INTRODUCTION

2011 marked a year of planning and change for eXtension. It also marked the end of one Strategic Plan and the development and beginning of a new Strategic Plan. eXtension brought together CES leaders and eXtension staff members in early 2011 to evaluate, reflect, study, rethink, and set a new course toward 2014. More on that new plan will be presented later, but now it’s time to consider the successes in 2011:

- Through 2011, eXtension has received 76 grants, contracts, and/or sponsorships totaling $15,092,865. These funds, in addition to the $9,763,461 of New Technologies for Ag Extension grants, translates to $1.58 of additional funds for each $1 invested by Cooperative Extension Directors and Administrators. Much of the support tracks to eXtension being written into USDA/NIFA competitive grant programs with the majority of the resources going to Extension faculty at member institutions.
- eXtension was chosen to participate in the Google for Nonprofits program and receives $10,000 per month ($120,000 annually) of free Google Adwords advertising on Google search page results. Three Communities of Practice participated in the effort. The ads were shown 932,901 times in 2011. People clicked on the ads to go to the public website 8,010 times for an overall click through rate of .86%. The range of click through rates was .27% to 2.08%. A click through rate of 2% is considered to be average.
- USDA-NIFA awarded eXtension a new 4-year New Technologies for Ag Extension (NTAE) grant. In 2011, the award was $1,676,640.
- Involvement by Communities of Practice grew in social media including more than 3,400,000 interactions and engagements on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and others, expanding Cooperative Extension’s content reach.
- Eight Communities of Practice launched; 10 new Communities of Practice formed; 27 Communities of Practice were certified and awarded leadership funds.
- Community of Practice members continue to report enhanced teamwork and professional contacts, increased use of new tools and technologies, e.g., social media, achievement of broader content and outreach, and documenting behavior changes and impacts of their programs in eXtension.
- Cooperative Extension faculty and staff resolved 27,593 Ask an Expert questions in 2011, a 60% increase over 2010. Forty percent of these questions were answered by experts in a state different from where the question originated. Nearly 11,000 questions were submitted from http://www.extension.org, while 16,600 were submitted from more than 550 local (state and county) Ask an Expert widgets.
- In 2011, eXtension received requests from Extension faculty to create 129 Extension Moodle courses, 50 of those have launched. eXtension’s 445 Moodle courses are being taught by 340 Extension educators representing 40 institutions and USDA. eXtension Moodle has a registered user count of 12,490.
- eXtension staff implemented a new content management system easing and speeding up creation of content and facilitating collaborative work.
- eXtension launched LEARN v2, a more engagement-focused learning environment for eXtension Professional Development featuring recommendation engine and curation technologies. This launch set the stage for public access in 2012.
- More than 16,100 Extension workers now hold eXtension IDs.
- More than 5,300 pages of content and FAQs were added to http://www.extension.org.
- More than 31,000 people participated in live and viewed recordings of Community of Practice-sponsored webinars and Learn professional development sessions.
- More than 1,500 persons attended a second successful National Virtual eXtension Conference featuring five outstanding keynote speaker sessions and critical conversations.
- Launched the Military Families Learning Network at the DoD/USDA Family Resilience Conference in April, 2011. The Network has 189 members from 40 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, and Korea.
  - The Financial Security for All, eXtension Alliance for Better Child Care, and Just In Time Parenting Communities of Practice are collaborating to develop educational programs in support of the Military Families Learning Network.
  - The Military Families Learning Network is collaborating with the Texas AgriLife Extension’s Wounded Warrior Project through blogging opportunities.
  - A Network Literacy Community of Practice was launched to help military family service professionals, Cooperative Extension professionals and others learn how to work and engage in networked environments using social media and other online tools.
- The 2011-2014 eXtension Strategic Roadmap was completed and approved by the eXtension Governing Committee.
  - Defined optimized Communities of Practice and laid the groundwork for enhancing and starting Communities of Practice in a new and faster way.
  - Developed a State & Local Value Enhancement Plan calling upon state and Institutional Teams to help achieve local implementation.
  - Targeted potential partners and identified products and services to leverage partnerships, i.e., Communities of Practice, Ask an Expert, and the Learn Network.
  - Global Advancement, LLC was retained by the eXtension Foundation to seek out corporate and non-USDA/NIFA government support.
  - A task force of Extension Directors and Administrators identified nine Critical Success Factors against which eXtension will be measured.
- More than 300 Community of Practice members and others attended the National Community of Practice Workshop. During the conference eXtension honored:
  - Greg Crosby, Karen Hinton, Craig Wood, and Kevin Gamble with the eXtension Champion Award.
  - The Livestock Poultry Environmental Learning Center as an outstanding Community of Practice.
  - Andrew Behnke as an outstanding Community of Practice member.
  - Institutional Teams from Michigan State University & the University of Missouri for their outstanding work.
  - Lela Vandenberg, MI, Todd Hurt, GA, and Joe Hunnings, VA as outstanding Institutional Team members.
- A partnership was established with The International Sorghum and Millet Collaborative Research Support Program (INTSORMIL) and USDA/NIFA to develop a Community of Practice and technology transfer system to deliver information to Mali (West Africa) producers. Under the partnership, all expenses will be covered by INTSORMIL and USDA/NIFA.
2011 MILESTONES & STRATEGIC ROADMAP FOR 2011-2014

In 2011 eXtension created a new set of milestones through extensive strategic planning. These milestones will guide progress of the Initiative through 2014. These milestones serve as the overarching outline for this 2011 Return on Investment document:

- User Focus
- Content Development
- Professional Development
- Partnership and Funding
- Shared Vision
- Transparency and Accountability

USER FOCUS

In late 2011, a task force was appointed and immediately began working on redesigning and transforming the eXtension public site, http://extension.org. The goal of the redesign is to create an environment where discovery, sharing new research findings, creating value added content, enriching user engagement, and learning opportunities around areas of interest can occur and flourish.

