

DRAFT

Meeting Highlights: EDUCATION Committee  
Tony Brannon Chair  
Farm Bureau Elizabethtown Office  
1/22/09

The Committee members introduced themselves and Dr. Brannon provided an overview of the goals they are to address. The Professional Staff elaborated on the Committee process, including the intent to identify other individuals who may be interested in participating and urged Committee members to think about individuals or organizations that could be a further resource to the Committee's work.

The Committee heard a briefing by Mr. Curt Lucas on the current programs for youth (K-12) that are operated under the auspices of the Kentucky Department of Education. Dr. Brannon updated the Committee on the status of Ag in the Classroom, under the auspices of the Ky Department of Agriculture. Dean Wallace provided information on the Ky Farm Bureau's educational activities, including its emphasis on scholarship development.

Mr. Bruce Metzger provided a briefing on the adult educational programs provided through the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) at its 16 campuses across the state. The KCTCS works with local Ag Councils to identify further program needs. He reviewed a profile of the population being served, noting that they are attracting more young people, sooner after high school versus in the past they had more of an older adult population seeking continuing education opportunities.

Dr. Smith provided a briefing on programs operated under the auspices of the University of Kentucky, including 4H, with its focus on Youth Education – noting that Kentucky is 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation in terms of per capita participation in 4H.

At the college academic level, new programs are being developed in the area of Food Science / Food Technology, including an emphasis on ham production (which is "exploding"). He notes that Kentucky has a significant infrastructure in food production and logistics. The Extension Service field programs are being adversely affected by the State budget, and have significant vacancies.

On campus, there is a record number of Ag Students (2200), creating pressure to accommodate them. Growth areas of interest include applied economics, merchandising, equine. Some 60% of the students in the equine program are coming from out of state, indicating its strong draw on the east and west coasts. Today's student mix is different than in the past, with a smaller number of students coming from farms and wanting to major in Ag Production. Today there is much greater interest in Ag Science and pre-Vet programs because of the attraction to Vet careers related to pets, not farm animals.

UK's biggest challenge is funding for the research and teaching farms. The cost of utilities is a special problem, plus labor costs that are based on University compensation structure, not typical farm wages.

The Committee also heard briefings on the Higher Educational programs at Western where enrollment also is reported to be at an all time high. Again, at those institutions Pre-Vet is "the" growth area; horticulture also gets a lot of demand. Ag science draws some students who are finding the

science requirements of Pre-Vet too difficult. There is emphasis on crop diversification, with a viticulture class being offered at Western next Spring. Also more entrepreneurial focus and business training. Western has plans for further expansion but is slowed by the funding situation. Western views the keys to its success as a) student-faculty relationships and b) hands on training on the university farm.

Reports also were heard from Hopkinsville Community College, one of the KCTCS campuses.  
(fill in more)

Murray Report  
(fill in)

Focus of Committee's future work is to document the baseline of programs that exist and determine where gaps may exist in terms of populations being served.

The perception that Ag Education is not reaching enough people needs to be supported with hard numbers and documentation. The Committee agreed to work with the professional staff to establish such a foundation of information regarding profiles of the existing populations being served by the various K-12 and Adult programs, including on a county-by-county basis. They also determined that other organizations not present, including the major commodity groups should be surveyed regarding their education and training programs, in order to provide a clearer picture of the educational offerings that exist and the populations being served.