



**DEPARTMENT OF EXTENSION EVALUATION  
& STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

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**AN OVERVIEW OF EXTENSION  
IMPACT STATEMENTS FOR  
DEPARTMENTS**

### ***Introduction***

This instructional packet is intended for Extension faculty, specialists, department heads, assistants, State Action Agenda team leaders, and others who provide leadership for some component of the Tennessee Extension Plan of Work. This packet should answer most of your questions about impact statements. I have also included example impact statements.

### ***What is it?***

The Annual Impact Statement is the document that describes the impacts to Tennesseans that resulted from our Extension programs. Our impact statements are used to compile the Tennessee Extension and Research Annual Accomplishment Report, reviewed by the United States Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA). The report satisfies the reporting requirements in the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, as amended, Hatch Act of 1887, Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, and the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998. Because this report justifies Tennessee Extension funding on the Federal level, USDA-NIFA analysts especially examine how our programs enhance the economy, environment and quality of life. Besides Federal reporting, the impact statement has other uses such as informing state and local stakeholders and improving our programs.

### ***How many do you write?***

Please write one impact statement report for each of your planned programs or topics. If you made an effort this year to gain stakeholder input, please write a separate, brief impact statement to describe the stakeholders and their input.

### ***When are impact statements due?***

Impact statement(s) are due in the System for University Planning, Evaluation and Reporting (SUPER) appraisal module on or about February 1 annually. Impacts statements from county and area Extension staff are due on or about December 1 annually, and you may view these by using the SUPER reports module.

### ***How do I submit impact statements?***

Extension impact statements should be submitted via SUPER. Prepare your impact statement in Word or WordPerfect and attach the file in the SUPER appraisal module. Step-by-step instructions are posted in extOL Workforce Learning.

### ***Are examples available?***

Example impact statements from Tennessee faculty are included in this packet. These example impact statements are being shared so that you will:

- investigate some “excellent measured” impacts.
- format your impact statements correctly.
- improve your skills in program evaluation.

Please use these examples as they are intended. These statements are NOT meant to show model program planning, model needs assessment, model research, model educational programs, or model program implementation.

### ***What do you write?***

An impact statement is a brief summary of the outcome of your Extension program. Outcomes should be:

- improvements in knowledge, attitudes, skills, and/or aspirations (KASA).
- positive changes in practices or behavior.
- improvements in social, economic, and/or environmental conditions (SEEC).

The impact statement answers three important questions:

- “Who cares about this issue?”
- “What was the Extension and/or Research response to this issue?”
- “So what was the result of this response?”

Impact statements should show improvements to the quality of life in these ways:

- economic value or efficiency.
- environmental quality.
- social well-being.
- health and well-being.

### ***How do you write a great impact statement?***

Tips for great impact statements:

- Be brief!
- Include numbers of participants and numbers that show a change in their quality of life.
- The longest part should be the impact.
- Focus on the outcomes (impact), not the activities (what has been done).
- Check spelling and grammar.

### ***How can your writing be improved?***

An Extension program in its early stages will typically not show impact. The following phrases, found in past Tennessee impact statements by USDA program analysts, show that impact has not yet been achieved.

#### ***Do Not Use These Phrases***

- “could impact”
- “potentially”
- “provides a new opportunity”
- “is currently being considered”
- “can help”
- “could result”
- “can have an enormous impact”
- “opens the door to”
- “will save”
- “will ultimately help”
- “will demonstrate”
- “can eliminate”
- “may be able to”
- “may be useful”
- “can directly improve”
- “may help develop”

#### ***Use These Words and Phrases Instead***

- “impacted by...”
- “helped by...”
- “resulted in...”
- “eliminated...”
- “improved...”
- “demonstrated...”
- “enabled...”
- “saved...”

### ***What is the impact statement format?***

The reports should follow the format below, using the bold section headers on the left:

<b>Title:</b>	The title of your program should be short and descriptive. If using the state activity report data, please use “Tennessee” in the title.
<b>Issue:</b>	Describe the issue in a few sentences: Who cares and why?
<b>What has been done:</b>	Describe in a few sentences what has been done: What was the Extension response to the issue?
<b>Impact:</b>	Describe the impact: So what?
<b>Funding Sources:</b>	Identify the funding sources: Smith-Lever Funds, TNCEP Grant, Other Grants, Contracts, etc.
<b>Contact:</b>	Type your name, title, address, phone, fax, and e-mail.