Development of an algorithmically-based recommendation engine also began in the fourth quarter of 2011. The initial implementation for this recommendation engine was incorporated into Learn, Extension’s professional development framework, and deployed at the end of year. While this technology was just developed, it will be at the heart of addressing market analysis and focusing the Extension system’s need to be out-in-front of emerging societal issues. An analysis of its use in the Learn framework will help to inform further uses of this technology in eXtension applications going forward.

Communities of Practice underwent an extensive content appraisal process to audit all their content for uniqueness, keyword usage, organization, links to complementary content, a call to action, identifying low performing content, and flagging it for updating or removal from the eXtension site. Communities were further trained on how to write discoverable content. These processes were incorporated into the new content management system (http://create.extension.org).

Launched Communities of Practice continued to work through the process of content appraisals using the criteria developed by Brain Traffic to enhance and maximize search engine optimization. This same criteria provides valuable information for new communities in developing content to ensure newly published materials meet the same criteria.

New capabilities for content curation, sense making, personal learning portfolios, and public registration and login were incorporated into a new version of the eXtension Learn application. These capabilities were deployed at the end of 2011. Based on what is learned from our initial testing in early 2012 these capabilities may be developed further for possible integration into additional eXtension tools such as the primary eXtension public website.
CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

Twenty seven communities were certified in 2011 and awarded leadership funds. Also during 2011 ten new Communities of Practice were added to the eXtension family of communities. Over 60 communities were supported by eXtension staff to reach their learning objectives and integrate their work more closely in social spaces where their clientele organically participate.

Shifting the certification process of communities to a more comprehensive learning model yielded the development of the Optimization Plan. In 2011, eXtension staff, stakeholders, extension educators and Community of Practice members developed what is now known as the Community of Practice Optimization Plan. Careful consideration was given to this plan and how both existing communities and new communities would implement plans to take their work to the next level in the online environment. This plan was introduced to all communities in the Fall of 2011.

Engaging and reaching users even more quickly was a new focus for communities in 2011 where Communities of Practice were encouraged to adopt a new philosophy to publish content as it was completed rather than waiting for the bulk of their content deliverables to be met before launching. This new philosophy included an intensified training for communities to write more discoverable content. Help documents and training sessions were conducted for all members of Communities of Practice and Cooperative Extension professionals. In turn, writing discoverable online content training supports the work community members may be doing at their institutions and this information is readily available for any Extension educator to consume and implement at the local level.

Significant strides were made to lower the barriers and make it easier for Communities of Practice to create content and engage with users. A new content management system was put in place that Community of Practice members said is much easier to use than the previous system.

In June, a National Community of Practice Workshop was conducted where over 300 Community of Practice members attended and many others joined the online webinars. The workshop supported eXtension’s efforts to encourage Communities of Practice to interact with their clientele in online social networks. Going where the users are online in these social spaces has been the common theme to increase clientele engagement with a communities’ content. eXtension continued to support evaluation efforts of Communities of Practice.

After establishing an online presence in 2011, the Military Families Learning Network Communities of Practice have published 45 articles, 6 FAQs, one learning lesson and answered 51 Ask an Expert Questions. The Military Families Learning Network and its Communities of Practice have 583 Facebook fans, reach 374 individuals with a secondary reach (friends of fans) of 148,867 people. On Twitter, the Military Families Learning Network and its Communities of Practice have 320 Twitter followers and an end of year amplification rate of 50% (ratio of retweet/tweets).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Over 260 eXtension professional development sessions were offered via Learn (learn.extension.org) and other venues in 2011. Based on direct counts and some estimations, the total number of participants was 4,149. In addition, 64 archived webinars were viewed 3,779 times. The length of the sessions ranged
from 30 to 540 minutes and the most frequent length for 135 of the webinars was 60 minutes.

All of this activity in Learn led eXtension to move forward to enhancing the framework to engage learners in new ways. Learn v2 was developed in 2011 for launch in January 2012. The enhancements include features to engage learners around professional development including the ability to comment or reply to comments of others and to engage in sensemaking, the process by which people give meaning to their experience by responding to questions for each event in which they participate.

Other features include:
- Text and email notifications for when an event is about to start
- Sense making questions and charts designed to prompt discussion
- Event recommendations based on individual activity in Learn
- Comments and ratings on events
- Event bookmarking to keep track of new event activity
- A new look designed to work better across all browsers, especially on mobile devices

PARTNERSHIPS & FUNDING

The new 2011 – 2014 eXtension Strategic Roadmap describes Critical Success Factors to move eXtension forward including the need to develop new partnership and funding opportunities. One priority is to develop successful partnerships that address programmatic needs while providing additional funding to grow eXtension. We will pursue partnerships with public and private organizations.

