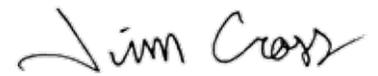


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or more than 100 years, UT Extension has worked to improve the lives of Tennesseans. To honor the past, we must look to the future and prepare to meet new challenges and opportunities, while continuing to provide solutions for local issues. This plan provides a roadmap that guides us in achieving excellence, and it focuses our attention on what matters most: advancing Tennessee. With your help, we will advance together by educating, collaborating and communicating. We will create the future our state needs, wants and expects. Join us on the journey.



Tim Cross
Dean

“Enduring great organizations are characterized by a fundamental duality. On the one hand, they have a set of timeless core values and core reason for being that remain constant over long periods of time. On the other hand, they have a relentless drive for change and progress ...”

Jim Collins

“How The Mighty Fall: And Why Some Companies Never Give In”

EXTENSION

ABOUT EXTENSION

Follow any road in Tennessee and you'll find people whose lives have been influenced by UT Extension's educational programs. Extension agents live and work in every county in the state. They help people solve problems and lead richer, more productive lives. Agents are the two-way link between Tennesseans, both urban and rural, and the University of Tennessee.

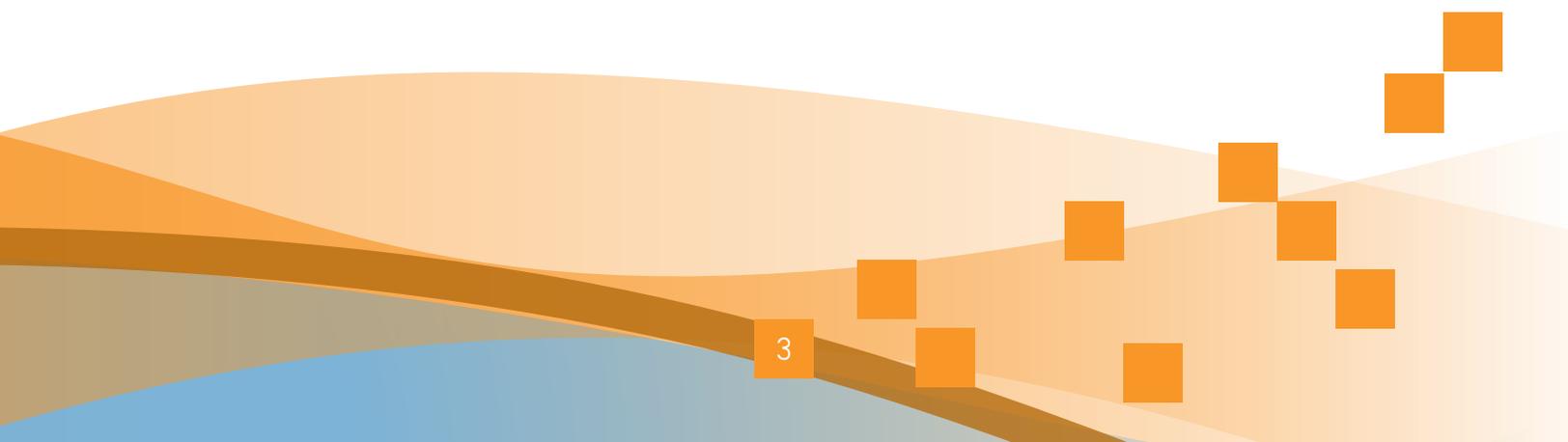
UT Extension is authorized by the Federal Smith-Lever Act as a partner of the United States Department of Agriculture, funded by federal, state and local governments. Extension partners with the Tennessee State University Cooperative Extension Program to provide comprehensive university outreach to all people of the state.

Education is Extension's goal. Approximately 16,000 professional Extension agents, employed in counties across America, are teaching citizens how to have better homes, farms and communities. Nearly 400 of these agents live and work in Tennessee, where they initiate, create and conduct educational programs that provide solutions to real-life issues related to agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, 4-H youth development, and community development.

