

Department Head / DRM Team Gathering

September 1, 2010

Question 1

What are some of our “past prouds?” What have we done well?

- Advanced in programming and impacts compared to other states
- Strong local government and economic connection
- Strong partnership with counties and districts
- Extension is in every county in the state
- High level of professional development offered
- There are opportunities to develop as professionals
- Helping communities plan their future
- Faculty and staff have skill sets to work with diverse organizations
- We are responsive and flexible
- Ability to build strong relationships with public, government representatives, tribes, etc.
- Achievement of NERR designation in our state
- Grazing Network
- North in the 80's
- Flood and Drought Response
- Dairy Modernization
- Family Financial Education
- International Work
- County Relationships
- Ability to retool and provide quality support, example: small farms
- Creativity and Innovation
- Consistency and Quality
- Timely Response

- Integrity
- Knowledge Base
- Regional Collaboration
- We show up – presence in all 72 counties – still.
- Leader in applying research in agriculture in early years.
- We have changed over time as needs of families communities, etc have changed.
- Wisconsin Idea – UW Campus is the whole state
- Rare that a state has a system of campuses like UW-System and that all campuses have relationships with Extension outreach.
- UWEX provides quality educational programs and information in response to local needs. These programs and needs are provided at no or little costs to participants.
- UWEX staff listens and provide a personal touch in understanding and meeting client’s needs.
- Our strength is in our relationships with local residents, organizations, and businesses.
- UWEX is valued for our non-biased researched based information.
- UWEX often provides information and services that are not offered by for-profit companies.

Question 2

What are things that we should avoid in this comprehensive budget planning process?

- Only the Department Head in the office is a spokesperson
- Don’t lose focus on inclusiveness
- Lose flexibility and funding for programs
- Don’t under estimate the value of UWEX when talking with your counties concerning the budget (BELIEVE IN UWEX)
- Don’t advocate for resources to do the job
- Lose focus on counties programming needs
- Do not lose focus on inclusiveness
- Do not forget about the importance of collaboration

- Backstabbing and/or self-preservation
- Doing business because “it’s always been done that way”
- Silo rigidity – i.e., eliminate silos
- Giving greater weight to the opinions of longer term employees – avoid “shutting down” the opinions of newer colleagues
- Cutting county positions
- Not using our supporters (calling in favors)
- Assumptions
- Negativity
- Standard definitions of who we are and what we do.
- Avoid infighting.
- Avoid having one spokesperson
- Avoid losing focus on inclusiveness
- Avoid thinking things have to be done the way they have always been done.
- Avoid picking the low-hanging fruit because it is most convenient without examining its value.
- Avoid alienating the people/communities/partners/organizations we serve
- Avoid not doing the difficult thing just because it is difficult
- Be as inclusive as possible... “everything is on the table and open for debate”
- Be willing to let go of personal or professional bias
- Avoid geographical or political boundaries
- Don’t make decisions based exclusively on program area boundaries (Be willing to combine or integrate staff (i.e state specialists) across program areas.
- Avoid saying or referring to UWEX as a non-mandated service... we are “politically??” mandated.

Question 3

What do you see as opportunities for Cooperative Extension in this budget planning process?

- Training for other agencies
- Forcing us to be more creative, effective and efficient. Be pro-active.
- Educate those running for political office about UWEX before they get elected
- Ask partners for help
- To become more inclusive
- To break out of silos
- Streamline organizational structure
- Utilize technology
- Reaffirm our core values
- Explore new, creative, maybe even “wild and crazy” ideas (Minnesota termed this as “retrenchment and reallocation”)
- To ask partners for help resulting in greater partner investment and commitment
- More efficient use of financial resources
- Look to what neighboring states have done that is positive to find out what the counties really want of us
- Look at it as a positive opportunity to streamline
- Enhance teamwork and partnerships
- Mentoring and enabling constituents
- Move us into new technologies
- Eliminate duplication
- Build more partnerships with county departments
- Opportunity to further leverage campus resources
- Opportunity to Leverage resources of partners because we have so many local and state partnerships.
- Opportunity to purge what is useless or low priority

- Opportunity to tell others a stronger story because we have also address hardships of budget
- Opportunity for more flexibility
- Forces us to look outside the box to form new partnerships or strengthen current ones.
- The process allows us to become even better at what UWEX does.
- Become even more critical or serious about making meaningful budgetary changes.
- The process allows us as an institution, local office or staff to re evaluate our value (dollar) to our local communities and clients.
- The process gives us more opportunity to emphasize our value (dollars) to our communities. We will all have a better understanding of our return on investment.

Question 4

What ideas do you have for achieving cost savings in our organization while maintaining our educational effectiveness?

- Internal meetings = less travel
- Better use of technology
- Consolidate administrative functions
- Blur geographic boundaries for purposes of program delivery
- Blur geographic boundaries for purposes of sharing financial resources
- In general, share resources – more carpooling
- Improved use of technology for meetings, distance education, etc.
- Drive less (email, tech, bunch mtgs)
- Look at % of specialists time we buy - nothing less than 25%
- Intranet (central repository)
- Streamlining reporting.
- In vestige breaking down program area silos
- Break down county lines and be more efficient about program delivery by crossing county lines

- Continue to explore ways technology can be used to deliver programs and educational information. Distance learning options (skype, youtube, webinars, extension, etc.)
- Can other state facilities be used for lodging, either for conferences, or individual trips? Campus housing? Is there an alternative option to staying in hotels? What about staying with friends, relatives, colleagues.
- Consolidate specialist's positions to provide cross program area expertise.
- Look to other states or agencies to provide subject matter expertise
- Encourage and empower all UWEX staff to become more politically savvy
- Continue to think outside the box in establishing new partnerships. (seek out private donations, or foundation monies)
- Evaluate why funds (grants) are not directed towards Extension and stream line process to encourage more funding to be directed toward Extension. i.e. Administrative costs of running a grant through UWEX. Other organizations and agencies have much lower grant administration costs.
- Provide assistance to county staff in writing grants, and grant reports.
- Evaluate ways to partner with private companies or foundations to help under write or sponsor programs. This could be especially useful on websites, or other posted educational materials.

Question 5

What can Cooperative Extension do to sustain and grow our resource engine in times of challenging public support?

- Become more entrepreneurial as an organization
- Universal branding in mass media (radio and television)
- Market preventive nature of our programs
- Communicating our political mandate
- Invest more in technology
- Use stakeholders to help in marketing – especially testimonials from Ag & Extension Committee members or other key officials, community leaders, etc.
- Change the “nice to have” thinking to “worth investing in” thinking when it comes to supporting U.W. Extension in county budgets

- Develop new partnerships – examples mentioned included tribes, non-profits, corporations, health care systems
- Teach/train staff to think resource generation
- Make better use of team resources strengths
- Aiding people to not just survive – but to STRIVE
- Increase our political effectiveness
- Hold staff accountable
- Teach and train staff with local technology expertise
- Be more politically effective
- Use skills to take on additional roles in counties; counties pay additional for those services
- Partner with public broadcasting
- See how other Extension divisions generate revenue