Global Advancement, LLC of Lexington, Kentucky was hired to help eXtension pursue partnerships with Federal departments, agencies and private entities to build on the strengths of Communities of Practice. A Case for Support, Development Plan and National Leadership Council are being developed. The National Leadership Council will include approximately 12 to 15 individuals strategically selected from several groups including eXtension leadership; nationally recognized corporate executives; nationally recognized non-profit foundation board members or executives; and other respected leaders who can raise awareness and provide access to potential funding sources. The Council will play a strategic role in fundraising activities and success. Directors/Administrators have been asked to submit nominations for the Leadership Council.

eXtension helps research, teaching and extension teams integrate eXtension into USDA/NIFA Competitive Grant Program applications. Teams choose whether to enhance an existing Community of Practice or establish a new one in a subject matter yet to be represented in eXtension. Through 2011, 114 NIFA applications have been submitted with 50 NIFA applications receiving awards totaling approximately $120,869,056 and of that amount approximately $13,789,065 (12%) has been directed to Community of Practice programs. In addition, Communities of Practice have been included in $1,418,973 of non-NIFA related grants and/or contracts of which $1,282,364 (90%) is being directed to Community of Practice programs. Totally, approximately $122,702,183 of grants and/or contracts with eXtension inclusions have been submitted of which $15,092,865 (12%) is being directed to Community of Practice programming.

Members of the eXtension Finance Task Force (Dan Cotton, Michael Ouart, and Greg Crosby) met with the House and Senate Subcommittees on Agriculture,
Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and related agencies to brief them on eXtension and the importance and use of Federal funding (New Technologies for Ag Extension – NTAE). eXtension leadership also met with USDA officials representing Research, Education, and Economics; Sustainable Development; Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; Natural Resources Conservation Service; the National Agricultural Library; as well as the leadership of the National 4-H Council.

eXtension has a $2.5M cooperative agreement with the USDA-NIFA in partnership with The Office of the Deputy Undersecretary of Defense Military Community and Family Policy (DoD/MC&FP). In 2011, eXtension launched the Military Families Learning Network which serves military family service professionals through online communities that identify and make use of the highest quality best practices, research-and evidence-based information, educational and curriculum materials, and programming activities and efforts. The Military Families Network is made up of Cooperative Extension family specialists and military family service professionals, DoD branch services, and non-governmental organizations. These online communities engage in various places:

- Military Families Learning Network blog: http://blogs.extension.org/militaryfamilies/
- Facebook: http://facebook.com/militaryfamilies
- Twitter: http://twitter.com/milfamLN
- and on DoD authorized social media sites.

The primary concentration areas for the Military Families Learning Network are Personal Finance, Child Care, Family Development (including parent education and military family caregiving), and Network Literacy.

In 2011, eXtension developed new partners and created new alliances in international work. Organizations working with eXtension include:

- International Sorghum and Millet Collaborative Research Support Program - INTSORMIL (http://intsormil.org/)
- Global Environmental & Technology Foundation GETF (http://www.getf.org/)
- USAID (http://usaid.gov)
- Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International – CABI
- Alliance for a Green Revolution – AGRA (http://www.agra-alliance.org/)
- Scientific and Institutional Capacity Building to Improve Agricultural Production and Food Security in Partner Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa
- The National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine

eXtension offers access to 200+ learning modules and/or courses on http://campus.extension.org. Currently, 25 courses involve fee collection. Twenty of these courses are managed by Texas A&M University, one by the University of Kentucky, and four through the eXtension Foundation.
2012 Projected Expenses

- Optimized CoPs: $2,636,870
- Partnerships & Funding: $527,703
- State and Local Value Enhancement: $595,153
- Measurement: $242,899
- Professional Development: $424,012

2012 Projected Expenses

- Optimized CoPs: 60%
- Partnerships & Funding: 13%
- State and Local Value Enhancement: 10%
- Measurement: 5%
- Professional Development: 12%
SHARED VISION
Not everyone has the same view and opinion of eXtension and its place within the Cooperative Extension System and thus don’t share a picture of what success for eXtension looks like. Many people within CES don’t see their place in eXtension; how it’s going to make their work easier, better, and provide better service to their constituents. Focusing on achieving demonstrable evidence of real success and value delivered will help this view point.

Institutional teams continue to be at the heart of local engagement in eXtension. In 2011 there were several “firsts” related to Institutional Teams. For the first time, Institutional Teams and team members were recognized for their efforts via the Be, Grow, Create Institutional Team awards presented as a part of the 2011 Community of Practice Workshop. Three individuals and two teams were recognized. (See the Awards Section). Sessions focused on Institutional Team needs were also included on the agenda.

As a part of the 2011-2014 Strategic Plan, eXtension will focus on State and Local Value Enhancement with Institutional Teams a critical part of that effort. A State and Local Value Enhancement Work Group was developed for implementation in first quarter 2012 and will continue to build our Institutional Team force and enhance an institutional team plan to include strategies to bring state directors and administrators on board. Through this effort eXtension will resume state and institutional visits with focus on state director and administrator and Institutional Teams.

eXtension conducted a second National eXtension Virtual Conference in October 2011 featuring five keynote speakers and five reactor panels of CES and other university personnel. The three-day event garnered 1,525 individuals who participated in one or more of the presentations and discussion sessions. Twitter was used during the conference as a means to ask questions during the discussion sessions and to communicate about the sessions both to other conference participants and those not participating in the conference. Traffic on Twitter helped leverage and extend the reach of the 2011 NeVC. The total number of unique Twitter users who received tweets about the conference using the hashtag #NeVC was 145,285. The total number of times tweets about the hashtag #NeVC were received by users (this includes users receiving multiple tweets) was 1,440,729. eXtension is will host a face-to-face national conference in October 2012.

eXtension also launched a social media marketing plan including advertising on Facebook and using Google Adwords. The strategy, focused on only a targeted number of Communities of Practice provided support for select pieces of content to evaluate the effectiveness of such advertising. The process will continue into 2012 adding additional Communities of Practice as well as eXtension’s Ask an Expert feature.

TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY
From its launch in 2008, eXtension has endeavored to provide information that captures the breadth and scope of its efforts about the activities of and benefits to its internal users (i.e., Cooperative Extension System staff) and engagement and benefits that accrue to its Communities of Interest (i.e., users of the eXtension resources). In the digital environment of 2008 and 2009, our evaluative efforts were driven by a content production focus (the distribution and retrieval of existing knowledge), which was appropriate for the times. Since 2010, with the
advent of social media, the digital landscape has changed from a content pro-
duction focus to the interactive and collaborative production of new knowledge.
Consequently, as the digital landscape changes, our focus in eXtension will likely change, and our efforts to document our effectiveness will also need to change.

In the 2011-2014 eXtension Strategic Roadmap, one of the important areas of focus was on performance measurement. More specifically, eXtension would create a “dashboard of performance metrics that the entire CES would find appropriate and acceptable.” The purpose of this effort was to further refine these into a more concise set of Critical Success Factors/Metrics (CSF/M) that represent what eXtension is about in this new digital environment, what can reasonably be documented and reported, and represents the added value eXtension brings as a resource to the CES.

In late 2011, an initial set of Critical Success Factors/Metrics were developed based upon input and review by a Critical Success Factors/Metrics Task Force including Extension Director/Administrator representatives from each of the five CES regions, a NIFA representative, and an eXtension Governing Committee representative. The Critical Success Factors/Metrics were then presented to the CES for review and input at three national discussion sessions attended by 70 individuals. The Critical Success Factors/Metrics Task Force met to discuss the input from the national discussion sessions and made revisions. The Critical Success Factors/Metrics were then presented to the eXtension Governing Committee in November 2011. The Governing Committee passed a motion to endorse the Critical Success Factors/Metrics, including input made during the discussion. A separate report entitled “A New Focus - eXtension’s Critical Success Factors/Metrics will document these Critical Success Factors/Metrics to date.”
AWARDS
Annually eXtension recognizes achievement, leadership, and performance through a series of awards. eXtension members are also honored by other associations, organizations, and societies. Honored in 2011:

**eXtension Champion Awards**
eXtension recognized four individuals who have been deemed “instrumental in the creation and development of eXtension.” Recognized as eXtension Champions were: Greg Crosby, National Program Leader, USDA National Institute for Food and Agriculture; Karen Hinton, Dean and Director, University of Nevada Extension; Craig Wood, eXtension Associate Director for Content Development and Kevin Gamble, eXtension Associate Director for Technology.

Greg Crosby

Karen Hinton

Craig Wood

Kevin Gamble
The 2011 eXtension Outstanding CoP Award is presented to Mark Risse, University of Georgia (left) representing the Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Center by eXtension Governing Committee Chair Jimmy Henning, University of Kentucky.

The 2011 eXtension CoP Achievement Award is presented to Andrew Behnke (left), NC State University by eXtension Governing Committee Chair Jimmy Henning, University of Kentucky.
Joe Hunnings, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech (left) receives the Be Grow Create Outstanding Institutional Team Member award from eXtension Governing Committee Chair, Jimmy Henning, University of Kentucky.

Todd Hurt, University of Georgia
eXtension’s Be Grow Create Outstanding Institutional Team Member Award
Lela Vandenberg, Michigan State University

Lela Vandenberg, Michigan State University (left) receives the Be Grow Create Outstanding Institutional Team Member award from eXtension Governing Committee Chair, Jimmy Henning,

University of Kentucky.
eXtension’s Be Grow Create Outstanding Institutional Team Award

Michigan State University
Institutional Team:
Michelle Rodgers
Liz Wells
Chris Skelly
Kathe Hale
Ruth Borger
Erica Ciupak
Wayne Beyea
Lela Vandenberg

eXtension Governing Committee Chair Jimmy Henning presents an Outstanding Institutional Team award to Liz Wells (left) and Lela Vandenberg (right) Institutional Team members representing Michigan State University.
University of Missouri
Institutional Team:
Share Bane
Meridith Berry
Gordon Carriker
Sharon Gulick
Sarah Hultine
George Laur
Julie Middleton
John Myers
Michael Ravenscraft
Ray Walden
Crystal Weber
Sandy Stegall

eXtension Governing Committee Chair Jimmy Henning presents an Outstanding Institutional Team award to Institutional Team members Meridith Berry (left), Julie Middleton (near right) and Sharon Gulick (far right) representing the University of Missouri.

