

Kentucky Agricultural Council: Task Force on the

Minutes of the May 2, 2007 Meeting

The Kentucky Agricultural Council: Task Force on the Future of Agriculture meeting was held on **May 2, 2007** at **10:00 AM EDT** at the Elizabethtown Tourism and Convention Bureau in Elizabethtown, KY. Dr. Tony Brannon, chair, called the meeting to order.

Members Present

David Beck, Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation; John Bell, Kentucky Horticulture Council; Ray Bowman, Kentucky Goat Producers Association; Kenny Brammell, Kentucky Vocational Teachers' Association; Dr. Tony Brannon, Kentucky Agricultural Council; Leland Brown, USDA NASS Kentucky Field Office; Kaycie Len Carter, Community Farm Alliance; Dennis Clark, Kentucky Soybean Association; Steve Coleman, Division of Conservation; Nancy Cox, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture; Marshall Coyle, Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation; Kip Ellington, Jackson Purchase ACA; Brent Frazier, PACE Board; Sharon Furches, Kentucky Women in Agriculture; Eston Glover, Kentucky Feed & Grain Association; Elmer Gray, Western Kentucky University Department of Agriculture; Daniel Green, Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative; Jerry Greer, Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts; Tod Griffin, AgriBusiness Association of Kentucky; Tim Hafner, USDA NRCS; Jeff Hall, Farm Service Agency; Mark Haney, Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation; David Henderman, Kentucky Woodland Owners Association; Jackie Holt, Kentucky Alternative Livestock Association; Tim Hughes, Kentucky Agricultural Finance Corporation; Dwayne Ingram, Kentucky Horticultural Council; Charlie Ison, Community Farm Alliance; Larry Jagggers, Kentucky Agricultural Finance Corporation; Mike Judge, Kentucky Department of Agriculture; Sam Lawson, Kentucky Agricultural Development Board; Keith Lowry, Jackson Purchase ACA; Curt Lucas, Kentucky Association FFA; Dave Maples, Kentucky Cattlemen's Association; Kathy Meyer, Kentucky Sheep & Wool Producers Association; Harvey Mitchell, The Center for Rural Development; Robert Monk, Farm Credit Services of Mid-America, ACA; Sam Moore, Kentucky Agricultural Development Board; Jamie Morgan, Kentucky Soybean Association; Dr. Wade Northington, Murray State University Breathitt Diagnostic Lab; Mike Ovesen, Kentucky Pork Producers Association; Al Pedigo, Council for Burley Tobacco; Don Pemberton, Kentucky Cattlemen's Association; Bruce Pratt, Eastern Kentucky University Department of Agriculture; Roger Quarles, Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative; Deborah Reed, Murray State University Breathitt Diagnostic Lab; Keith Rogers, Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy; Todd, Ryan, Kentucky Nursery & Landscape Association; Larry Sanders, Kentucky Horticulture Council; Jim Sidebottom, Kentucky Dairy Development Council; Dr. Scott Smith, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture; Deborah Spike-Pierce, Kentucky Veterinary Medical Association; Roger Thomas, Kentucky Veterinary Medical Association; Ray Tucker, Commodity Growers Association; Dean Wallace, Council for Burley Tobacco; Eddie Warren, Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative; Dr. James Weber, Kentucky Veterinary Medical Association; Matthew Whitaker, Kentucky Association FFA; Brent Williams, Kentucky Feed & Grain Association; John Wright, Kentucky Agricultural Resource Development Authority

Others Present

Angela Blank, Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy; Dr. Lori Garkovich, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture; Dr. Steve Isaacs, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture; Christi Marksburly, Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy; Dr. Rick Maurer, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture; Ted Sloan, Kentucky Department of Agriculture

Welcome

Dr. Tony Brannon welcomed the group to the first meeting of the Task Force on the Future of Agriculture.

Introductions

Dr. Brannon asked for introductions from the representatives for the organizations who would be involved in the Task Force. After introductions were made, Dr. Brannon asked each representative to think of one critical challenge and one emerging opportunity from their industry/organization to share with the group after lunch.

