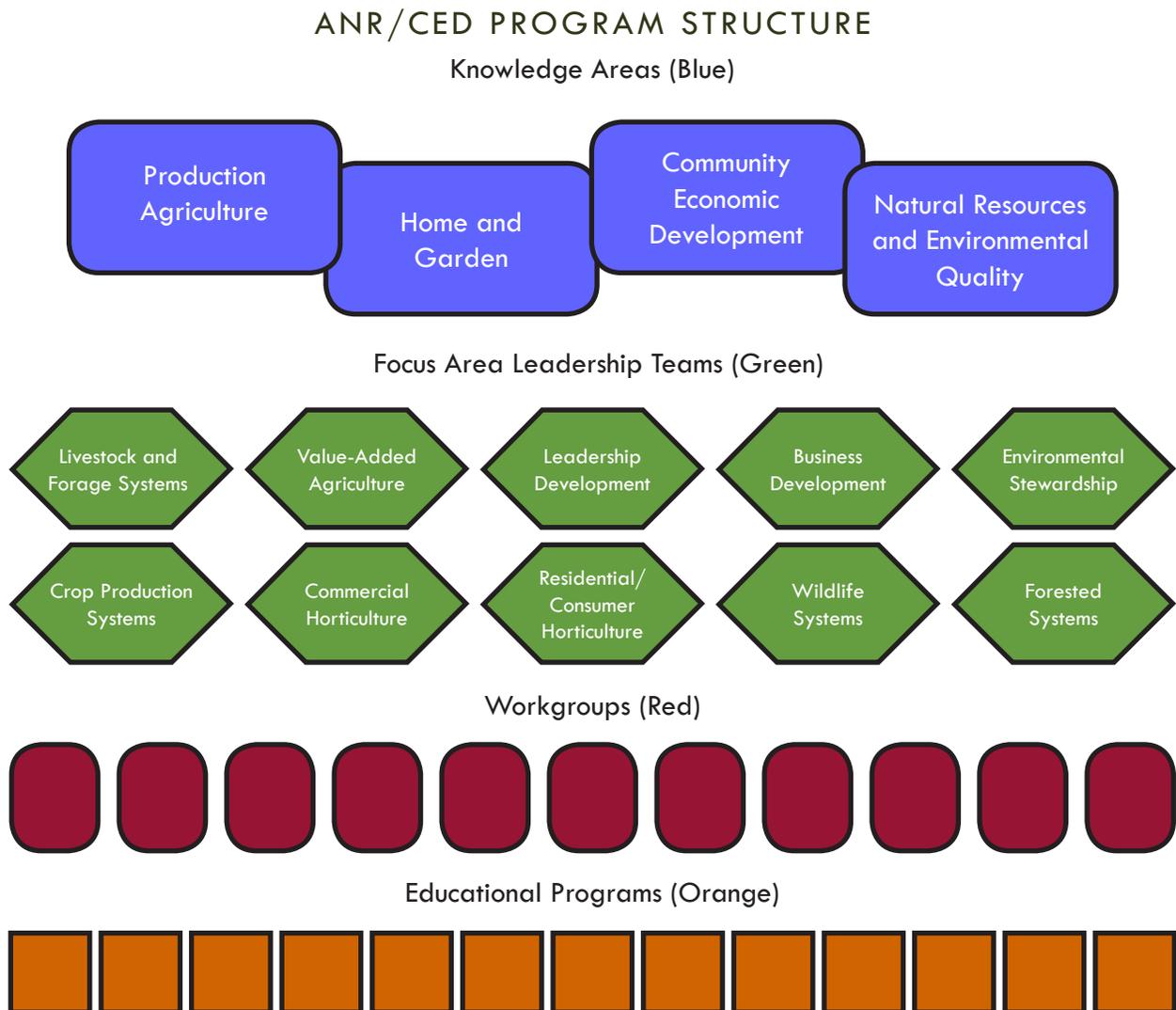


FIGURE 1

¹ UT Extension Community Economic Development was previously titled Resource Development and TSU programs in this area are currently titled Community Resource and Economic Development.