Other eXtension Community of Practice Award Winners:

Alexandra Stone, John McQueen, Roger Leigh, and Alice Formiga
2011 James and Mildred Oldfield/E.R. Jackman Team Award
Oregon State University College of Agricultural Sciences

Livestock & Poultry Environmental Learning Center
National Project of Excellence
USDA/NIFA National Water Program
Rick Koelsch, Nebraska; Joe Harrison, Washington State; Mark Risse, Georgia, and Frank Humenik, North Carolina State (deceased), Rick Stowell, Jill Heemstra and Leslie Johnson, Nebraska; Thomas Bass, Montana State; Saqib Mukhtar, Texas A&M; Mike Westendorf, Rutgers; and Karl Vandevender, Arkansas. Bill Lazarus, Minnesota; John Brooks, USDA ARS; Carol Galloway, US EPA; Mark Rice, North Carolina State; Jactone Arogo, Virginia Tech; Ron Wiederholt, North Dakota State; Joshua Payne, Oklahoma State; John Lawrence, Iowa State; Mike Jenkins, USDA ARS; Rhonda Miller, Utah State; Suzy Friedman, Environmental Defense Fund; Bill Boyd, USDA NRCS; Ray Massey and John Lory, Missouri; Jessica Davis, Colorado State; Janice Ward, US Geological Survey; Alan Sutton, Purdue; Doug Beegle, Penn State.
Kathy Anderson
Holling Family Award for Teaching Excellence
University of Nebraska Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Kathy Anderson (L) receives the Holling Family Award for Teaching Excellence. Also pictured, Kim Behrends, UNL Undergraduate; Steve Waller, (right) Dean, College of Agriculture Sciences and Natural Resources, UNL.

Kathy Anderson
2011 Outstanding Educator Award
Equine Science Society

eXtension HorseQuest
2011 Excellence in Teamwork Award
Joint Council of Extension Professionals

Betsy Greene
2011 Northeast Regional Excellence in Extension Award
Association of Land Grant and Public Universities

Presenting the APLU Northeast Region to Betsy Greene (center) are Doug Lantagne, Director, University of Vermont Cooperative Extension and Dr. Catherine Woteki, USDA Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics.
GOVERNANCE & STAFFING [ALL]

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  o Jimmy Henning, Chair, Southern Region
  o Noelle Cockett, Vice Chair, Western Region
  o Dennis Calvin, Secretary, Northeast Region
  o Mark Latimore, Treasurer, 1890s
  o Keith Smith, Chair, North Central Region
  o Mary Jane Willis, ECOP Program Subcommittee
  o Jane Schuchardt, ECOP
  o Greg Crosby, USDA-NIFA

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  o Mary Jane Willis, ECOP Program Subcommittee
  o Jane Schuchardt, ECOP
  o Elbert Dickey, Ex Officio

• Director’s Council
  o Linda Kay Benning, Northeast Region
  o Ron Brown, Southern Region
  o L. Washington Lyons, 1890 Region
  o Robin Shepard, North Central Region
  o Karen Hinton, Western Region
  o Greg Crosby, NIFA
  o eXtension Leadership Team:
    o Dan Cotton
    o Craig Wood
    o Kevin Gamble
    o Terry Meisenbach
    o Michael Lambur
    o Ashley Griffin
    o Bethany Raney
    o Steve Wyatt

• eXtension Leadership Team
  o Dan Cotton, Director
  o Craig Wood, Associate Director - Content Development
  o Kevin Gamble, Associate Director - Information Technology
  o Terry Meisenbach, Communications and Marketing Leader
  o Michael Lambur, Evaluation and Research Leader
  o Ashley Griffin, Content Design Leader
  o Bethany Raney, Professional Development Leader
  o Kyle Kostelecky, National Project Leader, Military Families Partnership
  o Larry Lippke, Moodle Coordinator

• Financial Task Force
  o Michael Ouart, lead co-chair, North Central Region
  o Mark Latimore, co-chair, 1890’s
  o Chuck Gay, Western Region
  o Paul Coreil, Southern Region
  o Jorge Atiles, Southern Region
  o Jim Trapp, Southern Region
  o Linda Kay Benning, Northeast Region
o Ron Brown, Southern Region
o Robin Shepard, North Central Region
o Greg Crosby, USDA-NIFA
o eXtension Governing Committee Members
o Dan Cotton, eXtension

