

**Question 4: Comment on how well the conference contributed to your professional development as a department head.**

very much

Conferences like this are needed to connect county department heads to statewide staff and current issues. Please have this conference on a more regular schedule.

I have a better understanding of where county administrators and boards are moving to in their thinking about the value of UW-Extension

Overall this was a good conference and offered sessions for all levels of experience as department head. I picked up lots of tidbits to bring back and share with staff in our office as ideas to consider or information.

I think this conference was excellent. Well planned and very focused. Thanks for that. I think it was very valuable to get together, learn of common issues, discover how others are handling situations, and for all of us to hear at the same time, the same messages.

to be honest I felt it was very depressing

Good conference with lots of practical applications! This will help me to be better prepared the next time we have severe budget challenges.

Reality Check

Learned a lot from the more experienced DHs

The content of the sessions and the networking opportunities were so helpful to me as a new department head. I received some good information to bring back and share with office colleagues.

This was an excellent conference, the best so far. I think the panel spoke to the challenges we have at the county level, even though the comments were harsh at times. This is who we're up against ... it's not easy.

I am a WNEP coordinator, so a few topics-- those having to do with managing county relationships-- did not pertain directly to my job. I hardly ever have contact with county officials. However, the conference was useful in helping me see the challenges faced by my department head and gave me a few ideas about how I could help our county government become more aware of WNEP and its value.

The most valuable thing to me about the conference was the chance to get into deep discussions with other WNEP coordinators about HR and budget issues.

This conference included many thought-provoking sessions.

The conference provided some good networking with other department heads, and especially state administrators.

I was able to have conversations with other people to learn how they are handling things in their office. It is a great networking time.

I thoroughly enjoyed the conference and learned so much about government and politics that I wasn't aware of before attending the conference.

It is always good to network with other department heads who are facing the same challenges as our county. I realize that we don't have it so bad.

Topics addressed during the conference were thought-provoking and interesting, but were really more philosophical and theoretical than practical.

It reinforced many of the values and strategies I already use.

Worth my time.

It was an affirmation of what we've been experiencing in the county, echo'd some concerns we've had and brought the reality to light that we are not the only county that is facing challenges.

I gained some insight into potential approaches to working with elected/appointed officials.

I felt that it was very timely and relevant to the work I do. It was good to see an external focus, rather than self-reflection...Disclndra, etc.

I thought the conference was well planned and provided a variety of experiences for different experience levels of departments heads.

Glad to have the opportunity to hear from DHs around the state. It was important to have a conference like this, since we have had a gap in time for this kind of opportunity.

I felt that this was a very insightful Dept. Head Conference. The theme and major content was very timely for our use, and in some respects it may have been a wake-up call to pay more attention to our county partners.

I am still learning the ins and outs of the department head role so the whole conference was valuable if a little overwhelming at time.

The conference helps contribute to my professional development as a department head by exposing me to new ideas. I like networking with other UW-Extension colleagues. Mark O'Connell was a good addition.

You certainly learn that you're not alone and that there are many resources that can be tapped into.

Conference maintained my interest. Panel discussion was a real eye opener.

Panel discussion was excellent in presenting a statewide awareness of 'value' of extension programming

Probably one of the best in years. The topics fit what we do so well and gave practical ideas of things to apply

I gained an appreciation of how many different hats a Dept. Head has to wear.

It really helped clarify my role.

**Question 6: Please identify 2-3 things that you gained at the conference that you plan to apply in your work as a department head:**

Continue to communicate with the county partner the benefit of having a UW- department located in the county.

Continue on our RBC culture that we have created.  
view point of administrators

continually tell our story and tailoring the story to the desired format of the person

Provided me with a better handle on the resources available through the websites. (Still find them hard to navigate at times and believe could use some reorganization. Heard from many department heads and others their struggles in navigating the various UW sites.)

1) The panel of county partners was the single most valuable experience for me. They gave refreshingly honest responses and helped with a big reminder of how others, who are responsible for different interests, have different perspectives that we need to consider as we do our work. 2) The chance to listen to others in different program areas talk about their work. It helps me in supporting other program area educators within my office.

