

The community-building work of Cooperative Extension, including the practical educational programs that respond to local needs, ensures access to the research and resources of the University of Wisconsin System. We are successful in our mission, in part, because Cooperative Extension offices are located where people live and work in each of Wisconsin's 72 counties and in 3 tribal communities. The overall responsibility for leadership, administration and relationship building in each of these offices is assumed by a local department head, a local department head team or in our most urban counties, a county director.

Because the localities served differ in size, complexity and type of administrative structure, the specific time demands and complexity of the department head's role varies. Department heads and leadership teams are appointed in joint agreement by Cooperative Extension and county/tribal government and report directly to the regional director. The department head serves as a leader, administrator and relationship builder in support of a responsive, relevant, engaged, well-communicated educational program.

As a **leader**, the department head is responsible for helping to create a positive and effective work environment, team building, communications, programming support and professional development.

As an **administrator**, the department head is responsible for key (and frequently shared) roles related to hiring, orientation, performance support, evaluation and budgeting.

As a **relationship** builder, the department head is responsible for ensuring political effectiveness, and positive working relationships and communication between the local office, Cooperative Extension, and various partners.

Many of these skills are important in the department head(s) educational programming.