

Flip Chart Notes -- Strategic Planning Forum #4 @ Bowling Green
Western Kentucky University Ag Expo Center
Task Force of the Future of Kentucky Agriculture and Rural Communities
Kentucky Agricultural Council
8/28/12

Ag Education → focus on creating a “model program” .

- good programs currently exist, operated by individual groups, but people don’t know each others’ programs.
- There is a need to share best practices and build a model program, or establish a bank of programs.
- Need is for both non-farm and farm-oriented types of educational programs

Success stories exist of “ag entrepreneurs” who did it on their own – people can learn from these examples.

Kentucky farms are more diversified that people realize. Most farmers are involved with several products, not pure mono-culture. Not as diversified as in the past (e.g. 1950s or 60s) but still do multiple crops and livestock. Their business model depends on cash flow from one product helping pay costs to start another on seasonal rotations.

Student loan forgiveness program: where would the funding come from?

Cattlemen: their Young Producers’ Council is involved with elementary education programs . . . there is a need to give educator the information they can use; lesson plans for HS teachers area needed.

Need to start Ag Education and Ag Literacy early – at elementary schools.

Get all groups together to put materials together for use in classroom education.

Farm Bureau already does this (provide educational materials) but some think that it’s not enough.

Make information easy to use, readily available.

Everyone is doing some of this but there is a need for a central CLEARING HOUSE.

Currently the Cattlemen, Poultry Federation and Pork Producers are collaborating on producing educational videos; they shared funding and the videos were shown at the State Fair, are available on uTube.

The need to collaborate – Agriculture is not a “turf war”, it’s a lifestyle

School systems are driven by their testing programs . . . individual teachers may be interesting in teaching Ag material, using as a basis for content in Science classes, for example, but they are limited in what they can teach by what material will be on the tests.

- Encouragement for using agricultural material in the classroom must come from the top and be supported by local school boards.
- Quality and level of interest of science teachers is uneven

The Logan Trace School model (Lexington) is working . . . they are turning kids away.

Soil science IS Chemistry; so is herbicide research.

Clearinghouse concept – where should this be housed?

- KDA is a possibility . . . KDA Ag Education Division just hired a new person

Need to start early . . . Kids don't know where their food comes from . . . example of kids visiting a farm and learning that eggs come from chickens.

Teachers need uniformity of guidance on what to do and how to do it.

I agree with everything that's been said thus far about Ag Education but we should not neglect the need for further education after college – continuing education, especially for beginning farmers. It is hard for them to get started, they are competing against established farmers with more acreage.

The legislature used to have more farmers among its members; there are many fewer farmer legislators today, so legislators do not understand farm issues as well

Pressures from urban development on agricultural land is a huge problem, in particular for the State's agricultural colleges – the Ag farms – here in Bowling Green, in Lexington. They could use more acreage but that would mean moving further out and they would be too far from the main campus. This is true for all of the state's Ag schools.

Ag School farms are good neighbors and set an example of how farms and housing can co-exist.

Why have groups not gotten together to collaborate before? The differences from county to county in the type of agriculture or the dominant organizations leading efforts in those areas accounts for some of this.

Concern with perceptions of Agriculture – how can we get people to focus on the issue of the looming food scarcity question?