It would have also been helpful to me to hear more of what best practices people are doing that I might be able to use as well.

Extension does not know how to market itself

Be more proactive by reporting in clear, concise ways about our impacts in the county. Use strategies that worked in other counties (as shared by Dept. Heads) when our budget and staffing come "under fire."

Met new colleagues.

Got new ideas to use at home.  
budget info

connections with colleagues

better understanding of county and state fiscal situation  
Communicating Value to County Admin.

Seeking more needs assessment ideas from other county departments.

1) Define impact of programs clearer to Ag and Extension Committee, agency partners, etc.

2) Continue to build relationships.

-determining program value

-that the success of UWEX is resting on all of our shoulders - we need to think of the entire system when we act

Suggest to staff that they share 2 or 3 bullet points about programming with the EEC each month that EEC can then share during the county board meetings.

Visit and use the budget website.

Work harder to build strong relationships with difficult people.

Plan more direct contacts with county board supervisors as an office team.

1. I will be using Sharon Klawitter's HR handouts to educate my staff about leave policy.

2. I will use an idea I got from another WNEP coordinator about how to handle a particular personnel problem.

3. I had actually never heard Dean Klemme speak before. I found his talk very encouraging. Share the comments from County partners

try to figure dollar values of programs

Increase our efforts to promote our work

1. hiring practices/procedures

2. budgeting practices

3. accountability

Ideas on how to approach a county administrator if our county hires one.

It was good to learn how other counties had prepared for the prioritization process.

(1) The importance of close work with elected officials, and (2) Spreading the word about how many ways Extension can benefit the county.

Communicate more with elected officials at the county and state levels.

Share information more frequently with my office colleagues.

Listen more and talk less.

1. Communicating with county board utilizing different strategies

2. The importance of proving cost-effectiveness of UWEX programs

calculating the value of Extension for local governments. Using the HR office and who to call. Next time I'm in Madison and I have time, schedule a visit with my state rep, and share with them some of our county programming.

Look for ways our office can partner with other county departments

Listen to the county decision makers even more than ever.

Build relationships that are stronger with other county departments.

Make the shared leadership more shared! The load for Department Heads is getting heavier and we can't do it alone, the entire team has to be on board and aware of the impacts they make.

Talked through a strategy of presenting annual reports with other dept. heads.

The importance of helping the entire Extension office team become aware of their advocacy roles.

Do more to demonstrate collaboration and non-duplication of services to elected officials.

Try to get more "face time" w/ key officials.

The panel discussion was most impactful. Our office team has been discussing ways to help

elected officials understand our connections better. The points communicated by panel members added detail and will help us do better work in this area.

What CNRED Specialist and board member training

Want to work on orientation ideas for new county board members

Plan to share this information with other staff members

Ideas for programming with other county departments - such as civil rights programs.

Be sensitive to "fluff" when distributing Extension materials to county officials.

funding aspects related to the levy

Better communication with county administration, better communication with my county colleagues, RESOURCES!

Comments from county administrators/supervisors etc., helped me think about how we are viewed in our county.

Always good to hear about HR changes - better address with faculty and staff in the county. Communicate/partner more with other local departments.

Address issues early rather than letting things blow up and pay consequences for years down the road.

I now have greater knowledge of FMLA and appropriate resources for HR questions.

Greater understanding of how UW-EX is viewed by County Board officials and what approaches may be the most effective when presenting to local government.

Share info with staff

ways of communicating with administrators and county board

Human resources pieces; Opinions from panelists; civil rights training create a stronger orientation for Ag Committee

increase marketing efforts

revive CPAG

**Question 8: Provide overall comments you have about the 2008 State Department Head Conference**

Good conference with lots of information and sessions.

Not what I expected, I wanted solutions to solve problems and it appeared all we received was more problems surfacing in the future  
One of the best and most useful that I've attended in the last 10+ years.

Kudos overall

Great conference and I recommend the conference be conducted no less than every other year since there is limited opportunity for the county DH to connect and network with other DH's around the state in such a setting.  
Rick was great - he really connected with the group  
Very relevant information

Breakout sessions provided great examples and discussions of how situations and issues are handled differently in counties

The hotel room was quite luxurious! I also liked the fact that the conference was held at a hotel with good exercise facilities. As always with conferences, it was difficult to sit for so many hours of presentation. Somehow we have to think of more physically active ways to share information so that we don't get so darn sleepy after lunch.

Very good session and great opportunity for networking. The sessions were very insightful and reinforced my knowledge of Dept. Head functions. I also learned several new things about HR and budgeting that will be very helpful, plus gained some insights into how county administrators/execs view and value UWEX.

The panel discussion was good, but I don't know how many new insights they really gave us. Many if not all of us are aware how county government views UWEX. The panel reinforced what many already knew. To me it is time to focus new/alternative ways of funding. It is becoming obvious to me trying to maintain what we are currently doing is not going to sustain us long term. If you want to give the organization a boost in confidence, or a huge increase in moral, tell us we will not have to fight to maintain our office for the next year. This takes a huge amount of energy and takes us away from what we really enjoy doing.

Excellent!

Important that this kind of meeting occur annually.

Greg Andrew's exercise using role playing was simply outstanding!

Conference was good. I enjoyed listening to Rosemary Potter and learned much from her about communicating with legislators. she's a great resource for UW-colleges and UW-Extension!

The panel with the county executives and county administrators was very valuable. The

roundtables were a good way to discuss issues in an informal format.

What is the next step in increased engagement with our County Administrators across the state as a group and as individuals?

Is it time Coop Extension considers real change in the model utilized to identify what and how it delivers its educational products, goods and services to the people across the state? At this point in time, this could be an excellent internal exercise to be carried out in a private setting on an invitation to participate only basis.

Frank, honest discussions help to build trust. Many people looked tired and stressed, we need to have some motivation to build on our strengths -- go forth, charge the batteries and be ready for what lies ahead. I felt very tired by the end of the conference, I didn't feel rejuvenated. Send us home with hope and determination next year!!! Probably the winter storms, ice and snow didn't help much to add to the stress...winter blues were evident. Perhaps we should have a mandatory "Extension is closed for one week" and no one can work or send emails or voicemails. We are all encouraged to take vacation, but preparing for vacation and coming back from vacation and catching up is a challenge.

The breakout sessions were excellent. Drawing from the experience and expertise of colleagues was very valuable. Having the panel of county legislators who spoke candidly about our org'n was also very insightful. I feel better informed and equipped as a result of this conference.

Hope we can do this again next year.

I thought the agenda/content was well-thought-through and the sessions were nicely presented with relevant topics. Kudos to the planning team - nice job.

Overall content was very good and relevant.

Learned some new things that will help in this role.

It was definately worth the time to attend.

I'll be curious to see how/if administration changes directions on a few of the weaknesses that were discussed by the panel.

Informative and enjoyable

Great job!

I am glad I attended.

**Question 9: Include any suggestions you have for future conference planners**

I wish there were more structured ways to meet and get to know other department heads. At times I would sit at tables with people I didn't know but there was never an opportunity to interact and get to know them better.

It was evident during the session on communicating value that our materials need to be updated. What was shared seemed outdated and hard to utilize locally. I liked the location, but we can move it a bit, within reason.

Lets get off defense and go on offense, marketing of our programs is essential. Continue with hands-on, practical applications such as this, to help us be more prepared for the unexpected, and know where to go for help.

a central state location was greatly appreciated

Allow more time/opportunity for small group discussion. This is invaluable for all of us. I'm not sure why WNEP coordinators were included - it really fragmented the focus of this meeting and many breakout sessions didn't apply. Keeping the conference focused is a better use of our time.

Continue to have panels of county reps since it brings a strong reality to the conference of what we're dealing with locally.

OK, bear in mind that I'm a dietitian-- Is there any way we can get healthy alternatives at every meal and break time? The fruit selection was good, but skim milk was not to be had, and sometimes the only available beverage choice was pop. Is it possible to request whole-grain breads and bagels? Can low-fat yogurt be offered as well as the big chocolate chip cookies?

I think a round table of Dept Heads who represent a variety of different types of UWEX offices who could present unique UWEX situations and how they are managed.

Lets find out what other states are doing to offset reduced financial support from local, state and federal budgets.

I started feeling overwhelmed with information on second day with break out sessions. Good information, but just started feeling overwhelmed with information.

Consider a visioning theme. What will Extension look like in 10 years? How do we get there? What is the responsibility of each person as an individual in that journey? How will everyone's professional lives change in the course of the journey?

I was one of the first to register...and then found out my registration had not gone through. Not sure how you can make sure that people know that they should get a receipt to confirm registration. We caught it early enough before the conference so I still got registered, I just thought it was all taken care of.

It is important to stay on the theme of examining and strengthening Extension's relationships at the county level.

I feel it is important to continue to invite WNEP Coordinators.

More of the county partners telling us what they want.

The Pre-Conference was pretty heavy for brand new people. Try to break up the content with different teaching methods, instead of Sharon and Dan just talking through a lot of information, for instance.

In the past, there has sometimes been a resource room for new Dept. Heads that had several stations where folks could learn about leadership training opportunities, technology, etc. Even as a "seasoned" Dept. Head, I learned each year from this offering. I thought that might be a welcome addition in future conferences.

It is important to have the powerpoint so it can be seen or the online access otherwise it is not effective.

Nice to include outside speakers - always good to hear other perspectives.  
None, great job

Awareness of issues that continue to face county offices  
Move the time to November

I would like to see a chance where people can bring in their own case studies and have others brainstorm possible strategies.

**Question 10: List additional information, training, tools or resources you need to assist in your work as department head**

The Department Head website could be clean-up and retooled to be a more effective resource with more current information.

Communicating value (dollars and cents during budget discussions) and having the difficult conversations related to performance issues  
More on working successfully with county government, more on strategies to succeed with the prioritization processes

Send us periodic, timely updates to remind us about resources available on the Dept. Head

website. With everything else going on, it is sometimes easy to forget about this great resource.

Great job!!!!

I think role playing and case studies would be useful in helping department heads handle common staff problems. We all have these chronic management and interpersonal problems that never seem to go away-- the chronically cranky county support person, the employee who is always late to meetings, the county official who goes off on unrelated tangents at Ag & Extension committee meetings.

monthly e-bulletin on key upcoming work needed from directors and impacts that we're having around the state

Technology Visioning of what could be.

Introduction to and professional development in proper utilization of new and emerging tech tools that prepare us and the institution for the next 10 years and beyond.

Continued support via the on-going district meetings with other department heads.

Perhaps a little more on office management, confronting performance issues more effectively.

RBC materials put in a more useable format...i.e. what materials to use when you have a new colleague in the office (i.e. DISC Indra discussion for staff meeting); Coaching on how to give feedback (how to find this information as a tool prior to doing performance reviews), etc. Would a hands-on session on building a county budget be more helpful than all the facts that Kate Lawton presented to help us have an improved understanding of budget.

More information on funding from county to state and how the levy works.

A ready/quick reference to the online resources available on the Dept head website

Being prepared (\$ value) for County Supervisors and County Exec. that only want 'mandated' programming

A stronger alignment between tenure process and getting "credit" for DH duties.

**Question 11: Other comments**

I appreciated Dick's use of the historical extension code.

The planning committee and speakers did a really nice job with this conference!

NA

Thank you to everybody who put this conference together. I was very pleased to come.

Dean Klemme did an excellent job of keeping us engaged. His humor helped relieve some tension. thanks to conference planners. It was an excellent overall experience. I enjoyed our evening dinners together. Helped me connect with people at a person-to-person level and will help to build trust in one another. Thanks much.

Great job to the planning team!

This was probably the most informative and useful Extension conference I've attended- including program area & DH conferences.

Great job  
Walter Craft was a nice addition.