Remarks

Dr. Brannon called on Michael Judge and Keith Rogers to bring remarks to the group.

Michael Judge, on behalf of Commissioner Richie Farmer, brought greetings to the group. Commissioner Farmer wanted to thank the group for their willingness to be involved in the Task Force. Mr. Judge stated that if the Commissioner was there, he would say through teamwork, if we work through this process, we can develop a plan to push Kentucky forward in agriculture. Personally, Mr. Judge wanted to express that he felt it an honor to be in the presence of the leadership of Kentucky agriculture. He felt that Kentucky agriculture is at the fork in the road and we need to know which path we want to take.

Keith Rogers, on behalf of Governor Ernie Fletcher, brought greetings. He thanked those who attended the Governor's Summit on Agriculture and for helping to kick off an important task. Governor Fletcher was excited about the positive energy in the room and Mr. Rogers expressed the Governor's enthusiasm about what is happening in the agriculture industry. Mr. Rogers thanked the Task Force for accepting the Governor's challenge and challenged them to look within their organization at their strategic plan. He also encouraged them to look to other states and back at Ag 2000. He stated that Ag 2000 was a very important effort and helped Kentucky achieve the Tobacco Buyout and HB 611. Mr. Rogers asked the group to look back on that plan and see what was not accomplished that can be picked up again. He stated that we will not be able to have everything we want in the final plan and compromises must be reached in order to develop a successful plan. Mr. Rogers asked the group to reach an agreement that moves agriculture forward as a successful sector.

Presentation

Keith Rogers introduced Dr. Lori Garkovich, Dr. Steve Isaacs and Dr. Rick Maurer with the University of Kentucky for the overview of strategic planning for the Future of Kentucky Agriculture.

Dr. Rick Maurer explained the process of their presentation and stated that they were not there to begin the facilitation process. The presenters were there to explain strategic planning to the group.

Dr. Lori Garkovich began the discussion by asking the group what they thought strategic planning was. Some of the responses included:

- More than one
- Determining what their children will be working with in the next 50 years
- Roadmap – direction we are going
- Blueprint for the future
- Different points of interest
- Young producers that we need to look out for
- Sacrifice – time, commitment and sacrifice of initiatives that are important to your group
- Sustainability - as a result of
- Difficult process
- Vision – guides the process
- Self evaluation and realization of facts

Dr. Steve Isaacs stated to the group that the plan will not end on December 31 when it is down on paper, it will begin there. He used the example of Ag 2000 and how that initiative is being implemented in this decade.

Dr. Maurer asked the question “Who owns the plan?” He stated that Kentucky agriculture as a whole owns the plan, not the Governor’s Office of Agricultural Policy, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture or the University of Kentucky. These entities have the staff that will be getting out the correspondence and the plan to the Task Force, the public and the legislators. The initiative for the strategic plan came from the Governor’s Summit on Agriculture. Governor Fletcher issued a challenge to the agriculture industry to develop a plan, but not his plan.

Dr. Garkovich began by asking the question, “What are we planning for?” What do we want the industry to be in 20 years and beyond? This vision is not for one commodity or one sector of agriculture. What do we need to have in place to allow us to flourish in the future? When one flourishes, we all can flourish. We need to build off everyone’s success and think long term. We need to look beyond the annual plan(s) and target resources beyond that point. Where does your organization fit into the picture of the long term plan of agriculture? How does your organization’s strategic plan fit into the state’s strategic plan? How do we reach out to those who share our vision?

Plans help coordinate activities and are implemented by everyone, not just one or two people. (IE: Not just Kentucky Department of Agriculture or the Governor’s Office of Agricultural Policy) Everyone has to work and partner together. It will succeed because everyone can pull together in the same direction, not just follow the lead dog. This is a challenge and an opportunity to work together. This is how we are going to create a future we want.

Dr. Isaacs encouraged the group to think broader and think in the sense of a community. He said that he felt community is defined in a couple of a different ways; geographic or where we live and in a broader sense as far as agricultural/rural. Diversity across the

state is a strong asset. Dr. Isaacs stated that he wanted to get the “out of the box” ideas from this group and wanted individuals to stretch their boundaries. He wanted the group to think broader and not say the same things that have been said the last 25 years.

