

AAEA ORGANIZED SYMPOSIUM
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**Strengthening Research and Extension Collaboration Within and
Between 1890 and 1862 Land Grant Institutions**

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ABSTRACT

Research and extension collaboration has traditionally been a challenge, especially within and among the smaller land grant institutions, primarily because of limited resources. These institutions' ability to interact with counterpart researchers and extension educators in the larger 1862 institutions is similarly constrained by lack of resources. This symposium highlights successes, identifies obstacles and explores ways in which research and extension collaboration can be strengthened within the land grant system.

SYMPOSIUM SUMMARY

Researchers in land grant institutions are continually asked to engage in integrated applied research. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, through the National Research Initiative (NRI) and other research grant programs, is emphasizing collaboration and integration of research and extension in attempt to uphold and enhance the three-fold functions of the land grant system – teaching, research and extension. Collaboration between research and extension helps both parties learn from each other. The extension educator gains first-hand experience with the research process, while the researcher understands how studies can be designed and implemented to maximize the potential for extension educational use. This results in maximum beneficial impacts on individuals, families, communities, and the social and economic sectors on which they depend.

Collaboration between researchers and extension educators can be a major challenge, especially within the 1890 land grant institutions, which traditionally have had to work with extremely meager resources. The majority of 1890 agricultural economists and other social scientists conducting research resides outside the cooperative extension machinery; and usually assumes heavy teaching responsibilities. The scarce resources limit how much time these scientists can devote to research and extension. These resources also impose severe constraints on these scientists' ability to interact with counterpart researchers and extension educators in the 1862 land grant institutions. However, there is a real need for collaboration where engagement of researchers, extension educators and stakeholders is meaningful and continuous. Viewing stakeholders as largely the same for both researchers and extension educators is one way of fostering and strengthening

collaboration, as is combining resources to jointly fund integrated research and extension efforts or initiatives.

Even with this grim picture, examples of successful collaboration within and between 1890 and 1862 land grant institutions exist. The purpose of this symposium is to showcase and/or highlight some of the collaboration success, identify major obstacles and begin a meaningful dialogue that defines ways in which collaboration in research and extension can be strengthened within the land grant system.

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PARTICIPANTS

Public and Private Sector Collaboration: The Southern Region Risk Management Education Center, *Ken W. Stokes, Professor and Director, Southern Region Risk Management Center, Texas Cooperative Extension Service, Stephenville, Texas.*

The Southern Region Risk Management Education Center was established by Texas Cooperative Extension; and is funded by a grant through USDA/CSREES. Public and private sector grant recipients assist agricultural producers and their families to be successful by using improved risk management skills. The Center is coordinating risk management education and outreach programs throughout the southern region, serving the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The Center offers very good opportunities for extension collaboration between 1890 and 1862 institutions and is the focus point for team building efforts, communication networks, and stakeholder participation in the South.

Opportunities for Collaboration: Lessons from the Southern AgBiotech Consortium for Underserved Communities, *Govind Sharma, SACUC Director, Professor and Chair, Department of Plant and Soil Science, Alabama A&M University, Duncan M. Chembezi, Research Associate Professor and Director, Small Farms Research Center, Department of Agribusiness, Alabama A&M University and Gerald Wheelock, Professor, Department of Agribusiness, Alabama A&M University.*

The Southern AgBiotech Consortium for Underserved Communities (SACUC) is a jointly planned effort of eleven 1890 institutions to promote agricultural biotechnology research, education and outreach to farmers and consumers and strengthen K-Life science education. The Consortium attempts to reduce growing disparities in dissemination of science-based information and aid in rural sustainability. Through meticulous planning, two 1862 and eleven 1890 land grant institutions in ten states have joined resources pursuing and addressing a common problem. The presentation draws heavily on this research and extension collaborative effort by SACUC member institutions.

An Assessment of Post-SOFSEC Collaborative Initiatives and the Involvement of Agricultural Economists and Other Social Scientists, *Ntam Baharanyi, Professor and*

Extension Economist, Tuskegee University, and Robert Zabawa, Research Professor, G.W. Carver Agricultural Experiment Station, Tuskegee University.

The Southern Food Systems and Education Consortium (SOFSEC) is a partnership of eight 1890 institutions that has led to the implementation of many subsequent programs and other regional initiatives in areas of agricultural and community development. This effort has primarily focused on collaboration between the 1890 institutions and community-based organizations in the southern Black Belt. As issues of community and rural development become prominent, agricultural economists and other social scientists from research and extension, as well as from both the 1890 and the 1862s are being called upon to play key roles in the efforts to make select initiatives more relevant.

Collaboration on Farm Financial Management and Business Planning, *Kevin Klair, Extension Economist/Professor, Center for Farm Financial Management, Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Minnesota.*

The sharing of educational materials, software tools, experiences, and continued ongoing training and support of staff has enabled 1890 and 1862 educators to more effectively reach producers with business training programs. The resource challenges of building high quality software and training programs is mitigated somewhat by collaboration. The challenge of reaching out to producers who are minimally motivated toward business and financial planning is being jointly explored by experienced educators from both 1890 and 1862 institutions

PRESENTATION FORMAT

The symposium will be 90 minutes long. The facilitator will open the discussion by briefly stating the purpose of the symposium and also introducing participants. Each participant will be allowed 10-12 minutes to discuss, make comments or present their prepared remarks. The remaining time (approximately 45-50 minutes) will be devoted to a general or roundtable discussion by respondents and also by the audience to solicit input, reaction and additional insights. The facilitator will finally summarize the salient points from the overall discussion of the symposium.

RESPONDENTS

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