KNOWLEDGE AREAS

Knowledge Areas are defined as the fundamental areas in which Extension ANR/CED educational programs are planned, developed and implemented. Extension ANR/CED programs assist Tennesseans with science-based educational programs in these four primary *Knowledge Areas*:

- Production Agriculture
- Home and Garden
- Community Economic Development
- Natural Resources and Environmental Quality

Production Agriculture is defined as the production and marketing of animals, plants and other life forms for food, fiber, biofuel, drugs and other products used to sustain and enhance human life as part of a business enterprise. Production Agriculture encompasses various agricultural enterprises across the state of Tennessee, including (but not limited to) row crops (cotton, corn, soybeans, tobacco and small grains), livestock and forage systems (beef, dairy, equine, small ruminants and forages), commercial horticulture enterprises (ornamentals, turf, fruits and nuts, vegetables, and landscaping operations), and production forestry. The production agriculture audience served by Extension also includes service and supply industries that support Tennessee production agriculture.

The Tennessee agro-forestry industrial complex (livestock, crops, forestry and agricultural supply industries, plus manufacturing) contributed \$66.4 billion to the Tennessee economy in 2011, accounted for 13.3 percent of the economic activity conducted within the state, and employed 9.6 percent of the total number of workers in Tennessee.

The direct economic impact of Tennessee agriculture is \$31 billion and accounts for more than 136,000 Tennessee jobs. The direct impact of Tennessee forestry alone is \$12.5 billion and \$19.6 billion with multiplier effects. Exports for Tennessee's forest products outside the United States for 2011 totaled close to \$1 billion. Paper products had the highest export value at \$682.3 million, followed by wood products (\$180.1 million), furniture and related products (\$90.6 million), and forestry and logging (\$79.5 million). The state's primary forest industries (which convert logs to products such as lumber or paper) employ more than 39,000 workers and its secondary industries (which further process or add value to hardwood lumber) employ more than 90,000 workers.

Currently, there are more than 10.8 million acres of farmland and 76,000 farms in Tennessee, and \$1 out of every \$8 in Tennessee's economy and 1 out of 10 jobs in Tennessee's economy are directly or indirectly derived from agriculture and forestry-related industries.

Home and Garden encompasses the broad scope of residential and consumer-based interests including backyard fruit and vegetable production, lawns, ornamentals, home landscaping, backyard livestock, and beekeeping. Extension's Tennessee Master Gardener program, with more than 2,000 active Master Gardeners in 43 Tennessee counties, is an example of a significant educational program within this *Knowledge Area*.

Tennesseans are reconnecting with a need for self-sufficiency, a desire for local healthy food, and a value system of living an agrarian lifestyle. Food security, resource conservation, buying local, and knowing where food comes from are all increasingly important topics for many Tennesseans. U.S. Department of Agriculture statistics clearly indicate the expanding local food movement by the increase in farmers markets across the United States from around 1,800 in 1994 to nearly 8,000 in 2012. Requests for assistance with home and garden issues represent the largest number of calls received by county Extension offices in many Tennessee counties.

Community Economic Development includes the development of entrepreneurship, business development, and leadership development at the local level in order to increase economic opportunities in Tennessee communities. The primary focus of Extension Community Economic Development educational programs is on business and leadership development at the county level with the recognition that thriving communities are necessary for economic growth across Tennessee.

Natural Resources and Environmental Quality involves the management and conservation of natural resources as well as the management of environmental impacts. Tennessee's natural resources – our forests, waters, wildlife, air, minerals, energy, soils and others – are a source of pride for our citizens as well as a valuable part of our state's economy. The wise management of these resources is critical, as is mitigating the impacts of human activities. Efforts in water quality and quantity, nutrient management, animal waste management, animal mortality management, and energy efficiency and conservation Extension programs are important to protecting Tennessee's natural resources and environmental quality.

Natural Resources and Environmental Quality contributes a significant impact to Tennessee's economy. In 2011, more than \$2.9 billion was spent on wildlife-related recreation in Tennessee and an additional \$2.5 billion was generated from the recreational boating program in the state. Tennessee's State Parks are also estimated to generate \$725 million in direct expenditures and support 12,000 jobs across Tennessee. Tennessee's outstanding natural resources and environmental quality are an important part of tourism in the state, which contributes more than \$14 billion to Tennessee's economy.