Dr. Maurer said he would like to see the Task Force take an asset based approach, not the problem based approach. What are the strengths and what assets does the industry bring to the table. What can the group build on? It is realistic and accomplishments will happen. The asset based approach makes us take responsibility for ourselves. Don't start with the big problems and how to change them. Start with the assets we have and build on them.

Dr. Garkovich asked to group, “What are key components of a plan?” Once again, she said to focus on what you have, not what you don't have. From there, you develop your goals. What resources do you have to make it happen? Build from your own resources and then go elsewhere. From your assets and your vision, you build your goals. In order to meet your goals, you must have a critical timeframe for each strategy. Have benchmarks and accounting each year for the plan. Also, who initiates the plan is very important. What are the barriers to doing this? Dr. Garkovich broke up into groups for an exercise. (Handout on file)

GROUP 1

Barriers: Improving agricultural literacy and participate in activities

Solution: Measurable outcomes that justify components of the plan that lead to helping farmers understand the importance in participating in overall agriculture

GROUP 2

Barriers: Quality of groups, apathy (always will have those who resist) and mindset that government or money will fix all the problems

Solution: Find way to breed cooperation and how to take the plan out into the state

GROUP 3

Barriers: Competing interests and large diverse groups – putting everyone together working toward same goal

Solution: Communication

GROUP 4

Barriers: Turf issues and Communication (scattered across the state)

GROUP 5

Diversity can be an opportunity and a challenge

GROUP 6

Barrier: Agriculture leaders tend to focus on short term goals

GROUP 7

Barrier: Territory mindset

Solution: Available funding for plan – get legislators involved

GROUP 8

Barriers: Most people don't recognize all facets of agriculture

Solution: Education is the solution - how do you make agriculture more important to all people in the state?

GROUP 9

Barrier: Don't alienate other groups and harm them – Dr. Garkovich suggested making this a guiding principle

Solution: Financing solutions - how do children and grandchildren get into industry?

GROUP 10

Barriers: Changing structure and demographics, marketing and promotion of plan and extreme urgency of communicating to general public about agriculture

Solution: Need to find common interest such as risk management, labor, fuel prices, access to capital, etc.

GROUP 11

Barriers: Owner/operators with the time and financial commitments and associations who do not have staff support

Solution: Need to buy into plan and grassroots commitment

Dr. Garkovich asked the group to break back into smaller groups and write a headline for the Courier Journal or the Herald Leader 20 years from now to reflect some aspect of success of agriculture.

GROUP 1

KY Overtakes California as Top Agriculture Producing State

GROUP 2

KY Becomes Model for Other States for Diversification in Agriculture

GROUP 3

KY Farmers Continue to Provide Safest, Most Nutritious, Affordable Food in the World

GROUP 4

KY Feeds it Own

GROUP 5

Agriculture Gains Ground in KY

GROUP 6

KY Ranks First in Agricultural Profitability in All Sectors

GROUP 7

KY Grows Agricultural Economy

GROUP 8

Kentucky Expands Kentucky Proud Products

GROUP 9

State FFA Convention Sets Records

GROUP 10

Agriculture Remains the Top Industry in the State

GROUP 11

Kentucky Leads Nation Again in Number of Farms

Dr. Garkovich pointed out the commonalities among the groups' headlines and that everyone wants the same vision, even though there was a vast amount of diversity in the room.

Dr. Isaacs gave his own headline "18th Annual Kentucky Agriculture Show draws 1 Million Visitors". He asked the question, "How do we bring the diverse interests of the group together?" It is very important not to have yes/no votes. Dr. Isaacs pointed out the gradient of agreement on the handout in the packet and discussed the chart with the group. He pointed out that he liked the comment made in earlier discussions that diversity was a barrier, but also a strength. (Handout on file)

Dr. Maurer responded by saying that there are different types of leaders. There are leaders that react and ones that participate. He congratulated them on being leaders that participated and he wished them good luck in developing the plan.