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    - Wayne Buhler, North Carolina State University
    - Jerri Caldwell Hammonds, Auburn University
    - Erik Chapman, University of New Hampshire
    - John A. (Tony) Cook, Auburn University
    - Andrew (Andy) Crocker, Texas AgriLife Extension Service
    - Chris Dillard, Auburn University
    - Bastiaan Drees, Texas AgriLife Extension Service
    - Carolyn Dunn, North Carolina State University
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    - Kathy Flanders, Auburn University
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    - Ronald Gardner, Cornell University
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    - Ann Hagan-Michel, Global Advancement
    - Susan Hawkins, University of Vermont
    - Amy Hays, Texas AgriLife Extension Service
    - Jill Heemstra, University of Nebraska
    - Diane Huntrods, Iowa State University
    - Scott Hygnstrom, University of Nebraska
    - Ben Jackson, University of Georgia
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    - Karen Jeannette, University of Minnesota
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    - Kelly Kopp, Utah State University
    - Michael Lambur, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
    - Chad Lee, University of Kentucky
    - Larry Lippke, Texas AgriLife Extension Service
    - Ben MacNeill, North Carolina State University
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    - John McQueen, Oregon State University
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    - Steve Meredith, Lincoln University of Missouri
    - Kathleen Morgan, Rutgers State University of New Jersey
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- Glenn Muske, North Dakota State University
- Glenn Nader, University of California
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- John Nowatzki, North Dakota State University
- Lesia Oesterreich, Iowa State University
- Debrah Palmer, Rutgers State University of New Jersey
- Mary Peabody, University of Vermont
- Stephen Quarles, University of California
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- Rick Rasby, University of Nebraska
- Madeline Schultz, Iowa State University
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- H. Marissa Stone, University of Georgia
- Sherman Swanson, University of Nevada Reno
- John Tanaka, University of Wyoming
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- Arion Thiboumery, Iowa State University
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- Michael Wilson, University of Tennessee
- Aaron Yoder, Pennsylvania State University
- Ed Zaborski, University of Illinois

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- Nancy Franz, Iowa State University
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- Kathleen Kelsey, Oklahoma State University
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- Becky Osborne, West Virginia University
- Stephen Judd, University of New Hampshire
- Christopher Rogers, Southern University
- Sarah Williver, Oregon State University
TELLING THE EXTENSION STORY

eXtension continues to share at conferences and meetings throughout the country. eXtension staff and many Community of Practice members have staffed exhibits, prepared and delivered presentations and speeches to the following entities or meetings:

- AgShare
- Alliance for a Green Revolution (AGRA)
- American Society of Horticultural Scientists (ASHS)
- Association for Communication Excellence (ACE)
- Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU)
- Association of Southern Region Extension Directors (ASRED)
- Association of 1890 Extension Administrators (AEA)
- Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International (CABI)
- Council for Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching (CARET)
- Children, Youth and Family at Risk (CYFAR) (CYFAR was held with the Department of Defense this year and called Family Resilience Conference)
- Department of Defense Family Resilience Conference (see CYFAR above)
- Feed the Future Forum
- Global Environment & Technology Foundation (GETF)
- International Sorghum and Millet Collaborative Research Support Program (INTSORMIL)
- Michigan State University
- National Agricultural Library (NAL)
- National Association of Counties (NACo)
- National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA)
- National Association of Extension 4-H Agents (NAE4-HA)
- National Association of Extension Professional and Staff Development Professionals (NAEPSPDP)
- National eXtension Community of Practice Workshop
- National Extension Association for Family and Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS)
- National Extension Directors and Administrators (NEDA)
- National Extension Technology Conference (NETC)
- National eXtension Virtual Conference (NeVC)
- National Institute of Food and Agriculture
- National Institute of Food and Agriculture - Grantsmanship Workshop
- National 4-H Council
- National Outreach Scholarship Conference (NOSC)
- National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine
- North Central Urban Extension Conference
- Office of the Deputy Undersecretary of Defense Military Community and Family Policy (DoD/MC&FP)
- Ohio State University
- Oregon State University
- Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists (SAAS)
- Southern Region Program Leadership Network
- University of Kentucky
- University of Missouri
- University of Nebraska
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- United States Department of Agriculture
  - USDA Ag Outlook Conference
  - Research, Education, and Economics
  - Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)
  - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
  - National Agricultural Library (NAL)
- USDA-NIFA Grantsmanship Workshop
- Virginia Tech
- Winrock International
- Western Extension Directors Association (WEDA)
eXtension COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

- The A, B, C’s of Omega-3’s
- Agricultural Law
- All About Blueberries
- Apples
- Backyard & Small Poultry Flocks
- Bee Health
- Beef Cattle Industry
- Better Kid Care America
- Brand Value
- Community Health
- Community Planning and Zoning
- Companion Animals
- Consumer Horticulture
- Cooperatives
- Corn and Soybean Production
- Cotton
- DAIREXNET
- Diabetes
- Diversity Across Higher Education
- Drinking Water Issues
- Entrepreneurs and Their Communities
- eOrganic
- Enhancing Rural Capacity
- Evaluation
- Extension Disaster Education Network
- Extension Wildfire Information Network
- Families, Food and Fitness
- Family Caregiving
- Farm Energy
- Farm Safety and Health
- Feral Pigs
- Financial Crisis
- Financial Security for All
- Food Safety
- Forestry and Climate Change
- Freshwater Aquaculture
- Goats
- Grapes
- Home Energy
- HorseQuest
- Imported Fire Ants
- Invasive Species
- Just In Time Parenting
- Livestock and Poultry Environmental Learning Centers
- Map@Syst
- Military Families
- Niche Meat Processing Assistance Network
- Oil Spill
- Pesticide Environmental Stewardship
- Plant Breeding and Genomics
- Pork Information
- Precision Agriculture
- Public Deliberation
- Rangelands
- Sustainable Marine Fisheries
- Teen Leadership
- Urban Integrated Pest Management
- Water Conservation for Lawns and Landscapes
- Wildlife Damage Management
- Wood Energy
- Youth SET for Life

Boldface indicates launched as of March 14, 2012
For more information about eXtension go to about.extension.org
or visit our public website: www.extension.org.
EXTENSION HELPS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION TO...

- Fill program gaps, provide content, and engage people in programs that one single state may not be able to adequately address.
- Brand content and programs locally, regardless of where and by whom the content was developed.
- Refer customers to local county extension offices for immediate help and expertise.
- Use scarce resources efficiently and cost effectively by sharing knowledge and expertise nationwide.
- Reduce duplication of effort in content development by increased collaboration across states.
- Provide education the way a new generation of learners wants it, online, any time and anywhere.
- Reach citizens through multiple technologies that work both independently and together, i.e., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, Second Life, Ask an Expert, and more.
- Provide access to system-wide news and information.
- Respond rapidly to immediate program needs, i.e., Communities of Practice in areas like the Financial Crisis, Gulf Oil spill.
- Increase visibility of Cooperative Extension with Congress, the White House, in USDA, NIFA, Department of Defense and with government and non-government partners.
- Leverage Cooperative Extension program funding through grants, sponsorships, and private partnerships through Communities of Practice.
- Provide “best of the best” programming and aggregate resources from across the country that any land-grant university member can use locally to improve programming.
- Engage customers with a national network of Cooperative Extension experts they can ask a question and know they will receive a timely response they can trust.
- Empower people to network and collaborate with colleagues across the country through today’s technology.
- Reach customers who may have little or no previous knowledge of the Cooperative Extension System.
- Empower Cooperative Extension employees nationwide to explore web and social networking technologies to deliver educational programming in new ways.
- Transform Cooperative Extension staff thinking when developing and delivering information and educational programs.
- Help Cooperative Extension workers systemwide to understand the intricacies of search engine optimization, content discoverability, and network literacy to improve state and local web content.
• Deliver information and educational programming to the more than 274 million Americans with Internet access at home, work, or outside the home and the 60 percent of Americans using wireless mobile devices...numbers that continue to dramatically increase.

• Provide a platform to support collaboration among research, teaching and extension faculty and staff involved in large-scale national grants and contracts, i.e., USDA-NIFA competitive grant program.

• Support international extension work that employs information and communications technology to deliver needed content and programs.

• Payoff Points
  • 4,537 CES Community of Practice participants
  • 60 Communities of Practice
  • 50 NIFA applications have received awards totaling ~ $120,869,056 and of that amount ~ $13,789,065 (12%) has been directed to Community of Practice programs.
  • 11,000 Ask an Expert questions submitted via eXtension.org
  • 260+ professional development events
  • 4,100 people participated in eXtension’s professional development live sessions
  • 3,700 people who viewed session recordings on professional development
  • 40 Launched Communities of Practice
  • 865,000 Views of HorseQuest videos
  • 184,000 Views of one Imported Fire Ants video
  • 54% Families, Food and Fitness respondents who lost weight
  • 85% eXtension traffic from outside Cooperative Extension
  • $1,600,000 Savings to Cooperative Extension for course distribution via Moodle
  • 7,800 live and recorded views of more than 260 professional development events offered in 2011
  • 16,600 Ask an Expert questions submitted via 550 active AaE Widgets nationwide
  • $13,789,065 Funds leveraged into eXtension in addition to annual institutional investments
  • 50 Number of USDA/NIFA grant applications which included eXtension
TESTIMONIALS [EXTENSIONITES & PUBLIC]
“eXtension has really stretched my knowledge and expertise in my ability...to reach out to other folks that have a greater expertise than I do in terms of entrepreneurs in their communities...I am able to utilize that expertise in my local environment, as well as in my State.”
Connie Hancock, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Entrepreneurs & Their Communities Community of Practice

“All the different people that I work with have different groups of clientele that they’re responding to, and so I’ve learned a lot as the project director about how we tailor the information to reach these different audiences because there are different ways that people want to get their content. So by working with all the different members involved in our Community of Practice has really broadened my thoughts about how to develop content and how to meet the needs of different people using these online resources. And a lot of people bring really creative ideas to the table that I would have never thought of.”
Natalie Hummel, Lousiana State University AgCenter, Blueberries Community of Practice.

“I think eXtension is the future of Extension. And utilizing technology in new and different ways, the way that public is interested in learning, and new modalities for learning, is the way that that we need to respond to the needs of our clientele. It is all of the communities across each of our states that we’re working with and the commonalities that we have across the nation and the issues that we have, have much commonality. They’re very tough looking problems that we deal with and we have a lot of integrated nature, and that network piece is going to be able to help us really make a difference in the communities that we all work in. It’s by coming together. It’s the Extension network that’s been part of our history, and the eXtension provides that network that we need for the future, training viable.”
“I just want to thank you for the FABULOUS webinars! What an amazing resource. I hate to miss any of them. I guess I date myself by saying this, but I think back to not too long ago when farmers would ask us technical questions and there was no one to turn to for help. In fact, Extension would roll their eyes and make derogatory comments about organic. To have this great resource created by Extension is phenomenal. The webinar technology is working GREAT, and the research and information is invaluable. THANK YOU!!!!!”

Nancy Hirshberg, Stonyfield Farm

“Three of us at our farm watched the webinar. This is a wonderful resource; so much easier than spending half a day traveling. I have shared the link with several other organic farmers. Thank you for making this available.”

