



**The University of Tennessee Extension
State Update for
Association of Southern Region Extension Directors
August 22 – 26, 2016 Nashville, TN**

ADMINISTRATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Leadership Changes Effective September 6

Dr. Larry Arrington has announced his resignation as Chancellor of the UT Institute of Agriculture. Dr. Tim Cross has been appointed as Interim Chancellor effective September 6 and will hold that position until a permanent placement has been made pursuant to a national search. An Interim Extension Dean will be appointed, but this had not been finalized as of August 5, 2016.

FY17 Budget

The Tennessee State budget provided a 2.5% increase for UT Extension in FY17. This increase was used to provide a 1.5% across-the-board increase plus a 1.5% merit/equity increase pool for a total average salary increase pool of 3%. These increases were effective July 1, 2016. Minimum starting salaries for Extension titles were increased 1.5% as a result of these changes.

Human Resource Officer Search

Interviews of the three top-tier candidates for the position of Human Resource Officer were held recently. A decision on this appointment is forthcoming, and we hope to have this position filled by October 1.

PROGRAM AREA HIGHLIGHTS

4-H Youth Development

The Tennessee 4-H program is one of the few programs in the nation with a strong in-school club program. We are in the process of aligning our curriculum to match to the state educational standards so that our program assists teachers to teach required subject matter and communication skills. The 4-H program is also involved in numerous STEM grants to promote science and health initiatives. Lastly we have established a 4-H Family and Consumer Science/4-H Advisory committee to enhance health and nutrition programming for youth.

Lone Oaks Farm 4-H Center

Progress continues to be made toward bringing our newest 4-H Center online and fully operational. We have received significant support from the Bolivar Utility Department, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and Hardeman County Schools. Development of a state of the art sporting clay shooting facility is underway. Small group meetings, youth STEM camps, environmental programs, and retreats are being conducted at Lone Oaks Farm. Fund-raising will be a major focus for additional capital facilities development. We continue to also invest in our other three 4-H Centers, emphasizing increased participation in summer camping programs. <http://www.loneoaksfarm.com/>

Agriculture and Natural Resources: Focus on Livestock Production Education

UT Extension Advanced Master Producer educational certification courses continue to be offered to beef, dairy and small ruminant producers across Tennessee. A new Master Horse Producer educational program will begin being offered in fall of 2016. After 19 years of being required to investigate livestock welfare abuse, this responsibility was moved from UT Agricultural Extension Agents to the Tennessee Department of Agriculture as of July 1st, 2016. Over 90% of the welfare investigations conducted by Extension involved equine. The new Master Horse Producer educational program is designed to education horse owners on the proper care, feeding and management of horses with the goal of improving equine management across Tennessee.

Family and Consumer Science Programming: Building Financial Capacity of Tennessee Families

Programs focus on (1) training citizens in sound basic financial practices, (2) encouraging Tennesseans to save to build assets over their working lives, and (3) encouraging individuals and households to reduce dependence on credit and discharge debt. One-hundred twenty-four Extension educators across the state reported conducting financial education programs, up from 95 in the past year. Financial education activities are conducted through bankruptcy education, homebuyer education, High School Financial Planning and teacher training, saving education for adults and youth, and financial education simulations for youth. Counties across Tennessee reported 93,128 total direct educational contacts. Direct contacts by agents included 79,782 contacts via group meetings, programs, and other direct methods. An additional 5,545,996 Tennesseans were reached with the message of the importance of savings and financial responsibility through agent and volunteer media and exhibits.

Impacts: The estimated economic impact of clientele's saving totaled \$12,933,510 in 2015, with debt reduction estimates totaling \$3,524,508. The total estimated impact of Extension Tennessee Saves adult and youth programs as well as youth financial simulations on Tennesseans' saving increase and debt reduction was \$16,458,018.

Strategic Plan Implementation 2016

The UT Extension Strategic Plan implementation has progressed successfully over the past 6 years. Several implementation teams have completed their assignments, and procedures and recommendations from those teams are being institutionalized. A county director training curriculum has been developed, with 30 newly-appointed county directors currently participating in a yearlong program that includes face to face training, online learning, mentoring, and a new website containing helpful resources. After the success of establishing a mentoring program for new agents last year, focus groups have been conducted to identify needs in order to develop a mentoring program for administrative support staff, which should launch this fall. Several trainings have been offered to employees earlier this year to address key needs identified in the strategic plan. A few sessions that have been offered include workshops on obtaining and managing extramural funds; an in-service to improve stress management skills; and trainings on working with volunteers and following new volunteer procedures related to child protection.