Extension in Tennessee has a 100-year history of evolving to meet the changing needs of the state. In the future, many significant changes are expected to occur at an unprecedented rate. The data collected to frame this strategic plan indicated six trends that will shape our state over the next 10 years. These trends will provide challenges and opportunities for Extension:

- Increasing urbanization, including a loss of farmland.
- Advancing technology in all aspects of Tennesseans' lives.
- Rising rate of obesity for adults and children.
- Increasing population and diversity.
- Declining economy, including job loss.
- Increasing concern for environmental sustainability.

The key to Extension's future is how it embraces these changes and opportunities, while remaining true to its mission, and is the reason for this comprehensive strategic plan.



PLANNING

STRATEGIC PLANNING OVERVIEW

Over the last 100 years, UT Extension has helped Tennesseans solve problems and implement changing technologies to improve the quality of life in all 95 counties. As we celebrated this rich heritage and looked back on our accomplishments, it seemed an appropriate time to take an active role in planning our future.

In spring 2010, Extension launched a strategic planning effort to map the future for the next 10 years. The planning process was guided by a diverse leadership team representing a cross section of employees from across the state and was instrumental in collecting and analyzing data to form the 2010-2020 UT Extension Strategic Plan. As a part of the process, we sought opinions from many Tennesseans, including employees, decision-makers, clientele, partners and volunteers. Ten area meetings involving approximately 1,000 people were held across the state. In addition, 2,000 Tennesseans provided their insights regarding Extension's future through an online survey. The goal was to give everyone a voice.

The results of these meetings and surveys shaped the goals contained in this strategic plan that will serve as a map for the future. Beginning with the November 2010 Extension Professional Development Conference and continuing through the next 10 years, we will use the following goals as our guide to move UT Extension forward:

- Preparing for future growth
- Advancing Tennessee through innovative programs
- Investing in Extension's human capital
- Maximizing organizational efficiency, and
- Increasing the visibility of UT Extension.

These goals reflect the need for innovation and technology while maintaining Extension's 100-year tradition of community-based education. This plan engages employees, partners, volunteers and those we serve to positively impact Tennessee communities. Together, we will advance Tennessee.

VISION

UT Extension is the premier educational organization for all Tennesseans. Extension increases economic prosperity, improves environmental sustainability, and enhances well-being in rural and urban communities.

MISSION

UT Extension helps Tennesseans to improve their quality of life and solve problems through the application of research and evidenced-based knowledge about agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, 4-H youth development, and community development.

CORE VALUES

UT Extension serves society using high-quality educational programs that improve Tennessee's quality of life, economy and environment. UT Extension employees, volunteers and partners are people of integrity. In all of our efforts, we value communication and responsiveness.

ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES

As UT Extension we ...

- Are the gateway to the University of Tennessee as the outreach unit of the Institute of Agriculture.
- Are a statewide educational organization with an office in every county.
- Are members of a team that includes employees, volunteers and partners.
- Are responsible for advancing Tennessee, and committed to team decisions.
- Are public servants who make wise decisions regarding time and resources.
- Encourage listening and mutual respect.
- Support diversity and inclusivity in people and programs.
- Use technology and promote lifelong learning to improve the lives, environment and economy for all Tennesseans.
- Strive for excellence in all things.

PREPARING

PREPARING FOR FUTURE GROWTH

Goal: Expand UT Extension partnerships, funding and infrastructure.

Strategy: Partner with individuals, agencies and organizations to address emerging needs.

Action steps:

- Strengthen existing partnerships.
- Explore new program opportunities and collaborations.
- Engage partners for multidisciplinary educational programs and opportunities.

Strategy: Increase funding to accomplish Extension's mission.

Action steps:

- Enhance relations with elected officials. Secure new gifts and recurring commitments from supporters, including new endowments, and establish chairs of excellence in Extension.
- Develop new public funding sources.
- Diversify revenue sources, including fee-based programming.
- Expand grant and contract funding.

Strategy: Renew facilities and equipment to meet the changing educational needs of communities.

Action steps:

- Evaluate and adopt cutting-edge technologies.
- Establish a premier, multipurpose West Tennessee 4-H Center.
- Cooperate with state and local government to invest in Extension's infrastructure.
- Develop standards for all Extension facilities.

ADVANCING

ADVANCING TENNESSEE THROUGH INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

Goal: Deliver programs to address the greatest needs of Tennessee families, farmers, youth and communities.