Margaret Shelton, Farmer

“I looked at several other training videos including several professional and well-known trainers and most did not really fit in with what I was looking for. You really do an excellent job of breaking things down for those of us who aren’t experts and the way you handle the horse with calmness and surety while explaining what you are teaching is excellent. Keep up the great work!”

“Personally I have used eXtension as my first source of information when I have gardening or small rodent questions. I’ve also consulted the financial management articles as I was thinking about retirement and attempting to get our financial house in order. I have found the articles helpful and guided me in setting up our financial filing system.”

“I love your site www.extension.org. I have used your site to teach my 8-year-old son how to set up an ecosystem. It incorporates water filtration, recycling (plants, pump, an air mattress as a liner) everything must be recycled. I wanted him to see every aspect of the environment for its own purpose. We have a ball using eXtension!”

Connie Smith, Marion County TX
2012 EXTENSION MILESTONES

These milestones are taken from the 2011 - 2014 eXtension Strategic Roadmap, which will guide the work of eXtension. They are grouped by action plans contained within the Roadmap.

User Focus

- Redesign and develop enhanced functionality in the following applications:
  - learn.extension.org
    - Learner profiles (participation and plans)
    - Targeted recommendations for upcoming sessions (recommendation engine)
    - Sensemaking, increased customer engagement
    - Public participation (Twitter, Facebook, Google registration and login)
  - extension.org (pub site)
    - Increased content discoverability
    - Site redesign
    - Enriched customer experience
    - Enhanced learning opportunities
  - Ask an Expert
    - Expert profile pages -- with geo-location (locate local expertise, performance metrics, question/answer archive)
    - Enhanced question routing combining expertise, performance history, proximity
    - Exposing answers to the public (no longer one-to-one). Adding value to answers beyond the immediate person asking the question.
    - Allow the public to engage around questions (sensemaking capabilities from Learn).
  - Develop best practices for working effectively in learning networks
  - Continue to increase discoverability of eXtension resources

Content and Program Development

- Establish up to 6 new Communities of Practice
- Optimize 3 – 6 existing Communities of Practice
- Publicly launch 20-25 Communities of Practice
- Use virtual worlds, such as Second Life, to develop new educational modules and programs

Partnerships & Funding

- Establish a new National Leadership Council to promote fundraising opportunities
- Include eXtension in USDA-NIFA grant and contract opportunities
- Submit applications/proposals to other Federal departments and agencies
- Continue to see partnerships within USDA
Shared Vision – State & Local Value Enhancement
- Conduct state/local listening sessions to help drive use of eXtension resources
- Develop a State & Local Value Enhancement Working Group
- Double the number of active Institutional Teams
- Hold another face-to-face National eXtension Conference

Transparency & Accountability
- Using newly adopted Critical Success Factors to report the value and benefits eXtension is providing to the Cooperative Extension System
- Conduct a 2-year evaluation of eXtension
- Assess scholarly value of digital work and activities

Professional Development
- Increase the number of professional development offerings
- Grow Learn (learn.extension.org) making it a national collaborative center of professional development programs and activities for Cooperative Extension and the public
- Conduct a national needs assessment to better design and evaluate professional development offerings
A LIFE REMEMBERED
Dr. Christopher Raines, 1982-2011

Dr. Christopher Raines, 29, an assistant professor of meat science and technology in the Department of Dairy and Animal Science in Penn State’s College of Agricultural Sciences, died Dec. 18, 2011, as the result of an automobile accident. Chris was a leader of eXtension’s Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network.

As a pioneer in the use of social media as educational and communication tools, Chris had built a growing national reputation as an important voice in the agricultural community. According to the Penn State College of Ag Sciences: “Through his Twitter feed (under the handle @ITweetMeat) he had sent more than 15,000 tweets that reached nearly 3,800 followers and countless other readers. He also offered a popular blog, meatblogger.org, where he posted his experiences and thoughts about meat as food -- where it comes from, how it’s produced, how people consume it and its health implications.”

His untimely death had a profound impact on those who followed him:

“I was one of those silent followers of his blogs, and often referenced his stuff when questions arose about the meat we eat. Yet I admired the guy for his knowledge and approach to education. But mostly I think it was the passion for his work and life that drew my attention. It was pretty evident if you ever stopped by his blog or read some of his tweets. The man known as @ITweetMeat on twitter had that effect on many people as evidenced by the #itweetmeat conversations in response to his untimely death.” --#AgProud

“See, like so many others, I met Chris online through his Twitter ‘handle’ @ iTweetMeat...Chris lost his life in a car accident and the online community of ‘AgChatters’ and ‘Agvocates’ lost a great friend. It’s amazing how close of a relationship you can form with someone in the digital space. I’ve spent my day randomly bursting into tears, despite the fact that my actual, in-person interactions with Chris were few. That doesn’t matter, though, because I will always remember his ability to teach us all, while making us smile at the same time. He will be sorely missed.”--Amanda Sollman

“Chris, or @iTweetMeat as thousands of his Twitter followers knew him, was a lot more than a professor of meat science at Penn State, a University known for top agriculture academicians. Chris saw it as his mission to spread the gospel of science to make sure that food policy was indeed based on the science, no matter how unpopular that science is, especially when matched up against sound bites, popular wisdom, fear, and plain old folklore.”--Jeff Stier