


Southern Extension/Research Activities
What's Working—What's Not

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SOUTHERN EXTENSION / RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Southern Extension/Research Activities
What's Working—What's Not

Purpose

- SERAs bring together researchers and extension specialists sharing a common problem, issue, or disciplinary interest
- General objective is to provide a functionally integrated forum to coordinate joint activities to address stakeholder needs




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Potential Tangible Outputs/Outcomes

- Research oriented: collaborations, review articles, web sites, standard experimental protocols, BMPs, research prioritization, public or private grants
- Extension oriented: multistate programming, printed/electronic educational materials, workshops, staff development, education prioritization, public or private grants




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SERA Survey

Extension Advisors—7
Research Advisors—9

Note-All 15 SERAs were reported. Some AA's have more than one SERA. Not all AA's responded.




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All SERAs

- SERA 3: Southern Regions Information Exchange Group for IPM
- SERA 5: Sweet Potato Collaborators Conference
- SERA 6: Methodology, Interpretation, and Implementation of Soil, Plant, Byproduct, and Water Analyses
- SERA 15: Competiveness and Sustainability of the Southern Dairy Industry
- SERA 17: Organization to Minimize Nutrient Loss from the Landscape
- SERA 18: Rice Technical Workers Group
- SERA 25: Turf (IEG-16) Working Group
- SERA 27: Nursey Crop and Landscape Systems (IEG-63)



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All SERAs

- SERA 35: Delta Region Farm Management and Agriculture Policy Working Group
- SERA 37: Latinos in the New South
- SERA 39: Public Policy Issues Education
- SERA 41: Beef Cattle Production Utilizing Forages in the Southwest to Integrate Research and Extension Programs across State Boundaries Development
- SERA 43: Southern Region Integrated Water Resources Coordinating Committee
- SERA 45: Crop Diversification Opportunities to Enhance the Viability of Small Farms
- SERA 46: Framework for Nutrient Reduction Strategy Collaboration: The Role for Land Grant Universities



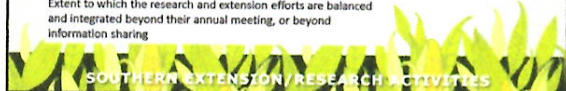
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Survey (example)
Please rate your SERA using the criteria listed below

Scale 1 (low) to 5 (high)

- Quality and quantity of research products produced
- Extent to which the SERA members understand their research objectives
- Extent to which SERA (insert your SERA here) accomplishes research objectives
- Quality and quantity of extension products produced
- Extent to which the SERA members understand their extension objectives
- Extent to which SERA (insert your SERA here) accomplishes extension objectives
- Extent to which the research and extension efforts are balanced and integrated beyond their annual meeting, or beyond information sharing




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Survey
Please rate your SERA using the criteria listed below

Scale 1 (low) to 3 (high)	Rating
Quality and quantity of extension products produced	4.00
Accomplishes Extension objectives	3.85
Understand Extension objectives	3.65
Understand their research objectives	3.40
Quality and quantity of research products produced	3.35
Accomplishes research objectives	3.25
Balance between Research and Extension	3.25
Averaging across all 7 factors range is 2.29 – 5.00	




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Survey
To what degree do you think the following aspects matter to the successful functioning of the ideal SERA?

Scale: none (1), a little, some, a lot (4)	Rating
Strong, committed leadership (chair, co-chair, secretary)	4.24
Regular face-to-face meeting/annual meeting	4.18
Clear plan of work	3.94
Some method of accountability within the group	3.88
Specific job duties and deadlines assigned	3.82
Easy avenues for communication (listservs, website, social media sites, etc.)	3.65
Organized committee structure	3.35
Regular calls among team members	3.24
Level of participant's home administrator support	3.18



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Survey
To what degree do you think the following aspects matter to your SERA?

Scale: none (1), a little, some, a lot (4)	Rating
Strong, committed leadership (chair, co-chair, secretary, etc.)	3.95
Regular face-to-face meeting/annual meeting	3.84
Specific job duties and deadlines assigned	3.21
Easy avenues for communication (listservs, website, social media sites, etc.)	3.21
Clear plan of work	3.16
Organized committee structure	3.00
Level of participant's home administrator support	2.89
Some method of accountability within the group	2.89
Regular calls among team members	2.58

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Survey
AA's Ideal vs. Own SERA

Scale: none (1), a little, some, a lot (4)	AA Ideal	Your SERA	Difference
Strong, committed leadership (chair, co-chair, secretary, etc.)	4.24	3.95	0.29
Regular face-to-face meeting/annual meeting	4.18	3.84	0.33
Clear plan of work	3.94	3.16	0.78
Some method of accountability within the group	3.88	2.89	0.99
Specific job duties and deadlines assigned	3.82	3.21	0.61
Easy avenues for communication (listservs, website, social media sites, etc.)	3.65	3.21	0.44
Regular calls among team members	3.47	2.58	0.89
Organized committee structure	3.35	3.00	0.35
Level of participant's home administrator support	3.18	2.89	0.28

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What is the best characteristic of your SERA?


1. Sharing successes. Exchange of ideas. Networking.
2. Strong annual meeting—face to face interaction, regular meetings.
3. Coordinating and collaborating—extension and research projects. Preparing symposiums, joint grant writing. Regular communication.
4. Integrate research and extension efforts

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What is the biggest challenge to your SERA?

1. Leadership. Lack of organization and promotion.
2. Getting members to complete Appendix E. Also completion of annual reports.
3. Declining meeting attendance. Declining participation in SERA activities.
4. Lack of interest in accomplishing objectives both research & extension.
5. Funding. Research and extension programming. Lack of funding to attend meetings.
6. Too much emphasis on the annual meeting rather than addressing objectives.




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What changes would you recommend to make your SERA stronger?

1. Focus on accomplishing objectives. Address Extension and Research objectives.
2. Stronger leadership.
3. Spend more time on programming rather than just information exchange.
4. More regular communication.
5. Need more participants. Participants need to complete Appendix E to become official members.




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What changes would you recommend to make your SERA stronger?

6. Need more support from administrators at all institutions promoting SERAs.
7. Extend activities to the entire region—beyond the annual meeting.




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What are the most important tasks for Administrative Advisors to help ensure a SERA's success?

1. Communicating the SERA's mission and objectives.
2. Encouraging routine meetings with a robust agenda.
3. Promoting coordinating and communicating among participants.
4. Identifying and training SERA leaders. Assisting in organizational structure.
5. Monitoring leadership and their activities. Convincing members to meet deadlines.




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What are the most important tasks for Administrative Advisors to help ensure a SERA's success?

6. Encouraging participants to communicate the impact of their work not just the outputs.
7. Finding resources to facilitate the SERA's success.
8. Fostering a culture of research and extension integration.
9. Facilitating communication between Extension and Research AA's.




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Summary: What's Working

1. Idea exchange, networking
2. Strong Annual Meetings
3. Some coordinating & collaborating
4. Some SERAs integrate Research & Extension




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Summary: What's Not Working

1. Leadership
2. Concentrating on objectives
3. Lack of communication among members
4. Inactivity of some participants
5. Funding



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