Operating Process for Strategic Plan Development

Dr. Tony Brannon asked those who were not present at the time of introductions in the morning to introduce themselves to the group. Dr. Brannon stated that 38 of the 41 organizations were represented at the meeting.

Dr. Brannon went over the handouts in the packet. Dr. Brannon made some points while going over the handouts. He stated that the plan should not only represent industries, but also represent regions. He discussed the Kentucky Agricultural Council and invited all organizations/entities to become involved in the Council. Dr. Brannon introduced the Executive Committee, which consisted of Tod Griffin, Daniel Green, Tony Brannon, Commissioner Richie Farmer, Dave Maples, Steve Coleman and a vacant chair elect position. He stated that the Council will be applying for a grant from the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board for funds for the plan. The organization is a non-profit 501©3. The Council cannot lobby, but can turn it over to the appropriate group to do so. (Handouts on file)

Dr. Brannon also outlined different groups and their responsibilities. He introduced the Staff Working group, which consisted of Daniel Green (co-chair), Tod Griffin (co-chair), David Beck, Robert Monk, Roger Thomas, Dave Maples, Steve Coleman, Jeff Hall, Todd Barlow, Tony Brannon, Will Snell, Mike Judge (ex-officio member) and Keith Rogers (ex-officio member).

The Media Relations committee consists of Bill Clary (Kentucky Department of Agriculture), Gary Huddleston (Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation) and Angela Blank (Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy).

Dr. Brannon mentioned the meeting dates in the General Operating Process document.

July 12

July 25 - Meeting in Princeton

August 16 - Meeting in Louisville at the Kentucky Exposition Center
November 9 - Meeting in Louisville at the Kentucky Exposition Center
Regional Public Forums in September and October – possible places could be Murray State University, Western Kentucky University and Eastern Kentucky University

It was mentioned that the group needs to have their potential legislative thoughts prepared before the December 17 meeting.

Dr. Brannon pointed out the Homework Page to the group. He stated this was an opportunity for input from each organization/industry. The form will be sent out electronically for those who have email and will be accepted in the same way. (Handout on file)

Dr. Brannon went over the Member Responsibility document with the group. (Handout on file)

As Dr. Brannon mentioned earlier in the day, he asked each organization/entity to share one critical challenge and one emerging opportunity for their industry.

EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food safety - focus on Kentucky Proud and will need infrastructure such as processing plants

KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

Improve net farm income by adding additional and expanding marketing opportunities

KENTUCKY VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Educating our young people in and about agriculture

KENTUCKY VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Critical shortage of veterinarians especially in rural areas, important public health issues and foot and mouth disease

KENTUCKY NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

Exotic pests and external threats

KENTUCKY SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION

Road tax on biodiesel, transfat issues, low land oil, young farmers having a hard time getting into agriculture and road repair issues

CENTER FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Marketing and/or processing, new technologies/ideas like cellulose/ethanol/biomass, organic production and finding markets

KENTUCKY HORTICULTURE COUNCIL

Direct markets to consumers, food safety, diversity is an asset

Concern: do we need to see what the opportunities are as well as what our assets are before we write the strategic plan?

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Reflect principle of comparative advantage, Fuel and water in California are running out and how long can they produce 70%?

COMMUNITY FARM ALLIANCE

Price takers, when do we become organized enough to say that not enough and we would not take the price?

MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY BREATHITT DIAGNOSTIC LAB

Insufficient laboratory capacity to support livestock groups

KENTUCKY WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

Telling our story and become more proactive

KENTUCKY CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Retailers want to buy KY Proud beef and there is a limited supply – need to create alliances for a commercial scale

KENTUCKY ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

High grain prices, need to be concerned about land, water, soil and air - need to take care of it

PACE BOARD

Kentucky loses 100 acres of farmland a day (estimated) across the state, food safety – less than 2% of imported food is inspected, preserving farm land, young farmers need to be able to afford land, lower equity of land