### ***What about the Federal priorities?***

Impact statements representing all programs and departments are useful. For the Annual Accomplishment Report, impact statements are especially useful in the USDA-NIFA priorities:

- Childhood Obesity
- Climate Change
- Food Safety
- Global Food Security and Hunger
- Sustainable Energy

### ***How do I enter my Extension impact statement report in SUPER?***

Login to SUPER with your netID and password. Click Profile. Click Appraisal. Click Create Appraisal. Select “Faculty or Specialist Appraisal”. Notice you browse and attach your impacts statement here. You also browse and attach your performance appraisal forms. Campus-based faculty should call Joseph Donaldson or John Toman if assistance is needed. Faculty based off-campus should call the regional IT specialist.

### ***How do I aggregate Extension data from agents?***

This data has already been aggregated for you in State Activity Reports, and a State Activity Report is available for each topic. You may access the reports at the following URL:

<http://eesd.tennessee.edu/Pages/ReportingSystem.aspx>

You may also view impact statements from county and area agents by using the SUPER reports module. Click Reports. Select your search criteria. Click Search.

### ***What about Extension and Research stakeholder input?***

Our State Annual Accomplishment Report includes a required section for describing how stakeholder input was sought and used during the past year. If you made any effort during the past year to obtain input from stakeholders to improve Extension initiatives, this information is needed to complete our State Annual Accomplishment Report. A listening session, survey, or focus group with stakeholders for the purpose of program planning are examples which should be reported.

Be brief! Describe this input in three to five sentences in a separate Impact Statement.

- What was the design of the stakeholder input? Was it an organized group? One-time focus group? Survey? Other?
- How many people were involved?
- How did you identify the stakeholders? Were they farmers, homeowners, industry leaders, professionals or others? Did any stakeholders represent under-served audiences?
- How were the results of the stakeholder input used in planning, implementing, or evaluating Extension programs?

### ***Example of Tennessee Extension Stakeholder Input***

TITLE: Stakeholder Input for Extension Programs

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE: The Department of Example conducted a survey with eight Tennessee Public School Food Service Managers to determine their needs for food safety education. One-half of the managers are in high-poverty counties and 25% of the participants represented a minority group. The surveys showed that food managers benefit greatly from Extension food safety programs and that they need high-quality posters to display in their facility to instruct newly-hired food service workers. The survey also showed that the managers were most concerned about the sodium content of processed foods. The Department of Example is now planning to create the posters during the next year, and the first poster will emphasize safe food storage. The Department will focus additional research on ways to reduce the sodium content of processed foods.

***Who do I contact for assistance?***

If you have questions about program planning and evaluation, contact me (865-974-7245 or [jldonaldson@utk.edu](mailto:jldonaldson@utk.edu)).

If you have questions about using SUPER, contact John Toman (865-974-7245 or [jtoman@utk.edu](mailto:jtoman@utk.edu)).

If you have problems with your netID and password, contact Shirley Irwin with Technology Services (974-7308).

If you are not based on-campus, call the appropriate regional IT specialist.

I appreciate and admire everything you do to improve the quality of life for Tennesseans. I look forward to showcasing your efforts in our Annual State Accomplishment Report to USDA-NIFA. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or concerns.

Joseph L. Donaldson

Extension Specialist

Extension Evaluation and Staff Development

## ***Federal Priority Areas***

USDA-NIFA has identified five priority areas to “help focus NIFA and other USDA science funds on solving specific problems demonstrating results.” The following descriptions are re-printed from NIFA.

### ***1 – Childhood Obesity***

NIFA supports research to identify effective measures that guide individuals and families to make informed, science-based decisions that will reduce child obesity and improve health.

### ***2 – Climate Change***

NIFA supports projects that generate knowledge to develop an agriculture system that contains high productivity in the face of climate changes and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This will help producers to plan and make decisions in adapting to changing environments, sustaining economic vitality, and taking advantage of emerging economic opportunities offered by climate change mitigation technologies.

### ***3 – Food Safety***

NIFA supports research that results to reduce the incidence of food-borne illnesses and provides a safer food supply by: eliminating causes of microbial contamination and antimicrobial resistance; educating consumer and food safety professionals; and developing food processing technologies to improve food safety.

### ***4 – Global Food Security and Hunger***

NIFA supports research, education and extension that will boost U.S. agricultural production and improve global capacity to meet the growing food demand. NIFA also fosters innovation in fighting hunger by addressing food security for vulnerable populations.

### ***5 – Sustainable Energy***

NIFA contributes to the President’s goal of energy independence by supporting science to develop biomass used for biofuels, design optimum forest products and crops for bio-energy production, and produce value-added bio-based industrial products.