FOCUS AREAS

Focus Areas are specific topic areas that sometimes fall within a singular *Knowledge Area*, but often integrate components of multiple *Knowledge Areas*. *Focus Areas* must have significant potential to improve the lives of Tennesseans, and UT and TSU Extension must be committed to providing excellent planned educational programming that results in meaningful and measurable impact in these areas. *Focus Areas* must have great potential to increase economic prosperity, improve environmental quality, or enhance well-being in rural or urban communities. Based on input from Tennessee Extension agricultural and natural resources agents, specialists and departmental units, 10 *Focus Areas* have been identified:

- Business Development
- Commercial Horticulture
- Crop Production Systems
- Environmental Stewardship
- Forested Systems
- Leadership Development
- Livestock and Forage Systems
- Residential/Consumer Horticulture
- Value-added Agriculture
- Wildlife Systems

Focus Areas will be formally reviewed for relevance every five years by the ANR/CED program leaders. An earlier review can be required if annual impact reports do not indicate significant impact is being achieved in a given *Focus Area*. Proposals for new *Focus Areas* must be submitted by a team that includes at least one agent from each region (three agents in total), a state specialist and a regional ANR/CED program leader and will be reviewed by the ANR/CED program leaders. Proposals should include justification, potential impact and proposed *Workgroup(s)* and are submitted through the ANR/CED Internal Team SharePoint site.

LEADERSHIP TEAMS

Leadership Teams will establish and coordinate program planning *Workgroups* within a *Focus Area* and organize their efforts. For every *Focus Area*, there will be one corresponding *Leadership Team* to provide direction, coordination and evaluation.

Functions of the *Leadership Teams* include:

- Establish and oversee *Workgroups*
- Meet with *Workgroup* chairs
- Develop State Action Agenda content
- Coordinate in-service training planning and delivery
- Prepare state-level Impact Statements using information provided by *Workgroups*
- Function as the liaison between administration and the *Workgroups*
- Coordinate special projects among *Workgroups*
- Prepare Outcome Indicators for their *Focus Area* – State Action Agenda
- Evaluate *Workgroups* annually for relevancy and effectiveness and determine renewal

Each *Leadership Team* will be composed of three county ANR/CED agents (one from each Extension region), three subject matter specialists (statewide and/or area specialists), and one ANR/CED program leader (regional program leader, department head or Extension center director) or regional director with appropriate subject matter expertise. County agents and specialists will be selected to serve on the *Leadership Team* through an application process and will serve a three-year term. Program leaders will be invited by the UT and TSU Statewide ANR/CED program leaders to serve on *Leadership Teams* and will also serve three-year terms. Members will serve on their *Leadership Team* upon recommendation of the ANR/CED program leaders, with final approval of the statewide program leaders. County agents on the *Leadership Team* will serve as the team chair during their third year of their service. Specialists on the *Leadership Team* will serve as the team vice chair during their third year of service. *Leadership Teams* are accountable to the statewide program leader. A one-day retreat with program leaders and *Leadership Team* chairs will be held annually. Each *Leadership Team* should hold at least one face-to-face meeting per year. An annual travel stipend will be provided to each agent serving on a *Leadership Team*. Table 1 shows the annual timeline for *Leadership Team* member application and selection that will be followed when the plan is fully implemented.

LEADERSHIP TEAM MEMBER SELECTION PROCESS AND TIMELINE

| | |
|---|---|
| July 1 | – Application announcement made by statewide ANR/CED program leader. |
| Aug. 1 | – Agent and specialist applications will be submitted via a SharePoint application form available on the ANR/CED Internal Team site. |
| Sept. 1 | – The regional program leaders will make recommendations of agents and area specialists to the state ANR/CED program leader. – The recommendations of specialists from department heads are due to the state program leader. |
| Oct. 1 | – Agents and specialists are notified of <i>Leadership Team</i> assignments. |
| Jan. 1 | – Agents and specialists begin their role as a member of the <i>Leadership Team</i> and the new chairs and vice chairs assume their new role. |
| * Initial appointments will be designated by the program leaders for one-, two- and three-year terms. | |

TABLE 1

WORKGROUPS²

Workgroups are intended to support and enhance county-based educational programs by providing regional or statewide leadership. They are formed as a result of high-priority needs that are likely to be included in agents' annual plans. Suggestions with justifications for new *Workgroups* can be made to the *Leadership Teams* at any time by any UT or TSU Extension employee or program stakeholder by submitting a *Workgroup Proposal* form on the ANR/CED Internal Team SharePoint site. The creation or dissolution of *Workgroups* is the prerogative of *Leadership Teams* with approval of the ANR/CED statewide program leaders. *Workgroups* design, develop, implement and evaluate educational programs relative to the *Focus Area*. *Workgroup* membership can include agents, specialists, volunteers, and teaching or research faculty. The composition of the *Workgroup* and the chair position is at the discretion of the *Leadership Team*; however, membership suggestions can be made on the *Workgroup Proposal* form. Before an invitation is extended to a potential *Workgroup* member, the *Leadership Team* will contact his or her immediate supervisor for approval of the invitation. There can be multiple *Workgroups* per *Leadership Team*. *Workgroup* chairs are required to meet with the appropriate *Leadership Team* at least once per year.

