



Report for the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors Spring 2014

Personnel

- ASRED officers are: Dr. Tim Cross, TN, Chair; Dr. Tony Windham, AR, Chair-elect; Dr. Paul Brown, AL, Secretary; and Dr. Beverly Sparks, GA, Past Chair.
- Drs. Jimmy Henning, KY; Jim Trapp, OK and Tim Cross, TN, represent the region on ECOP.
- Dr. Jimmy Henning is serving as Chair of ECOP during the 2014 year.
- Dr. Tim Cross, TN, was elected to serve as Extension representative on the BAA Policy Board of Directors.

ASRED and Cooperative Extension Highlights

- **Strategic Opportunities** for the Extension section and the major areas of the ESCOP Roadmap were merged and adopted as the organizational structure for the joint Land-grant Impacts database for research and Extension. Dr. Tim Cross is chairing a multifunction workgroup to focus on the public-facing website for the database that will equitably represent both research and Extension to users of the system. The workgroup includes Eric Young and Bill Brown, representing the research community.
- **eXtension** (www.extension.org) commissioned an external evaluation conducted by Societ Associates and the report was presented in the fall. The Governing Council, with assistance from the Cascade Center for Community Governance (<http://www.cascadeccg.com/>) is now leading a strategic planning effort to redesign eXtension to refocus efforts that are synchronized with the resources available and which match expectations of Directors. Dan Cotton has stepped down from his role as Director of eXtension and the GC has employed Dr. Elbert Dickey, former Director of Extension in Nebraska, as interim Executive Director of eXtension. A national search will be announced after completion of the new strategic plan.
- **Southern Legislative Conference** – Dr. Jimmy Henning, KY, represented ASRED August 11 as an invited speaker at the Southern Legislative Conference. He provided an update on Cooperative Extension and its role in today's agricultural and rural economies to House and Senate Agriculture Committee Chairs of states in the southern region. Useful in this was the Battelle study which shows the economic impact of Experiment Stations and Extension Services in our region's land-grant universities.
- **Southern Region Extension Climate Academy (SRECA)** – In August 2013, the Southern Region Extension Directors asked the University of Florida to coordinate a regional climate training program. Dr. Joan Dusky, FL, asked the leadership of three USDA-NIFA-

funded regional climate projects to undertake this task and they have developed a regional training program for extension professionals (county agents and specialists) to be held on September 3-5 in Athens, GA. The goals are:

- To support Extension professionals in the application of climate science & stakeholder engagement methods for developing place-based adaptation options that support more resilient forest, crop, livestock, and coastal systems in the Southeastern USA
- To build an alumni network of innovative leaders in Extension who act as resources for their area and share ideas with others regionally through sharing innovative case studies & outreach materials
- **Community, Local and Regional Food Systems (CLRFS)** - a recently formed Southern Region multi-state workgroup is pooling resources in order to explore the measurable impact on Extension's local food systems outreach efforts by developing and piloting regional indicator tool(s) for gathering data that ultimately communicates the impacts of all CLRFS program components. Increased maximization of multi-state programs and resources is an important strategy for building sustainable institutional bridges through integrated, collaborative partnerships that will produce innovative, high-quality interdisciplinary, multi-state programs and high impact outcomes that communicate a powerful "Extension Story."
- **Social Media Best Practices** – The SR-PLN Communications Committee is developing a dossier of best practices in using social media.
- **Community Development Indicators** – The SR-PLN Community Resource Development Committee is developing indicators of success for CRD programming. This regional effort will feed into a national effort.
- **4-H** is in the process of aligning programs and initiatives across state lines so that they can be unified nationally. One of the outgrowths is to establish some first time 4-H agent training used nationally and to establish common 4-H indicators on a national level.

Meetings

- **ASRED Meeting** - ASRED will meet jointly with the Association of Extension Administrators and the Southern Region Program Leadership Network the third week of August, 2014 in Fort Worth, Texas. In a "Change the Story, Change the World" workshop the first morning of the meeting, Andy Goodman of the Goodman Group (www.thegoodmancenter.com) will explain why storytelling remains the single most powerful communication tool we possess, and will offer specific ways institutions can use stories to advance their missions. As we learn more about how our brains work, we're also discovering that stories are intrinsic to decision-making and shape our view of the world. Goodman is a nationally recognized author, speaker and consultant in the field of public interest communications. Along with the book, *Storytelling as Best Practice*, he is author of *Why Bad Ads Happen to Good Causes* and *Why Bad Presentations Happen to Good Causes*.