## **Example Impact Statements (2010)**

**TITLE:** Tennessee's Commercial Ornamental Horticulture Program

**ISSUE:** Challenges facing the commercial horticulture industry include marketing, integrated pest management, sustainable cultural practices, environmental and human health risks, invasive species, regulations, and profitability.

**WHAT HAS BEEN DONE:** Extension agents and area Extension specialists conducted commercial nursery and landscape educational programs reaching over 104,500 direct contacts during 2010. Best production and landscape management practices were taught at approximately 175 group meetings and over 400 on-site visits. Over 50 newspaper articles supported the direct contacts.

**IMPACT:** The total economic impact of Extension's commercial ornamental and landscape horticulture programming was estimated at \$240,000 in increased savings, increased income, and one-time capital purchases (Donaldson 2009).

- 903 professionals increased their knowledge of green industry services and marketing practices.
- 516 professionals added additional services and/or marketing practices.
- 549 professionals increased their knowledge of components of business plans.
- 200 professionals developed or made adjustment to their business plans.
- 1405 professionals increased their knowledge of plant culture (e.g. fertilization, soil mixing and/or sampling, propagation, irrigation, transplanting and installation).
- 1689 professionals increased their knowledge of plant pests and pest control measures.
- 1468 professionals increased their knowledge of proper plant selection.
- 716 professionals practiced proper plant selection and installation practices.
- 706 professionals implemented recommended cultural practices: fertilization, soil sampling, propagation, irrigation, etc.
- 774 professionals implemented recommended management practices for pest control.

**FUNDING:** Smith-Lever

**CONTACT:** Dr. Amy Fulcher, UT Department of Plant Sciences, 252 Ellington Plant Sciences Building, 243 I Johnson Dr., Knoxville, TN 37996; phone: 865-974-7152; fax: 865-974-1947; email: [afulcher@utk.edu](mailto:afulcher@utk.edu)

**TITLE:** Adopting Precision Agricultural Technologies in Tennessee

**ISSUE:** Precision agriculture technologies offer Tennessee producers various data management opportunities to analyze current production systems. Due the rising cost of fertilizers, chemicals, seed, fuel and labor, Tennessee producers are adopting precision agriculture technologies to increase production, reduce input costs, and manage farmland more efficiently.

**WHAT HAS BEEN DONE:** An integrated, multi-disciplinary research, education, and outreach program has been established to develop and disseminate information about precision agriculture management strategies that are profitable and practical for Tennessee producers. Field days, county and multi-county meetings, on-farm demonstrations, news articles, publications, personal contacts and information gained from applied research projects were used to promote the adoption of precision agriculture technologies.

**IMPACT:** UT Extension's educational effort to promote the adoption of precision agriculture technologies resulted in 575,479 acres planted and managed using precision agriculture technologies such as variable rate applications of fertilizer and lime, plant growth regulators, defoliant, and/or pesticides.

**FUNDING:** Smith-Lever, Cotton Inc.

**CONTACT:** Michael J. Buschermohle, Professor, University of Tennessee, Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science, 301 Agricultural Engineering Building, Knoxville, TN 37996-4531; phone: (865) 974-7266; fax: (865) 974-4514; email: mbuscher@utk.edu

**TITLE:** Tennessee GROW-10

**ISSUE:** GROW-10 targets a 10-county area in southwestern middle Tennessee with high unemployment and poverty rates, low median household incomes which have suffered economic effects from severe weather and loss of jobs due to manufacturing plant closures and relocation.

**WHAT HAS BEEN DONE:** The GROW-10 program utilized a variety of methods to fulfill the program's goal of delivering educational resources and assistance to farmers and agri-entrepreneurs in 2010. These approaches included development and delivery of 19 educational programs, in addition to a three-day educational bus tour. Thirteen new educational resources and materials were developed and utilized in training, including five educational presentations, three peer-reviewed publications and five instructional fact sheets. One-on-one technical assistance was provided through individual 45 consultations and farm visits.

**IMPACT:** The GROW-10 program has served 1128 farmers, agri-entrepreneurs, community leaders and Extension agents through technical assistance and educational outreach initiatives. Comments from GROW-10 participants illustrate the program impacts for 2010:

- "I've a much more realistic picture of what I can do and this saved me from doing something I need to research first." (Small Farmer)
- "This was an awesome adventure and so helpful in making this successful [running and opening an operation]" (Entrepreneur)
- "The best educational trip I have ever taken! (Entrepreneur)
- "Thank you very much. Marketing for us is the biggest challenge. This workshop really helps!" (Entrepreneur)

**FUNDING:** Smith-Lever; USDA Rural Development; Tennessee Department of Agriculture; and Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation

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