Duties of the *Workgroups* include:

- Conduct program needs assessments
- Identify programming resource needs
- Identify existing resource materials
- Develop needed resource materials (websites, publications, etc.)
- Review existing resource materials for relevance
- Plan and deliver in-service training
- Develop educational program Outcome Indicators
- Develop and validate Program Evaluation Network (PEN) instruments
- Provide information to *Leadership Teams* to support Statewide Impact Statements
- Obtain funding to support educational programs as required
- Initiate cooperation with existing and potential program partners

In addition to these standing *Workgroups*, *Ad Hoc Workgroups* can be formed for specific issues that are short term. The *Leadership Team* will determine the roles and responsibilities and determine the sunset date of the *Ad Hoc Workgroup*.

² Existing teams can transition into a *Workgroup*.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Through the efforts of *Workgroups* and *Leadership Teams*, educational programs will be developed and delivered across Tennessee. This cohesive and consistent approach will provide better quality educational programs to ANR/CED agents and thus to Tennesseans, improving their quality of life. This holistic approach will also strengthen the impact results of educational programs by allowing the use of a consistent evaluation tool and more streamlined reporting.

The ANR/CED Strategic Business Plan will be used by ANR/CED agents, specialists and administration to better define and allocate resources required to provide excellent, relevant and innovative programs and subsequently reporting program impacts effectively and efficiently. This plan and the programmatic organizational structure and operations can be utilized by both UT and TSU ANR/CED Extension personnel.

ANR/CED AGENTS AND SPECIALISTS SERVING A YOUTH AUDIENCE

Agriculture, Natural Resources and Community Economic Development agents and specialists who provide programming targeted at youth audiences can participate in ANR/CED *Leadership Teams* and *Workgroups* that are appropriate to their educational program topic areas.

SUPPORT FOR NON-FOCUS AREA TOPICS

The initial *Focus Area* topics included in this plan are broad enough to include all of the educational topics in which UT and TSU Extension have traditionally worked. *Leadership Teams* will establish *Workgroups* to provide planned educational programs in selected high-impact topic areas. Agent and faculty numbers are not sufficient to establish *Workgroups* for every topic area in which we have historically offered Extension programs, or for every topic area that we may be asked for assistance. *Leadership Teams* will be tasked with selecting the topics that *Workgroups* will support. *Leadership Teams* will also be tasked with providing guidance to agents on how to best answer commonly asked questions that may not be covered by an existing *Workgroup*.

PLANNING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION

Base programs capture impact according to the four main educational program areas engaged by UT and TSU Extension. The ANR/CED Strategic Business Plan will provide flexibility for documenting impact in the program area most appropriate to meet local needs. The four *Knowledge Areas* in the ANR/CED Strategic Business Plan are:

- Production Agriculture
- Home and Garden
- Natural Resources and Environmental Quality
- Community Economic Development

These *Knowledge Areas* will align with Extension's System for University Planning, Evaluation and Reporting (SUPER) current base programming areas in the following manner:

- Production Agriculture, Home and Garden, and Natural Resources and Environmental Quality impacts will be reported under the current Agriculture and Natural Resource Base Program
- The Resource Development Base Program will be renamed in SUPER to Community Economic Development (CED), and CED impacts will be reported under this Base Program

Extension agents, area specialists and state specialists should plan and conduct educational programs that meet the needs of their local audiences. UT and TSU Extension personnel will have the flexibility to report activities and impacts from planned activities to any of the State Action Agendas in SUPER. These State Action Agendas will correspond directly to the ANR/CED *Focus Areas*. This reporting model provides Extension ANR/CED personnel the flexibility to conduct grass-roots programming to address specific needs in their communities and supports the concept of county-based Extension programming.

Leadership Teams will provide leadership for each *Focus Area*. *Leadership Teams* will coordinate *Workgroup* efforts and summarize the activities into a structured State Action Agenda. Each *Focus Area* and respective State Action Agenda will have an expected planning horizon of five years. The sections of the State Action Agenda will include the following components:

ISSUE

Workgroups will conduct needs assessments to obtain input across the state from various stakeholders (including underserved and underrepresented audiences), program partners, key agriculture and community leaders, minority groups, commodity groups, agricultural industry representatives, and governmental agencies to ensure Extension programs address needs important to Tennessee farms and families. *Leadership Teams* will be responsible for writing the issue section from the needs assessment data supplied by the *Workgroups*.

PLANS FOR THE COMING YEAR

This section will contain resource links for educational materials, facts, program templates, curricula, resources, program partners, supporters, donors, sponsors and grant funding resources. *Workgroups* will provide *Leadership Teams* with this information and the *Leadership Team* will be responsible for summarizing information from all *Workgroups* related to this *Focus Area* into this section.

PARTNERS AND RESOURCES

County and state Extension staff will provide the *Leadership Team* with this information based on local programming needs.

OUTCOMES

Workgroups will be responsible for developing Outcome Indicators for each State Action Agenda. *Workgroups* will be responsible for supplying the specific questions and information required to validate the questions enabling inclusion of the questions into the UT Extension Program Evaluation Network (PEN). Each *Workgroup* will be limited to two Outcome Indicators unless approval is obtained from the state ANR/CED program leader. In addition, each *Leadership Team* will have the ability to create two additional Outcome Indicators.

PLANNED EVALUATION SECTION

Each *Workgroup* will develop specific evaluation metrics to obtain the necessary data to complete all Outcome Indicators and PEN surveys. *Workgroups* will develop these evaluation metrics for their specific topic area and submit them to the *Leadership Team* for inclusion in the State Action Agenda.

Workgroups should follow the established Tennessee Extension Program Planning and Evaluation Model as shown in Figure 2 for planning, delivering and evaluating Extension educational programs. *Leadership Teams* will review program impacts annually and create a Statewide Impact Statement for each *Focus Area* summarizing educational program activities from Extension agent Impact Statements and summaries of Outcome Indicators. *Leadership Teams* will conduct an annual review to ensure sufficient and appropriate resources are being allocated to support needed educational programming. Every five years, *Leadership Teams* will evaluate long-term program impacts and conduct additional needs assessments to determine what level of programming should continue in each *Focus Area*.

TENNESSEE EXTENSION PROGRAM PLANNING & EVALUATION MODEL³

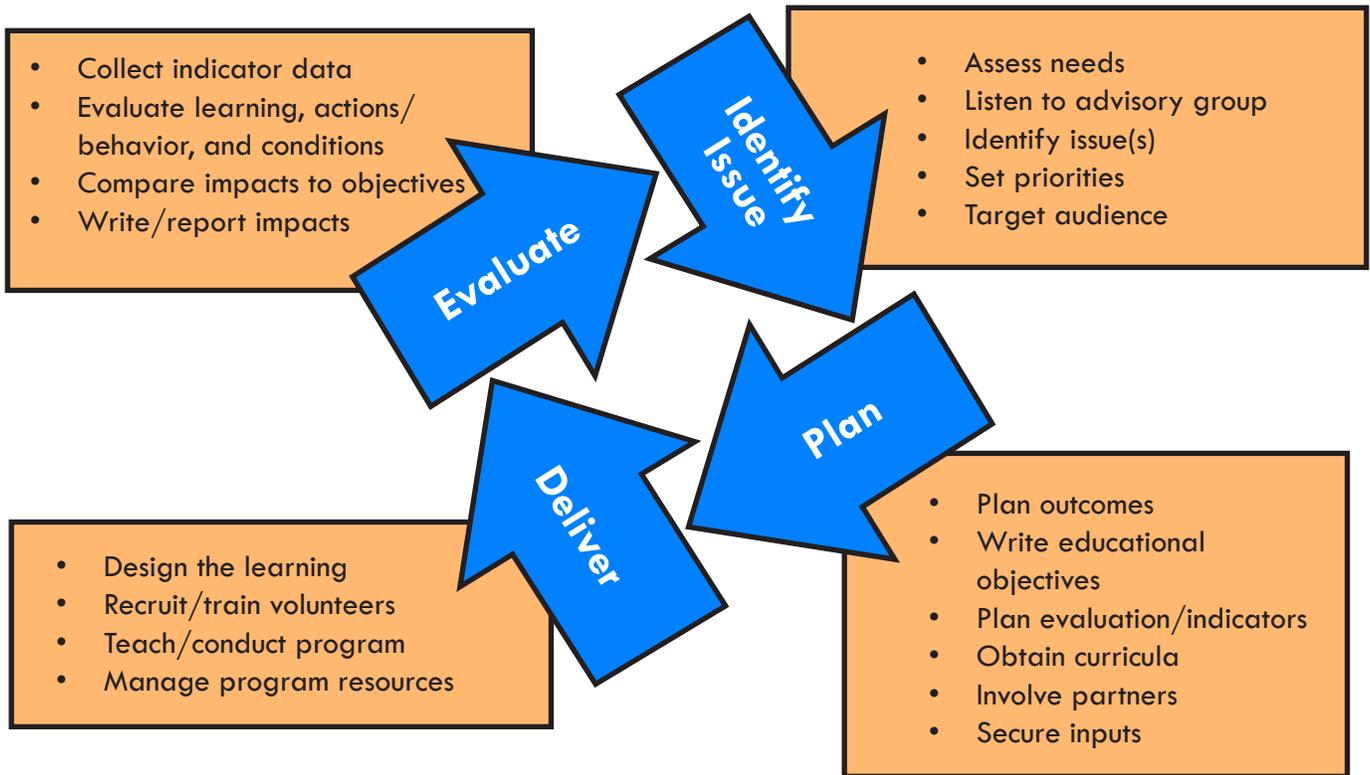


FIGURE 2

³ Excerpted from UT Extension publication W 240 "Tennessee Extension Programming and Evaluation Model" by Joseph L. Donaldson, Ph.D.

IMPLEMENTATION AND PILOT TEST

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

Following the distribution of the final ANR/CED Strategic Business Plan in January 2014, the application process for membership on ANR/CED *Leadership Teams* will be opened and filled on an accelerated schedule. The selection of initial *Leadership Team* membership by ANR/CED program leaders will be completed and announced in April 2014. *Leadership Teams* will be asked to establish at least one *Workgroup* in 2014 and each initial *Workgroup* will be asked to work on the development of two initial Outcome Indicators.

Beginning in July 2014 the standard process for nominating and selecting *Leadership Team* members will begin with the distribution of 2015 *Leadership Team* member applications by the ANR/CED statewide program leader. Agents and specialists selected for *Leadership Team* assignments will be notified in October 2014 and will begin their role as *Leadership Team* members as well as the new chairs and vice chairs assuming their new roles in January 2015. Initial *Leadership Team* members who served less than a one-year term will be eligible to apply for an additional term of service on their respective *Leadership Teams*.

The target date to submit new State Action Agendas and Outcome Indicators associated with the newly formed *Workgroups* will be May 15, 2015. New State Action Agendas and Outcome Indicators submitted by May 15, 2015, would be available for use in SUPER in 2016.

PILOT IMPLEMENTATION OF LIVESTOCK AND FORAGE LEADERSHIP TEAM AND BEEF WORKGROUP

The Livestock and Forage *Leadership Team* and a Beef *Workgroup* will be used to pilot test the planned *Leadership Team* and *Workgroup* structure. An initial Livestock and Forage *Leadership Team* will be selected in January 2014. This team will establish a Beef *Workgroup* that will be tasked with guiding the implementation of the Advanced Master Beef educational program.

ANR/CED STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN TEAMS

PROCESS PLANNING TEAM:

A. Ruth Correll – County Director, Wilson County
James Estep – Extension Agent, Hancock County
Clark Garland – Professor Emeritus, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics
Rob Holland – Director, Center for Profitable Agriculture
David Perrin – Extension Program Leader, Eastern Region
Philip Shelby – County Director, Gibson County
Cindy Tietz – Administrative Specialist, Extension Administration
Ben West – Regional Director, Western Region

STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN DEVELOPMENT TEAM:

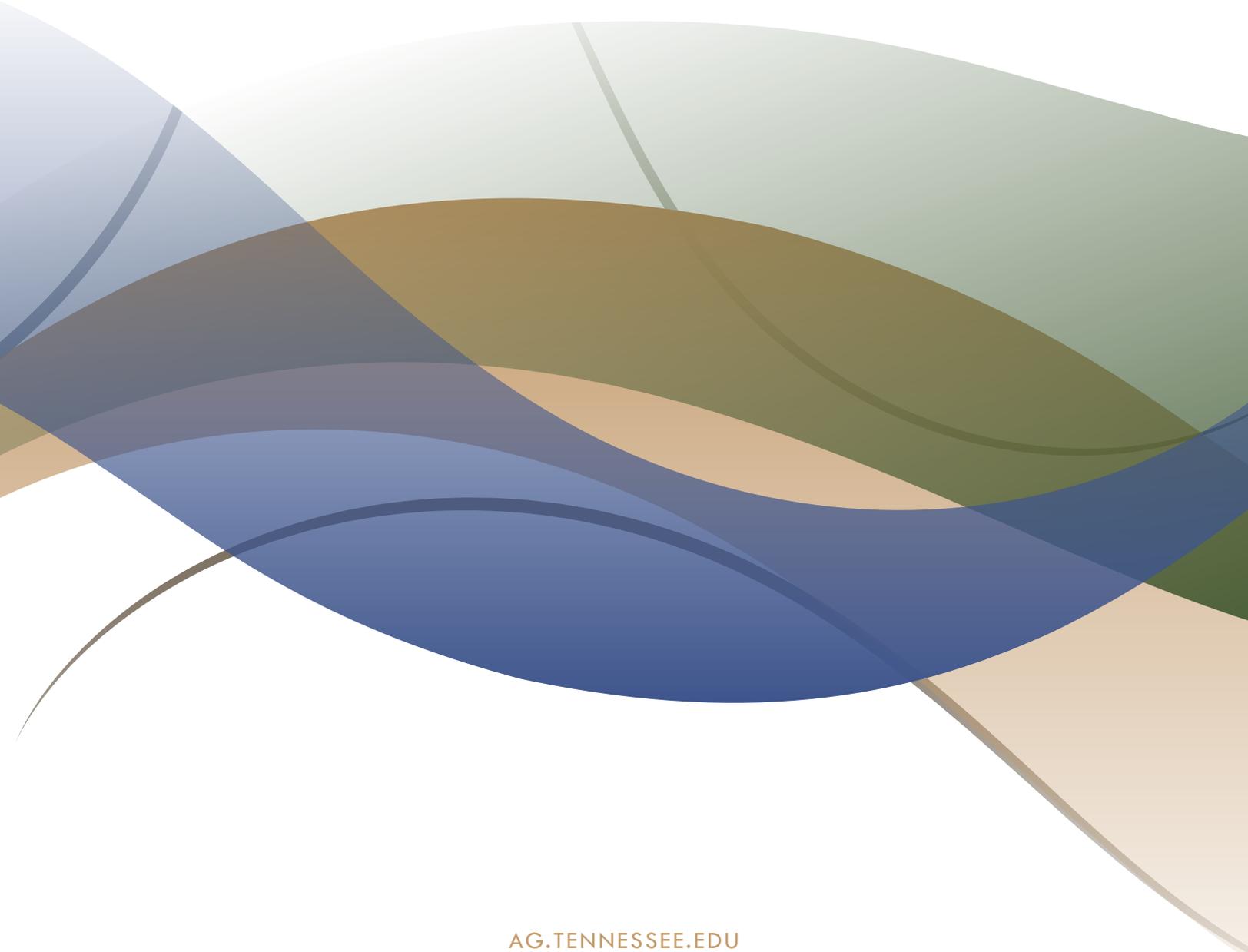
Mike Buschermohle – Professor, Department of Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science
Clark Garland – Professor Emeritus, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics
John Goddard – Extension Agent, Loudon County
Ricky Mathenia – County Director, McNairy County
David Perrin – Extension Program Leader, Eastern Region
Alice Rhea – Former Extension Area Specialist, Eastern Region
Melody Rose – Extension Agent, Greene County
Neal Schrick – Department Head, Department of Animal Science
Philip Shelby – County Director, Gibson County
T. Bruce Steelman – County Director, Cannon County
Justin Stefanski – Extension Agent, Wilson County
Cindy Tietz – Administrative Specialist, Extension Administration
Anthony Tuggle – County Director, Rutherford County
Ben West – Regional Director, Western Region
Annette Wszelaki – Associate Professor, Department of Plant Sciences

CHAIR:

Robert T. Burns – UT Extension Assistant Dean, ANR/CED

DESIGNER:

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E12-1015-00-003-14 400 01/14 14-0127

Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating. UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.