

2014 University of Tennessee Research and Extension and Tennessee State University  
Extension Combined Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results Review

Status: Accepted

Date Accepted: 05/29/2015

2014 University of Tennessee Research and Extension and Tennessee State University Extension Combined Annual Report of  
Accomplishments and Results Review

**State:** Tennessee

**Institution(s):**

- University of Tennessee
- Tennessee State University

**Type of Report ( Check all that apply )**

- 1862 Research
- 1862 Extension
- 1890 Research
- 1890 Extension
- Tuskegee Research
- Tuskegee Extension

**NPL Reviewers:**

- Eric Norland

**Report Overview Section (Required):**

Acceptable		
YES	NO	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Executive summary. (Suggested in Guidance)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Total FTEs are included for each appropriate institution of the Report

**Comments:**

The executive summary provides an overview of UT and TSU Extension's contributions to improving the lives of Tennessee residents through facilitating their knowledge and use of research-based information. The activities of Extension contribute significantly to the economy of Tennessee through direct funding and the economic return for each \$1 of federal funding. UT AgResearch efforts are directed at advancing knowledge about biomass production, varietal support for the TN nursery industry, variety testing for agronomic crops and improvements in the reproductive health of livestock. The total of actual 1862 research FTE/SY is 13.6 less than what was planned for.

**Merit/Program Review Process Section (Required):**

Acceptable		
YES	NO	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	At least one process has been checked (including other) (required)

**Comments:**

UT and TSU utilize internal and external university panels and expert peer review to accomplish the merit review process. Specifically, UT engaged a panel of external reviewers from other 1862 land-grant universities, while TSU's merit review process was accomplished by an internal university panel. UT AgResearch underwent a formal, week-long review in February, 2014 by deans and directors of peer ag research stations. The review produced a report with recommendations that is being utilized to increase research productivity. UT AgResearch programs are also strengthened by the use of an online work plan system that allows for interactive review and revision by the PI, department heads, deans, and research director. The merit review process, as reported, is adequate and meets the requirement for merit reviews.

**Stakeholder Input Process Section (Required):**

Acceptable		
YES	NO	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(a) Actions taken to seek stakeholder input that encourages their participation (Required)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(b) Method used to identify groups and individuals (Required)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(c) Method used for collecting stakeholder input (Required)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(d) A statement of how collected input will be considered (Required)

**Comments:**

ACTIONS TAKEN TO SEEK STAKEHOLDER INPUT - Both UT and TSU Extension conduct a variety of activities to seek stakeholder input. Of particular note is the emphasis on involving youth and other under-represented audiences. Of the needs assessments contacts that were made during this reporting period, 21% were with youth under 18 years of age. UT AgResearch formed three regional advisory councils to help guide priorities and

programs. These councils provide a forum for to discuss trends and issues that are relevant to Tennessee residents. Additionally, each UT Agresearch department has an advisory committee that meets 1-2 times per year to review and discuss current and future research activities.

PROCESS USED TO IDENTIFY INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS OF STAKEHOLDERS - First, all TN Extension Agents receive instruction in selecting needs assessment strategies and in selecting individuals to serve on advisory committees; special attention is given to ensure that diversities, by all measures, are represented. UT AgResearch retained a PR firm to help the institution better understand their critical stakeholders.

METHOD USED TO COLLECT STAKEHOLDER INPUT - UT and TSU use a variety of methods to collect input, including surveys, meetings with stakeholders and general public, and surveying and meeting with non-traditional individuals. The institutions use key informants, identified by advisory committee members and community leaders. Stakeholder input was used explicitly by TSU Extension to expand its outreach through its Small Farm Expo and Small and Limited Resource Producers Outreach Conference. UTS AgResearch collects stakeholder input during its "UT Day on the Hill, direct contact with through research center websites and individual interactions at more than a dozen field days throughout the state.

HOW THE INPUT IS CONSIDERED - All of the stakeholder input, collected through a wide variety of methods, is used by the institutions in budget processes, hiring processes, state action plans, and other points to input and resource allocation decisions. Several examples of programs that were redirected include the childhood obesity program, 4-H positive youth development, and the animal systems program at the U Beef and Forage Center. In summary, UT and TSU do a good job in identifying important and relevant stakeholders, soliciting their input, and considering it when allocating resources, modifying program direction, and establishing new programs as needed.

**Planned Programs Section (Required):**

Acceptable		
YES	NO	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Used Appropriate Logic Model Elements
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Input Dollars Expended on Each Planned Program
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appropriate Knowledge Areas
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appropriate Outputs for each Program
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appropriate Outcomes for each Program

**Comments:**

The outputs, outcomes, and impacts reported by UT Extension and Research and TSU Extension document the very significant accomplishments by the institutions in serving their stakeholders. Many of the planned programs have significant involvement in eXtension Communities of Practice and this reviewer extends high compliments to UT and TSU commitment to serving clientele electronically. This is a complement to the tried and true program delivery methods. Not everyone learns the same way nor has electronic access or savvy to "do" eXtension, so the combination of electronic and face-to-face is absolutely beneficial. Many of the planned programs have an integrated approach involving the discovery of new knowledge through the research enterprise and its transfer to end users. This integration is noteworthy and the results that are described indicate that it is effective. UT AgResearch has produced several patents during the reporting period and are commended for this accomplishment. The annual report on a couple of planned programs, "Environmental and Water Quality Impacts" and "Horticultural Systems" would be more useful if there were more outcomes, impacts, and qualitative narrative demonstrating their value. Those programs are probably much more impactful than the report portrays. Some additional effort to expand on the description of their program impacts would be useful to this reviewer.

**General Recommendations:**

Once again, UT and TSU have provided NIFA with a comprehensive annual report that clearly demonstrates that the federal funding provide by NIFA is having an impact through your efforts. Your institutions are good investments by USDA and NIFA. The evaluation summaries and narratives, at both the outcome level in individual programs as well as for entire planned programs are well presented. Many institutions do not provide sufficient resources to do good evaluations of research and extension planned programs. Your institutions are not among them. You have done a very fine job in reporting and this results from investing in the process and having program evaluators who can support extension and research faculty and staff. This report, as submitted, is completely and fully acceptable. Thank you for your time, effort, staff, and financial resources that go into producing it.

**We hereby recommend NIFA acceptance of this Annual Report.**

Eric Norland /s/

NPL Signature

05/22/2015

Date