Strategy: Prioritize Extension programming to address needs.

Action steps:

- Implement a streamlined process for prioritizing programs based on local needs and emerging issues.
- Coordinate county and state Extension program development and delivery.
- Designate state-level subject matter expertise and develop curricula for priority programs.

Strategy: Equip Extension to provide excellent education using technology.

Action steps:

- Provide expert IT staff to support innovative technologies for teaching and learning.
- Ensure effective teaching methods using cutting-edge equipment and software.

Strategy: Evaluate Extension program outcomes to confirm they are meeting priority needs.

Action steps:

- Enhance and fully utilize Extension's System for University Planning, Evaluation and Reporting (SUPER).
- Seek input to ensure Extension programs continue to address local needs.
- Implement a review process to assure resources are allocated to high-priority programs.

INVESTING

INVESTING IN UT EXTENSION'S HUMAN CAPITAL

Goal: Become the employer of choice to attract and retain a diverse and highly qualified workforce.

Strategy: Develop a world-class Extension team.

Action steps:

- Implement a staffing plan that balances needs and funding across the state.
- Establish a competency-based system to guide personnel actions such as hiring, promotion and training.
- Provide high-quality, future-oriented, professional learning opportunities for all employees.
- Conduct a comprehensive training program for county directors.
- Increase accountability at every level.

Strategy: Support and encourage employees to enhance commitment and engagement.

Action steps:

- Hire and retain diverse and talented employees.
- Implement a mentoring program.
- Support and encourage work and personal life balance.
- Apply policies, rewards and incentives consistently.
- Recognize and reward outstanding performance at all levels of the organization.
- Promote healthy lifestyles for employees.

Strategy: Competitively compensate employees and provide advancement opportunities.

Action steps:

- Provide total compensation to employees that is comparable to the upper third of Extension peers.
- Define and communicate benefits to current and prospective employees.
- Improve the performance review and promotion processes and establish additional promotion levels and tracks.

Strategy: Expand and strengthen Extension volunteers.

Action steps:

- Recruit and retain a culturally diverse, active volunteer workforce.
- Create well-defined volunteer job descriptions and expectations.
- Work together as volunteers and staff, demonstrating mutual respect.
- Enable learning and growth of volunteers.
- Establish a volunteer recognition program.

MAXIMIZING ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCY

Goal: UT Extension operates efficiently and effectively at all levels.

Strategy: Eliminate barriers and simplify procedures to achieve greater efficiency.

Action steps:

- Review approval processes and adopt procedures that facilitate approval at the lowest level.
- Establish consistent procedures and best practices statewide.
- Conduct employee training on procedures and best practices.

Strategy: Simplify reporting.

Action steps:

- Identify mandatory reporting requirements.
- Identify and eliminate unnecessary and duplicate reports.
- Establish consistency in reporting statewide.

Strategy: Implement clear, concise and effective policies.

Action steps:

- Implement policies to improve efficiency.
- Provide policy training and references for all employees and volunteers.

INCREASING

INCREASING VISIBILITY OF UT EXTENSION

Goal: Establish UT Extension as the primary knowledge source for Tennessee residents.

Strategy: Develop an effective marketing plan.

Action steps:

- Brand Extension as “Your Local UT Campus.”
- Launch a comprehensive and ongoing media campaign.
- Evaluate and refine marketing strategies to ensure effectiveness.
- Use marketing and communication strategies to increase visibility.

Strategy: Inspire and empower employees and volunteers to market Extension.

Action steps:

- Provide training and materials to market Extension effectively.
- Increase marketing competencies of employees and volunteers.

Strategy: Share Extension’s successes.

Action steps:

- Inform residents and communities of Extension’s impact.
- Employ social media and other marketing tools to promote program success.

Strategy: Increase visibility of Extension programs.

Action steps:

- Cross-market programs to current clientele.
- Promote Extension at major public venues.

STRATEGIC PLAN TEAM:

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John Bartee, County Director, Montgomery County
Gary Bates, Professor, Plant Sciences
Kelli Bottoms, County Director, Cumberland County
Lynn Brookins, Program Leader, Western Region
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11-0045 E12-0140-00-003-11 3M 10/10

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

THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE **UT**
INSTITUTE of AGRICULTURE