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

Competitive advantage, innovation, research and development

KENTUCKY WOODLAND OWNERS ASSOCIATION

400,000 woodland owners in Kentucky, participation by people in field vs. apathy

KENTUCKY ALTERNATIVE LIVESTOCK ASSOCIATION

New to marketplace and have a niche to fill, public relations, elk meat, organic health food, getting the information out to the farmers and the cost of slaughtering, sales and scale of operation

KENTUCKY ASSOCIATION FFA

Goal to add 50 new agricultural education programs in middle and high schools across the state by 2015, will help with agricultural literacy

COUNCIL FOR BURLEY TOBACCO

Facts vs. public perception, food safety, attacks on animal agriculture/livestock

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

Concern that agriculture could become insignificant, disconnection that public has and they take us for granted, being able to farm (IE: hog permits and Bluegrass Stockyards)

KENTUCKY DAIRY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Don't elect officials with agriculture backgrounds, need to increase production and getting people to become veterinarians

KENTUCKY AGRICULTURE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Agriculture sustainability, research and development, marketing and energy value of alternative resources to fossil fuel production, value of food, energy, food and fuel not one or the other but both working together, Kentucky is the perfect size state to provide in an identity reserve way as far as being sustainable, strategically we can feed the world because of geographic location, transfat is an example of how you can lose a market overnight

KENTUCKY ASSOCIATION OF EQUINE PRACTITIONERS

Keeping equine industry and other animals in Kentucky, educate young people in agricultural opportunities

BURLEY GROWERS COOPERATIVE

Tobacco is important crop in the state, reenergize the growers, how to handle the problems such as overproduction through export sales, etc.

KENTUCKY PORK PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

Water is a major issue, address the challenge of storage of water, access to capital, labor and labor development, careful about what we say about one another, educate the public, low interest loans

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Need to research and grow for different cultures living in America, a growing market for producers – challenge of young farmers starting

COMMODITY GROWERS COOPERATIVE

Tobacco is viable part of the economy, young farmers need to have opportunities to farm full time instead of part time

KENTUCKY AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Health care – reason why some young farmers have off farm jobs

KENTUCKY FEED & GRAIN ASSOCIATION

Health care, labor, energy sources, livelihood is based on the farm, concentrate on staying on the farm

FARM CREDIT SERVICES OF MID-AMERICA

Biggest challenge of this effort is thinking and paradigms that are brought to the table, great opportunities if we adjust and think through a different lens, have to think of the marketplace demands, research and sound business plans and have not always approached it from that way

KENTUCKY WOODLAND OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Need to deal with reality, maintain number of family farmers, raising farm income, what we can do and what our marketplace can do

MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE

Preparing people for jobs in agribusiness – can be a challenge and an opportunity, human resource capital

KENTUCKY ASSOCIATION FFA

Advocacy for food, fiber and resource industry – education

LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMISSION

Connection between agriculture and rural communities and agriculture is only one part of rural Kentucky, transportation, health care, economic development, good schools and technology

KENTUCKY AGRICULTURAL FINANCE CORPORATION

Prioritize

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

Recognizing that agriculture and natural resources are environmental industries and that will help to educate the general public, it enhances their lives in more ways than they can imagine

CENTER FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Land Value and who will farm in the future, land value increases because of recreational purposes, new markets, organic expansion, look at who we are trying to help

COUNCIL FOR BURLEY TOBACCO

Urban areas need to be included because of major agri-tourism venues, they need to have ownership in the process too

KENTUCKY DAIRY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

County piece of HB 611 has generated more support for the state, growing perception that local is better and safer, look at providing infrastructure for crops and products, survivability to profitability, regionalism, quality of life, aging population in agriculture

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY

Non-governmental component and regional development, not one state, it is 6 or 7 states, need to work on identifying those areas

Closing Remarks

Dr. Brannon congratulated the group on having great discussions. He stated there was a tremendous amount of thinking power and hard work in the room. The next meeting of the Task Force on the Future of Agriculture will be on July 12, 2007. More details will follow at a later date.

The meeting adjourned at 2:39 PM EDT.

APPROVED: _____

PRESIDING OFFICER:

SECRETARY:
