REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE ISSUES BASED REVIEW

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REPORT OF A

COMPREHENSIVE ISSUES BASED REVIEW

FOR THE

SOUTHEAST RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER

Submitted by
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Rick Koelsch
Cathann Kress
Robin Orr
Jim Schild

CONDUCTED ON
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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT

This report is an attempt to review, synthesize, summarize and make recommendations from the Team’s readings, observations and discussions regarding the research and extension programs of the Southeast Research and Extension Center. The Center’s staff prepared and shared with the Review Team an excellent Self-Study document prior to our arrival. This document was quite comprehensive and helpful in preparing for and during the review. The Team was requested to assess the overall quality and effectiveness of the Center’s programs in terms of their strengths and challenges.

The approach taken by the Review Team was to focus on the priority issues identified in the objectives and to consider the Center’s programs overall. Team members were each responsible for their subject matter specialty during the review and in preparing the report. However, this report represents the consensus view of the entire Review Team, and is intended to be helpful to the administration, faculty and staff as they plan for the future.

The Review Team was grateful for having been selected for this effort, and we wish to express our thanks to the Administration of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Director Williams and the Steering Committee for the review, especially its co-chairs, Gail Brand and Gary Zoubek. All staff members appeared to have been involved in the process of preparing for the review and were most hospitable and helpful during the actual review. This bodes well for the future programs and activities within the District.
THE REVIEW

Each academic unit of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln reviews its programs every five years for appropriateness, efficiency and effectiveness. This particular review was issue based which covers the current efforts of the unit and the emerging issues as seen by the unit’s staff. It is almost always necessary for one reason or another to change one’s plans over time, and an issue based review represents the best efforts of both the staff and Review Team at a particular point in time.

The process, which the unit’s staff and administration went through in planning, preparing and executing the review, can be the most educational, meaningful and helpful part of the entire review. The Review Team’s primary purpose is to validate what they read in the Self-Study report and heard during the actual review. They also can provide an independent and objective look at what the unit faculty and staff feel is appropriate for now and in the future, as well as offering their own suggestions.

It was obvious that the faculty and staff of the District spent considerable time and effort in preparing the self-study, including a significant effort on Needs assessment. The study team completed surveys and visited with their stakeholders to determine if their programs were meeting the needs and also to ascertain the emerging issues. Further, they made tours available for the Review Team to meet with stakeholders as well. The issues receiving primary attention in the report were: Agricultural profitability, community resource development, community and residential environment, families, healthy life, 4-H and youth development, diversity, educational technology, marketing, student recruitment, urbanization and the cross-cutting issue of water. The identification of external issues was heavily dependent on clientele input.

PROCEDURES FOR THE REVIEW

The review process actually began in early 2005 with the selection of the co-chairs and a steering committee. The overall review committee was built upon the current Extension action plans and several engagement and delivery issues. Work groups were formed based upon the following:

Priority Education Programs
- Food Production and Natural Resource Systems
- Building Strong Families
- Nutrition, Health and Wellness
- Community and Residential Environment
- Community and Resource Development
- 4-H Youth Development

Cross Cutting Program Issue
- Water
Engaging our Clientele
- Diversity
- Educational Technology
- Marketing
- Student Recruitment
- Urban Initiative

The faculty and staff of the Southeast Research and Extension Center prepared, through their Work Groups, Steering Committee and Co-chairs, an excellent detailed self-study report which the Review Team received in mid-August. This Self-Study was highly informative and most helpful to the Review Team. All of the documents provided the Team were carefully read and considered.

The Review Team’s visit occurred during September 18-21, 2006. During the visit, the Team was briefed by Dr. John Owens, Vice President and Vice Chancellor for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Dr. Elbert Dickey, Dean for Extension, Dr. Gary Cunningham, Dean for Research and Dr. Susan Williams, Center Director. Presentations and discussions of district issues center around those described in the self-study document. A question and answer session was held following each discussion.

The Team also visited with Center faculty and staff during the breaks and at mealtimes. The tours planned for the Team throughout the district also provided an opportunity for team members to visit with stakeholders.

The Review Team met alone during the evenings of the review for discussion of the day’s activities and to arrive at a consensus opinion on the issues and/or to gather additional information the following day on items for which there was some uncertainty.

This report from the Review Team will attempt to respond to the issues brought forth in the Self-Study and in briefings by the administrators. Recommendations on certain district-wide issues will be made, along with those in specific program areas. In conducting the review and preparing this report, the Team had to operate under certain assumptions. These assumptions were based on our discussions with the administration, faculty and staff of the district, stakeholders, other knowledgeable individuals, information in the Self-Study and our Team’s own assessment.

**ASSUMPTIONS OF THE REVIEW TEAM**

- That institutional funding from the federal, state and county governments will not increase significantly over the next few years.
- The best opportunity for significant increase in funding over the short-term will be from grants, contracts and private funding.
- Many of the same issues will face the Center over the next several years that have in the past, but they will occur at a faster pace.
• Urban growth will continue at a rapid pace in the Southeast Research and Extension District, but agriculture will continue to be an important economic engine in the economy. However, information on the significance of agriculture to the District will require a greater public relations effort by everyone involved.

• There will be significantly more pressure, competition and required accountability for use of natural, human and financial resources in the future.

• Technology will continue to change rapidly and it will be an even greater driving force on future society activities.

• Overall, our constituents will be more technology savvy which may have important implications on how we deliver extension programming and/or information dissemination. Juxtaposed to this is that we will likely see a growing number of “haves-nots.”

• Extension is a teaching and educational organization and it needs a strong research base to be effective.

• Research needs of the Southeast Research and Extension Center are predominately, but not exclusively, those resulting from applied research.

• With the rapid changes and advances in technology, constituents will demand almost instantaneous access to pertinent information.

• With all of the advances occurring in society, including technology, professional development opportunities for faculty and staff will need to be more frequent and of shorter duration.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Southeast Research and Extension Center is unique among Nebraska’s R&E Centers in many aspects. It has the predominant urban population and total population (70%) of the state, thus a significant rural and urban interface, great diversity within its agricultural production sector with a sizable number of small acreages, a large food processing segment, and finally, the Center Headquarters is located on the main University campus in Lincoln which dwarfs this Center’s visibility compared to the other R&E Centers in the state.

The Center is fortunate to have a talented faculty and staff. The self-study report was well done, oral presentations made during the review were excellent and the faculty and staff seemed to be engaged and enthusiastic about their work. We do have some concern about whether there are enough human resources available to do all the programming that is suggested. In this regard, the Review Team would suggest that Center faculty and staff continue to take advantage of every opportunity to leverage their resources by forming partnerships and coalitions with other affiliated groups to increase the potential resources available to complete the work. Also, in many instances, there are retired individuals and/or professional people who would be quite willing to volunteer and assist on a specific job or work part-time on multiple tasks.

The Review Team wishes to compliment the faculty/staff for what appeared to be a concerted effort to reach out and obtain shareholder input. In instance after instance, this evidence was cited
in oral and written comments. Also, where Review Team members had the opportunity to visit with shareholders, they spoke often of conversing or working directly with the educators.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The self-study report identified one cross-cutting issue—water. We agree that water does involve many programs from agriculture production, including runoff from livestock and cropping practices, to food processing, to bio-energy production, and to rural versus urban uses including human consumption.

Population pressures on both water quantity and quality will continue to grow in the Southeast District and other parts of the state. Climatic changes and drought may reduce the water available for all purposes, but especially those related to agriculture. Production agriculture, food processing and bio-energy production are all heavily dependent upon water availability and quality.

Agriculture is the largest consumptive user of water in Nebraska. Better technologies can increase crop yields and reduce water use, implying that we should focus attention in both research and education programs on the dollar value or biological yield per unit of water. The latest technologies, along with economic strategies, can improve the efficiency of water use in all sectors of our economy.

Agricultural non-point source pollution is one of the leading sources of water quality degradation. Top water pollutants are pathogens, chemicals and sediment. These are associated with agriculture, manufacturing and municipal water uses. Emphasis needs to be placed on best management practices to protect and enhance our water quantity and quality. There is a need for significant research attention on the reuse of waste water as it is a significant potential future source of water for agriculture and other sectors of our economy. Further research is also needed for understanding the interactions between surface and sub-surface water. We would also encourage a district-wide plan for educational programs targeting water issues.

Even though considerable progress has been made on several items since the last comprehensive review, there are some issues that continue to need attention. There is an urgent need among administrators to work on improving communications and working relationships between educators and specialists, and educators and educators. We heard repeatedly about the lack of communication, in particular between specialists and educators as a group. There are individual exceptions to this, however.
DISTRICT-WIDE AREAS OF EMPHASIS

Food Production and Natural Resource Systems
(General Comments)

Strengths
Producers and agribusiness stakeholders offered high praise of agricultural extension programs and specifically on the quality of field staff. Common reasons for this praise included willingness to partner with others, leadership provided for program implementation, and involvement of the end user in the discovery process.

Multiple examples of good informal partnerships between specialists and educators were observed primarily because of extension educators taking the initiative. However, there are glaring exceptions in the connection to the UNL research base.

Multiple examples of partnerships existed between individual teams and a variety of public and private sector organizations including both traditional partnerships (e.g. USDA agencies and Natural Resource Districts) and new partnerships (e.g. banking community).

Opportunities/Challenges
Stakeholders expressed the perception that UNL Extension is and will continue to be a shrinking resource. Recent eliminations in regional Research and Extension Center support and extended periods for open positions have added to this perception creating some discontent among extension clientele. New models will be needed to maintain accessibility to extension resources following temporary and permanent losses.

Stakeholders (specifically a group of bankers) strongly tied economic opportunity for many rural Nebraska communities directly to agriculture. They identified three opportunities for economic growth: agritourism, livestock growth, and ethanol (which was tied to livestock growth).

The average age of the Extension Educator is in the mid 50's in the southeast district. The success that this district has seen has been on the quality of the educators and their history of working with clientele and partnering agencies. As these educators retire and new people come on staff, it will be critical that these new educators have the tools to continue strong programming. Mid career staff will need to coach or mentor the new staff. In addition, more formal arrangements between campus and Southeast district faculty will be critical to future success of extension programs in the Food Production and Natural Resource Systems (FP&NRS) topic area.

Recommendations
The four FP&NRS program areas should jointly develop umbrella priorities and indicators of success for some issues. Possible crosscutting issues include energy, water, economically and environmentally sustainable models for animal agriculture (e.g. NE Pork Model for other species), utilization of excess grains and by-products in livestock and opportunities for young people to return to production agriculture.
Technology and web based resources are needed within the Southeast District for improving 1) clientele awareness of and access to extension resources and 2) extension educator sharing of resources with peers. A generic web page should be developed for each of four issues identifying extension resource people, publications, and related resources accessible through individual county web sites. In addition, the FP & NRS team should review technology efforts of the Food, Health, and Wellness team as a possible model for use by the FP&NRS team.

**Food Production and Natural Resource Systems**  
*(Risk Management & Production Management)*

**Strengths**

Educational programs targeting producers and crop consultants on marketing, cost efficiencies, and general crop production issues have reached significant agricultural audiences and demonstrated substantial impacts leading to improved crop production efficiency and profitability.

Partnerships with the rural banking industry for delivery of the Farmers and Ranchers College have resulted in enthusiastic and influential supporters for extension programs. Expansion of this partnership throughout the district should be explored.

Programs in this issue area produce wide recognition of the educational and applied research strengths of UNL Extension programs.

**Opportunities/Challenges**

Production of corn, soybeans, and livestock in this district represents 39, 50, and 21 percent, respectively, of the state's total. The regional disparity in feed grains and livestock production suggests large export of feed grains and untapped economic opportunities. Utilization of feed grains in ethanol and livestock production could add significant economic growth within the district.

While there is no denying the importance of risk management programs focused on marketing and cost reduction strategies, there is a growing set of non-economic risk factors that should be considered in extension programming. These include rural and urban interfaces, livestock and rural community interfaces, environmental regulation compliance, and water resources sustainability. These issues can be equally important risk factors in the sustainability of agricultural systems, especially livestock systems.

**Recommendations**

The Risk Management team should evaluate the need for future educational programs addressing emerging issues (e.g. implications of Farm Bill changes, energy—including biofuels) and non-economic risk issues (rural urban interface, livestock and rural community conflicts, environmental compliance). This may require:

- Transition of some focus away from traditional economic risk programs (marketing, cost reductions, efficiency improvements).


- Improving efficiency of delivery of traditional economic risk programs. Successful programs should be identified and educator accessibility to supporting resources should be improved. The Nutrition, Health, and Safety model for sharing among educators may provide one option for improving efficiency.
- New connections with university faculty should be considered to evaluate emerging and non-economic risk issues.

The Risk Management and Livestock Issues teams should partner on an educational initiative demonstrating economically and environmentally sustainable models for small and medium size animal agricultural systems. The Nebraska Pork Model provides an immediate opportunity for education outreach. The teams should consider expanding this concept to other species.

### Food Production and Natural Resource Systems
(Diversified Agriculture)

**Strengths**
The addition of the Kimmel Education Center will add new dimensions to research and delivery of educational programs in the area of diversified agriculture. This center has the potential for becoming the ARDC model for diversified agriculture clientele.

A group of staff has been assigned to look at issues and do programming in diversified agriculture. These staff members are leading the efforts statewide. A staff member has been assigned to coordinate activities with SARE and increase linkages with the Center for Rural Affairs, Organic Crop Improvement Association (OCIA) and other diversified agricultural organizations.

**Opportunities/Challenges**
A growing group of consumers want to know how their food was produced and who produced the products. This clientele base will provide marketing opportunities in the area of diversified agriculture.

A strong research base in this area is needed within the state and nationally. Many times it is the producer that is the expert in the area. Extension in the past has not been seen as a source of information.

The clientele in this area are not typical producers and many work other jobs. Programs and delivery of information should be adjusted to meet the needs of this group. Web based information is an avenue that this group typically uses to gather information.
**Recommendations**

Staff working in this area need to partner with other University Departments that may be a resource to clientele, e.g., the Food Processing Center. The clientele do not make the connection of all the University resources that may be of help to them.

Development of web based information systems to deliver information and educational programs.

There are a lot of opportunities to incorporate other Extension program areas into this program area. Examples might be the Nutrition Education Program (NEP) group working with Farmers Markets and young entrepreneur's direct marketing of specialty fruits and vegetables.

**Food Production and Natural Resource Systems**

(Irrigated Agriculture)

**Strengths**

This district has had a history of many strong Extension programs that have addressed critical issues dealing with water. These programs have had a significant impact in helping people change their thinking and management practices especially in the area of nitrate contamination and irrigation best management practices.

Extension Educators have developed many excellent examples of cooperation between government agencies, producers and agribusiness to address local water issues. In addition some Extension Educators and Specialists have developed informal partnerships to deliver educational programs and applied research in the district.

**Opportunities/Challenges**

The declining ground water levels in the state need to be addressed. Educational programs based on research need to address the declining ground water levels and the role that ground water depletion has on surface water and vice versa.

Measures to conserve irrigation water and to use no till farming practices will help growers in the short term by saving water and lowering fuel expenses for pumping irrigation water. These measures alone will not assure the sustainability of irrigated agriculture. Consumptive water use in each of the basins needs to be addressed so that there is not more water consumed in the basin than what is recharged.

The cities of Omaha and Lincoln will continue to expand and the demand for water will increase. This demand will place more strain on agricultural water uses upstream in the state, which in turn may increase conflict on water management policy between Western Nebraska and Eastern Nebraska.

Water quality and water quantity have been listed in other program areas and as a cross cutting issue. All staff should be aware of the issues and understand the terminology to communicate to the general public.
**Recommendations**

Extension needs to lead the educational efforts on water issues in the state. These educational efforts need to be based on research instead of emotion. Stronger ties need to be made with the UNL Water Center to address the research issues of the district.

In the review document, considerable emphasis was placed on the priorities of the Natural Resource Districts (NRDs), especially nitrogen management and irrigation management. Many of these NRDs have established water management areas to address these issues. These issues need to be placed more in a management mode and more emphasis in the district placed on the emerging water issues.

Educators working in this area need to have professional development opportunities to attend national meetings and workshops to help identify emerging issues.

**Food Production and Natural Resource Systems**

*(Livestock Agriculture)*

**Strengths**

The livestock team has a history of delivering successful educational livestock programs targeting youth, cow-calf production systems, and nutrient management for confinement livestock systems.

The Livestock Issues team identified three critical areas (premise and animal ID, zoning to allow for co-existence of rural and urban, and environmental issues) which they judged to be appropriate for priority needs in the Southeast District.

**Opportunities/Challenges**

Future economic growth for agriculture in the Southeast District will be dependent upon growth of confinement livestock systems and the availability of water. Sustainability of confinement systems will require an understanding of many issues including odor control technologies, facility siting, environmental regulation compliance focused on water quality, appropriately sized systems for economic sustainability, neighbor conflict resolution, and traceability of animals through the production systems. Investment in educator knowledge will need to be made for several of these issues.

*[See General Comments and Risk Management sections for discussion of economic value of animal agriculture to feed grain production]*.

Environmental issues associated with small livestock operations have historically been ignored. The predominance of open lot feeding of livestock, smaller un-permitted facilities, and higher rainfall in the southeast district would suggest a need for environmental programming targeting this audience.
**Recommendations**

The identified critical issues for Livestock Agriculture will require a significant re-direction of educator effort and an investment in educator inservice if educational programs are to address the three identified critical issues. Some investments in these program areas have been made previously. However, focused educators more closely tied to these three issues will be necessary for future progress.

The Risk Management and Livestock Issues teams should partner on an educational initiative demonstrating economically and environmentally sustainable models for small and medium size animal agricultural systems. The Nebraska Pork Model provides an immediate opportunity for educational outreach. The teams should work with campus faculty and Risk Management team members to expand this concept to other species.

Educational programs targeting environmental issues specific to existing small, unregulated livestock systems should be delivered within the district.

**Building Strong Families**

**Strengths**

1. **Excellence in programming.** Clear evidence of effective programs with a strong research base is shown. Programs are nationally recognized.

2. **Demonstrated collaboration.** Family teams collaborate with local and state government, health systems, schools, child care providers, Health and Human Services staff as well as the justice system. Collaborations are noted both in the Self-Study report as well as strongly reflected in site visits. Stakeholders and collaborators voice high praise for Extension’s contributions and give examples of enormous impact on children, health and communities. Extension is truly engaged with partners and is highly valued. Extension grasps the needs of the groups and provides strategies and support for reaching shared goals.

3. **State leadership.** Family Educators have shown strong leadership across the state in program areas critical to families. They have shown creativity and flexibility in meeting needs of Nebraska families.
**Recommendations**

1. Since many programs are participant mandated, funding is not always constant. A variety of alternative funding methods should be sought. This can result in wider programming and participation by clientele in need of assistance.

2. With demographics showing significant population growth in residents between the ages of 50 and 65, Educators are challenged to provide services to meet priority needs of this age group as the population faces new challenges. These might include financial planning and budgeting, care of elderly family members, public policy change, grandparenting, parenting grandchildren, and other topics as identified by clients.

3. Work with an Evaluation specialist to find best tools for measuring impact of all programs. Share results with stakeholders and policymakers.

4. Expand collaboration with Health and Human Services (HHS) staff by offering programs and continuing education opportunities for foster parents and health service workers who interact with children and families. Consider “train the trainer” programs as appropriate because there are a limited number of family focused Educators.

5. Expand collaboration with community organizations, schools, and faith-based agencies, to provide needed programming for families: parenting, grand-parenting, pre-marital education, financial planning and budgeting. Again, consider “train the trainer” programs.

6. Request whatever technology equipment and training needed to ensure all Southeast counties participate in available programs. Technology can assist in reducing any barriers to participation because of income or location.

7. Find avenues to deliver the Building Nebraska Families (BNF) curriculum to families. Use strong existing collaborations to identify ways to reach all families who will benefit.

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**Nutrition, Health and Wellness**

**Strengths**

The review team learned of many well-known components of the District's programs in Nutrition, Health, & Wellness that are listed below and are not limited to the list:

- Leading nationally on development of current materials
- Innovative local programming
- Flexibility to be creative and independent while staying connected across the discipline
- Technologically on the move
- Solid outcomes in food safety
- Strong stakeholder support
- Good connection to specialists & department
- Clear connection with research & department
In order to build on these strengths there are several recommendations that may provide insight into even more outcome driven programming in the future.

**Recommendations**
The following recommendations are not in any particular order of importance, rather they are all deemed important and doable with a continuum of effort needed.

**Farmers Market nutrition - tie to diversified farming - get more dollars to vegetable farmers - communicate across teams**
Farmers markets provide a way to connect consumers with the concept of "Farm to Table" and also get direct income to local fruit and vegetable farmers. With the influential people NE has in the federal government, it seems that a successful connection here is a good demonstration of the strength of federal support for Farmers Market Nutrition Programs. This will bring more money to such programs and provide better access to all Nebraskans for locally grown produce. Increasing visibility in this area will also help the Diversified Agriculture Team work toward their goals. Encouraging attention to Farmers Markets is a way of connecting urban communities to farming communities in a positive food focused way.

**Overweight & obesity - work to find tools to measure changes with many different discipline areas on campus - applied research**
The Nutrition & Physical Activity team, at the Center for Disease Control, is very interested in applied research being done in this area. Nebraska is well positioned with materials and now needs to get campus faculty engaged in applied research and work on how to best measure changes. Innovative methods such as participatory research have the potential to provide sustainable long term effective programs.

**Connect all the dots of physical activity with wellness, health, and obesity prevention**
This is strongly connected to the just previous comment. There is also the opportunity to connect with other departments across campus working on similar issues to increase the strength of all outcomes. For instance, Education may want to work on how to provide useful information for tracking children through school and compare changes with programming interventions. Contribution to the success of nationally mandated school wellness plans is good programming.

**Find ways to develop minority extension staff - use innovative staffing patterns**
The indigenous model of education is being confirmed and adopted across all different kinds of programming throughout the nation. Although in NE there are concerns about the education of staff, we are in an environment where the credibility of the messenger is crucial to implementation of any practice changes. The growing Latino population in NE is a great place to put this model back into your system and make a big impact. It will also open the doors of the University to a growing culturally diverse audience.

**Get credit for food safety programs with public health - work with livestock staff**
You have well-documented programs in food safety that truly make the food people consume in NE safer than before the programs were implemented. We suggest that you take this opportunity
to extend the courses for University credit to consumers. This will provide UNL with the ability to reach new audiences of students and realize that many students have different educational needs than are provided by four-year university educations. It may be very productive to even use your food safety programs to provide General Education Degree (GED) certification for many entering the food service industry that have not completed high school education. The future of long-term programs will be the ability to give participants credit for those programs. Provide these programs in cooperation with Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) programming along with livestock staff and present a full menu of programming.

Spend energy on raising the bar of programs to continuing education credits, credentialing credits, and even to classroom credits and use for student recruitment
All your Nutrition, Health & Wellness programs can be developed into credit programs. There is a great need for this type of programming in the public schools, and it is prudent to tie outcomes in your programs to learning standards in Nebraska. Comments in the food safety section are just as possible in the whole program area.

Be open to very different partnerships for solving health issues
There are lots of new partners in today’s world. With a growing urban area you will find more and more non-profit organizations that can use your expertise. Find a balanced portfolio of partners that will benefit from the research-based programming Extension does. Also pursue new partnerships on campus.

Look to Foundations for funding in combination with other teams
With as many new community partners as we are seeing, there are an equal number of community trusts and foundations interested in making a difference using solid evidence-based programming. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is the most notable in working on ways to improve health and weight. Working with other departments on campus provides innovative ways to pitch programs in a fundable light. Who knew that the UPS Foundation is only interested in ending hunger in America. We suggest more involvement with the multitude of multi-state, multi-organization opportunities.

Stretch yourselves to find ways to weave technology into other venues
This team has the most developed technology work we have seen. Now figure out how to move from power points and curriculum into adding to the knowledge base for credit. MIT just put all their classes on-line at no charge and for no credit. Put nutrition courses on-line for credit and have people pay for credits. Figure out how to podcast UNL into peoples ears. This is an area that might enjoy working with engineering people for innovative ways to get this done.

Use outside data sources to enhance and strengthen outcome reports
Share your outcome data with agencies and encourage them to share their data with you. Absenteeism in schools is due primarily in elementary grades to colds, flu, and Hepatitis A. Hand washing is the best way to prevent this. Women, Infants and Children (WIC) data combine well with NEP data so your whole state can provide a more complete report of program effectiveness. Common messages from all agencies improve message adoption. Extension can also find ways to
share this information with state and federal stakeholders that will benefit the whole system. State agencies often don't have the leeway that Extension does in this area.

**Share technology with other teams**
All the Extension teams can benefit from the progressive technology of this team. If we need to compete with Phoenix University in the future, the more grounded we all are in technology the better.

**Opportunities for Nutrition, Health and Wellness to interact with other program areas:**

**Food Production and Natural Resources**
Nutrition programs are your best outlet for almost all your work. Connecting with them will promote healthy products (e.g., direct marketing of fruits and vegetables) and give you an idea of innovations that might work for future planning.

**Building Strong Families**
Connect with nutrition programs so that similar audiences get the full benefit of Extension.

All teams will benefit from better understanding of what all others do. Think of new ways to connect and new outcomes to measure that will be of interest to your changing population.

**Community and Residential Environment**

Community and Residential Environment (CRE) represents a diverse set of programs -- Water Supply and Waste Management, Environmental Horticulture, Community Integrated Pest Management and Healthy Homes. It is evident from the self-study material, presentations and tours that Extension Educators in this area have developed programs in collaboration with appropriate partner organizations to impact priority issues in Southeast Nebraska.

**Strengths**
The review team recognizes that this group of Extension Educators are highly respected in the community and have strong support from stakeholders and affiliated organizations. Because of the commitment they have made over the years, Extension is seen and valued as a true partner.

It is also important to recognize that programming in CRE reaches a diverse group of participants many of whom would not be considered the "traditional" user. Extension educators are to be commended for their efforts to reach out to develop programs for new audiences.

With a limited number of extension educators, the team recognizes the need to utilize innovative educational delivery methods such as Blackboard and WebEx/Breeze software and polycom technology to reach larger audiences. The use of technology has also been shown as a highly effective delivery method for reaching 18-35 year olds with Extension resources.
The Southeast District is home to 13 of the 17 CRE educators and assistants in Nebraska. As a result, this group of staff provides leadership, support and assistance to educators in responding to the tremendous demand for CRE education across the state.

**Recommendations**
The Review Team recommends that CRE develop a set of common indicators among a diverse set of priority programs. These indicators will enable the team to demonstrate more cohesiveness among the programs, measure outcomes and more clearly communicate the impact of the programs within CRE.

It is also recommended that CRE educators engage youth from 4-H and other youth organizations, not only as a target audience, but as participants in discussions around these topics. CRE involves issues that are important to the future of Nebraska and youth should be an active participant in the conversations.

As reported in the review documents and presentations, water supply and waste water management will continue to be an important issue for Southeast Nebraska. The Review Team identified water conservation, water quality and energy conservation as emerging issues that Extension can address with educational programming.

Water issues were identified as cross-cutting and impacting several program areas. The Review Team sees an opportunity for great collaboration with other issue teams and suggests the development of a comprehensive plan.

**Community Resource Development**

**Strengths**
1. **Strong programs.** A variety of programs addressing the development of human, social, economic and financial capital have been implemented across the district and state. Programs successfully target needs of individuals, businesses and communities.

2. **Strong collaboration.** The Community Resource Development (CRD) team works with clientele and partners creating a synergy that ensures successful completion of community projects, improvement of business practices and creation of new business enterprises.

3. **Model of interaction.** The CRD team serves as a model of interaction with other teams and other colleges at UNL in bringing UNL to the people. Partners and clients from Chambers of Commerce, health care organizations, schools, local governments and entrepreneurs report enormous impact because of CRD programs. Their increased capacity enables them to reach goals, impact policymakers, secure funding for their communities and for local businesses.
Recommendations
1. Expand youth involvement. In addition to leadership development, assist communities in taking the step to involve youth as active decision-makers across community organizations as well as on college campuses and within regional organizations.

2. Expand entrepreneurship opportunities, again for both youth and adults. Work with Diversified Agriculture to assist with their entrepreneurial efforts.

3. Offer partnerships to other teams in creating appropriate relationships with other colleges, as CRD has done with the College of Architecture.

4. Find ways to include all Southeast District counties in the CRD programs so each community member has the opportunity to increase their capacities, thus strengthening the community. A variety of strategies may be needed to accomplish this; which could include technology opportunities, “train the trainer” programs or other methods.

5. Consider additional partnerships. For example, as Workforce Development is partnering with the Department of Education and UNL with the new web based career site, CRD team members have expertise to assist.

4-H Youth Development

Strengths
The 4-H Youth Development Team recognizes the importance of their work in ensuring the future of Nebraska.

- Focus on the Essential Elements which tie practice to the research base of youth development principles and the Mission Mandates which tie practice to the relevant research base of the land grant university.
- Many of the marketing pieces and uses of technology are creative and help connect youth to their areas of interest.
- Professional Development for Volunteers and Staff is imperative to nurture the single largest contribution to our programs and ensure that we recruit and retain volunteers and staff by providing what they need when they need it. Volunteers and staff should be involved in determining professional development needs.
- Strong support from stakeholders and constituents was evident.
- National leadership related to mission, curriculum, and delivery methods is being provided by the faculty/staff.
Recommendations
• Need a clearer link between how the recognition model will support the mission of 4-H Youth Development, the "so, what?" What will the impact of the 4-H program be on youth over the next 5 years?
• A focused implementation plan to take the state strategic plan forward within the context of the unique needs of this region.
• Strengthen connections between specialists and educators, particularly in development of new and innovative curriculum that ties to the current needs/interests of today's youth. Find a way to introduce 4-H into NEP programs.
• Develop a clear plan for evaluating efforts tied to relevant objectives either related to the content of youth development work, or the context of youth development work (content/context)
• Engage youth in practices and decisions that cut across all program areas (water quality, mapping communities for tourism, etc.)?
• Build a clearer data collection process for understanding impact on student recruitment (including asking applicants if they were in 4-H)
• Fully and intentionally consider the balance among delivery methods and what value they bring to the program (school enrichment, after school, clubs, camping) and what level of resources should be invested in each.
• Diversity issues need to be addressed more fully by considering ways the program may need to change to meet the needs of diverse youth.
• Provide youth input on all planning teams

4-H Youth Development
(Administration and Policy)

Situation
The Southeast District 4-H Youth Development Team recognizes the importance of their work in ensuring the future of Nebraska. It was clear that the individuals involved in the leadership of the 4-H Youth Development Program are dedicated and working diligently to strengthen this program area. A model of team-based shared leadership has been created, but the focus on specific strategies rather than an overall vision of how the program will contribute to the future of Nebraska may be limiting.

Recommendations
Commend Leadership
A very clear and important strength of the Southeast District 4-HYD program is the leadership which is effectively focusing on the future steps necessary to sustain the program. Further, the entire team is seeking to align the priorities of 4-HYD with those of Cooperative Extension as a whole, and with those of the University. In addition, the staff is to be commended for the strong sense of community and investment demonstrated. They are also to be commended for the concerted effort to make the 4-HYD program successful through diligent attempts at planning.
Clarify Policy Goals in Support of Programming

Three themes emerged related to the confusion about the overall vision:

1) Need a clearer link between how the recognition model will support the mission of 4-H/4-HYD development, how incorporating such a model will enhance the experience and impact of the program;
2) Individual staff are all defining the impact of the 4-H program on youth over the next five years in different and unique ways leading to misunderstandings and a diversity of expectations for decision-making and planning;
3) Fully and intentionally consider the balance among delivery methods and the value they bring to the program (school enrichment, after school, clubs, camping and what level of resources should be invested in each).

It appears that administrative responsibilities have become blurred with program leadership within the 4-H Program. There is a need for clearer program leadership, including articulation of the role and responsibilities of the policies which will be implemented in support of the program rather than having policies determine program vision. The current lack of clear and unified vision makes it difficult to hold each other accountable or to mobilize efforts across the district towards a unified vision.

In addition to clarifying the vision and the policies which support it, the leadership needs to establish clear methods for communicating planning processes and decisions. Without such clarity, staff may believe all programmatic decisions are at their discretion, and may not feel accountable to the larger vision. In time, this lack of unity will impact the ability of the 4-H program to efficiently expend resources and address priorities. Clearer communication also helps build support for new structures. Without such communication, staff may resist changes they do not fully understand, such as already questioning the potential success of the new recognition model and how it will contribute to the shared purpose.

Role of 4-H Within the Institution

The leadership and staff within 4-H/4-HYD must find consistent ways to articulate the mission that connects 4-H to Cooperative Extension more broadly and the University even more clearly. 4-H/4-HYD needs to clearly articulate the body of knowledge unique to it, including its current potential applications for research, education and outreach. Second, 4-H/4-HYD needs to inform others on specifically what it does, how researchers can connect to youth development work, and how its work improves the lives of people where they live and work.

The Review Team also recommends using a focused program planning process to elicit clear youth development program priorities from Cooperative Extension and related colleges and departments. Build on the current team approach to create a program advisory structure with youth voices, stakeholders, and program partners to guide youth development extension and research.

1) Find a way to introduce 4-H to Nebraska Education Program (NEP) audience; this provides an opportunity to explore lots of different teaching/learning models. All programming to youth in this country that comes through Extension should be 4-H. Not only will it introduce a wealth of programming to people, it will make all of 4-H stronger. Starting with NEP clientele and making youth programs 4-H (numbers can be counted by both as long as you indicate that you
are doing so) NEP clientele get a view of Extension that is actually extended to other areas. Youth rarely need only one topic and by partnering with 4-H you will have a great way to interface urban and rural 4-H and you will be able to get more youth interested in UNL. When you first approach an NEP family, you very quickly realize that there is so much more need than just Nutrition. 4-H is your opportunity to broaden your reach and outcomes.

2) Find a way to introduce 4-H into NEP programs.
3) How are youth engaged in practices and decisions that cut across all program areas (water quality, mapping communities for tourism, etc.)?
4) Build a clearer data collection process for understanding impact on student recruitment (including asking applicants if they participated in 4-H programs).

Elucidate the Decision-making Processes
The decision-making processes and the rationale for decisions need to be made more transparent. It includes understanding how program priorities will be determined and how 4-HYD will be supported in the future. Provide youth input on all planning teams.

Articulate a Clear Identity for 4-HYD
Although there are significant examples of individual productivity among staff, there is a great need to strengthen the interactions and cohesiveness with the larger statewide program. Critical to building the morale and transforming the culture of the program is a need to articulate a clear identity for Southeast District 4-HYD in the future. This articulation would tie directly to a focused implementation plan.

4-H Youth Development
(Opportunities for Enhancing the Program)

Situation
It was apparent during the review process that there was significant confusion over how the state strategic plan could be taken forward within the district and its unique needs. Several staff members expressed concerns regarding what the overall state plan meant regarding their daily work and a few reported that the rationale for how they expended resources was often driven by the "squeaky wheel" rather than determined by a set of priorities and focused strategies. The Review Team also noted that staff struggled to relate decisions regarding their daily work to youth development principles, and were aware of the need to more closely tailor broader plans and principles to the unique needs of local programming.

Recommendations
Commend Focus on the Future
The highest priority of the Review Team was to help 4-HYD progress toward its goal of ensuring the quality and effectiveness of its programs. We commend the willingness of staff at all levels to be open to change and responsive to recommendations. The Review Team encourages further efforts in defining a tailored vision for the future of what the Southeast District 4-H Youth Development is and will be, and clear steps must be identified to foster the unique niche and implementation necessary to sustain it. In addition, the Review Team recommends that the
strategic vision be consistent with state and national efforts, including emphasis on the Essential Elements and shared outcomes, including:

Through 4-H Youth Development, youth will
- Practice effective problem-solving and decision-making skills.
- Possess positive work attitudes and skills.
- Value diversity.
- Accept community and social responsibility.
- Contribute to positive relationships with families, peers, and community members.
- Demonstrate communication and leadership skills.
- Value lifelong learning.

Facilitate Focused Strategic Planning
The 4-H YD Team has a sense of community and direction and is well-versed on the state strategic plan, but could benefit from articulating how broader plans and principles work at the local level. The 4-HYD staff needs to articulate a clearer vision for local efforts, goals, direction, focus, and/or desires for the future that go deeper than creating slogans or just gathering current activities under a collective umbrella.

In addition, the Review Team encouraged 4-HYD to explore what it means to be a Steward of the 4-H Youth Development Program, including:

- The promotion of positive youth development, facilitation of learning, and engaging youth in the work of the Land-Grant Universities and USDA to enhance their quality of life.
- Championing Youth Development principles and practices, and staying connected to the research base.
- Understanding the differences among activities, prevention efforts, education, and youth development.
- Holding ourselves collectively accountable for the quality of the 4-H Youth Development Program.

The Review Team encourages 4-HYD to create a focused implementation plan that would accomplish the following:
- Position Southeast District 4-HYD as a major player in youth development in the state.
- Articulate a clear vision for the program.
- Identify a focused, core program.
- Achieve measurable outcomes.
- Strengthen the link between 4-HYD and youth development research at the University.
- Mobilize University faculty and staff to the youth development opportunities in the Southeast District.
- Build an inclusive program that represents the diversity across the district.

Examine current and proposed program directions and activities in relation to vision, mission, and values. Ground the program plans and resource allocation decisions on that examination.
Establish 4-H Youth Development diversity goals and plans. Regularly review accomplishments and revise plans as needed. Diversity issues need to be addressed more fully by considering ways the program may need to change to meet the needs of diverse youth and their families.

**Focus on Youth Development Principles**

The Review Team recommends that as part of the focused planning process, the 4-HYD program become more intentional about basing programming in youth development principles, rather than the continuation of activities based primarily on their traditional inclusion in program efforts. In addition, the program should focus on designing programs and priorities around research-based youth development practices. While the Southeast District 4-HYD is in the process of re-examining its programs, the Review Team recommends that it consider building programs around best practices as outlined in the national Programs of Distinction or assess current programs which are providing the impact desired to use as models for broader applications. Develop a plan to involve youth in program planning and policy determination at all levels of 4-HYD-local, county, state, regional, and national.

Define a variety of roles for youth involvement in determining their individual learning goals and methods.

Develop a youth involvement/leadership curriculum that identifies a progressive path for participation.

Conduct staff development programs for campus-based staff, county-based staff, and volunteers to strengthen their commitment to and skills in supporting youth involvement.

Model youth involvement by including youth members on relevant programming or planning groups.

**Streamline the Program Curriculum**

Along with articulating a strategic plan and focus, there may be additional opportunities to streamline the 4-HYD program around fewer priorities, rather than attempting to provide support for such a wide range of program offerings. Identifying a focused, core program and articulating standards and quality measures could significantly impact the ability of staff to improve the future quality of the program. Opportunities may also exist for eliminating some activities which may no longer be as relevant or don't support programmatic goals or the 4-HYD mission. Curriculum and methods should be consistent with the 4-H Youth Development vision, mission, and values and focus on current core program themes. In addition, Southeast District 4-HYD could establish standards for curriculum, including quality of content; how youth will be involved in making choices and establishing learning goals; delivery methods; procedures for development, testing, and selection; and methods for measuring outcomes, including:

- Curricula prepare youth for the future (i.e., success in education, life as adults capable of caring for others, employment, citizenship).
- Curriculum and delivery standards are established, accepted, and consistently used.
- Curriculum materials and delivery methods meet the needs of diverse youth and volunteers.
Create an efficient process to identify, review, and recommend curricula and methods from all sources in relation to standards and core curricula. Attend to the special needs of youth and volunteers.

Use research and professional experience to identify high-impact delivery methods. Make greater use of identified methods. Examine existing research and apply it to curriculum development. Encourage new research to achieve youth development goals.

**Improve Cohesiveness Within Program Staff**

The Southeast District 4-HYD program could benefit from strengthened connections between specialists and educators, particularly in the development of new and innovative curriculum that tie to the current needs and interests of today's youth.

Establish and implement a coordinated program development process that values, acknowledges, and effectively uses the unique contributions of campus and county staff in youth development programming. Allocate resources, human and fiscal, to flagship programs and to those departments that have clearly identified roles in 4-H Youth Development.

Along with the cohesiveness that a shared vision and agreement about best practices can provide, the Review Team encourages attention to frameworks to provide guidance around policy issues and other mandates. These frameworks could help articulate shared expectations for reporting, accountability, program delivery, or diversity goals. The result could help foster a more cohesive staff if there is less confusion and staff feels less vulnerable in taking action because expectations are clearer.

The Review Team also recommends capitalizing on opportunities to bring staff together and address the broader issues of vision and mission or professional development related to youth development to engage staff, rather than focusing meetings on details that may not be pertinent to all participants.

**Create an Intellectual Community to Support Youth Development Work**

It appears that there are currently no methods employed by which to explore, debate, and inform the scholarship of youth development among faculty and staff. The Review Team recommends that 4-HYD consider strategic linkages with departments which would further their shared goals in research, education and outreach. Priority should be given to discussions that will lead to the identification of core, shared concepts. The result might be the development of signature areas for the 4-HYD program and departments, with the departments providing the intellectual capital for program and policy decisions. Identification of signature areas should then have an impact on decisions related to new hires, programmatic decisions, where to focus requests for funding, and where to deploy outreach resources.
Facilitate Effective and Consistent Program Evaluation

Develop a clear plan for evaluating efforts tied to relevant objectives either related to the content of youth development work, or the context of youth development work (content/context, see appendix).

Develop a district wide plan to evaluate high priority impact areas. The Review Team recommends working with other state specialists and national partners to adapt current evaluation tools and techniques for use in this district.

Ensure compliance and participation with National standards related to Name & Emblem Authorization Processes, Programs of Distinction Database, Jury Reviewed Curriculum Database, and other systems to both increase visibility of Southeast district 4-HYD and provide opportunities for ongoing review of program quality.

4-H Youth Development
(Opportunities for Enhancing Professional Development for Faculty, Staff and Volunteers)

Situation
The staff and faculty working with the Southeast District 4-H Youth Development Program are clearly a passionate, creative staff deeply committed to their work. They possess integrity about the program and genuinely desire improvement. In addition to focusing on an implementation plan, the 4-H Youth Development Program should continue and strengthen their coherent staff orientation plan and process focused on 4-H Youth Development.

Recommendations
Strengthen Coherent Staff Orientation and Professional Development Plan
The Review Team recommends that 4-HYD provide consistent and ongoing staff development and support particularly around the nationally revised 4-H PRK-C model (4-H Professional Research and Knowledge Taxonomy). In addition, 4-HYD could continue to benefit from connecting with national and regional efforts related to staff orientation and professional development through the Professional Development Task Force, NAE4-HA and other targeted efforts.

Foster systems that will ensure that 4-H Youth Development staff will have the professional youth development competencies required to lead quality programs, including:

- Identify entry-level competencies for 4-H Youth Development staff.
- Develop position description prototypes that reflect the unique requirements of 4-H Youth Development work.
- Establish proactive recruitment and retention plans to achieve a diverse and productive workforce.
- Define roles. Align requirements, expectations, and performance outcomes. Use program impact and management data in making staffing decisions.
- Design and implement a 4-H Youth Development professional development program
• Require all 4-H Youth Development staff to demonstrate mastery of entry-level competencies. Provide professional development opportunities in support of this standard.
• Provide opportunities for advancement through youth development specialization.
• Award youth development credentials for entry-level and specialization achievement.
• Establish introductory and universal training for paid and volunteer staff to achieve safe learning environments for all youth participants.
• Assure that all 4-H Youth Development staff engage in continuing professional development.
• Design and implement a staff recognition program for excellence in 4-H Youth Development work, including encouraging staff to submit programs for the national Programs of Distinction.

Enhance Communication at All Levels
To ensure that trust and morale among staff are sustained, the Review Team encourages improved communication at all levels within the 4-HYD program. It appears that both the frequency of communication and the quality of communication could be enhanced. Policies and procedures need to be open and understood by all, including the methods for establishing them. Attention also needs to be given to improving communication within Cooperative Extension, and especially between Extension Educators and subject matter Specialists. 4-HYD could strengthen communication between county and campus-based staff using a variety of planned, system-wide strategies.

Better communication should improve understanding and respect for the uniqueness of the 4-H YD program and could potentially lead to beneficial collaborations. Several ways of improving communication might be considered such as the appointment of official liaisons, presentations to faculty and other groups, inclusion on listservs, and so forth.

A coordinated plan for external communications is needed as well, and the Review Team commends 4-HYD for beginning to think about how to craft messages and communicate effectively with stakeholders, potential funders, and citizens. Many of the marketing pieces and uses of technology are creative and help connect youth to their areas of interest. It is important that as communication efforts proceed, they remain consistent with the identification of a vision and priorities.

Consistent Application of Volunteer Management Policies, Practices and Development
While the Review Team saw ample evidence of a large number of dedicated volunteers supporting the 4-HYD program, we also heard frustration on the part of staff to more fully engage volunteers in moving the program forward. The Review Team commends Southeast District 4-HYD for their commitment to Volunteer Development and encourages continuation.

It is critical that training and support include:
• Volunteers know their responsibilities and the connection between their role and the overall Cooperative Extension system.
• Volunteers are as diverse as the population of the state.
Youth fill a variety of volunteer roles.
Volunteers feel valued and respected by staff and administration.
4-H Youth Development staff working with volunteers understands and applies volunteer management skills, as outlined in the 4-H professional research and knowledge (PRKC) taxonomy.

Provide system-wide leadership for volunteerism in 4-H Youth Development and volunteers in other programs.

Establish and consistently utilize a district-wide process for recruiting, screening, selecting, and supervising volunteers that ensures safe, protective environments for youth and adults.

Develop a district wide generic volunteer orientation program that can be localized for specific programs. This mandatory training for volunteers who work with youth will include information on achievement of safe learning environments and the Essential Elements of 4-H for all youth and adult participants.

Continue to explore and pilot the use of a variety of delivery methods for volunteer training programs (e.g., meetings, video, distance learning, World Wide Web, self-study packets, state newsletter).

Provide staff with adequate training and resources, including legal expertise, for managing volunteer systems. Include extension administrators in training programs that support their volunteer management roles.
OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

General Recommendations

1. There is a need for significant improvement of communication at all levels, i.e. District Director and Department Heads, Educators and Specialists/scientists and Educators and Educators. These should be designed in a more structured and formal way. Some of these might be handled by small group meetings between Educators/Specialists or Educators/Educators at ARDC, the campus or at Clay Center.

   a. The existing model is not providing an adequate research base and extension direction for the Southeast Research and Extension Center. A new model needs to include a combination involving both resources and personnel evaluation, where both the department head and district director have authority and leverage. This model should also have the flexibility to address high priority and emerging issues in a timely response.

   b. We believe attention is being given to significant issues but too little emphasis is being placed on emerging issues and trends, in part because of lack of formal relationships between educators and specialists.

2. We endorse and support the idea of issue-identified teams but urge that they be more interactive and collaborative across the teams.

3. Because of the importance of water in the district, we recommend a district-wide plan be developed on water issues across program areas.

4. We support the idea of having focused Extension educators serving multiple counties, and for this to be effective there must be adequate funds available for travel across county lines.

5. Since no new positions are likely to be available, and with priorities changing rapidly, a plan should be developed for meeting priorities and more effective reallocating of resources. The Team understands that some policies are now in place in this regard.

6. There is good support from stakeholders and affiliated organizations, and these partners should be called upon for support and assistance with marketing and advocacy.

7. Continue vigorous pursuit of minorities to become members of faculty, staff, advisory boards and other groups supporting Extension. This may require innovative and flexible systems for recruitment, training, and retention.

8. We support the position that all faculty and staff should be involved in student recruitment, and the 4-H Youth Development programs.
9. There is a need to recruit new stakeholders in the urban initiative, who have not traditionally provided input or direction for Extension programs but who can help identify significant urban issues.

10. The number of cooperators, collaborators and partnerships throughout the District is excellent. This is a good way to extend the reach of Extension through others. In all of these cooperative endeavors, Extension should always be recognized as one of the cooperating partners.

11. Issues from the previous report that have not been completed should be reviewed and further evaluated for timely application.
APPENDIX A

Essential Elements of Youth Development Programs

(See powerpoint slides attached.)
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2006 Five Year Issue Based Review

Response to Outside Review Team

May 2007
We wish to thank the Review Team for their time and efforts related to the Southeast Research and Extension Center’s Five Year Review. We found the exchange of ideas that took place during the team’s visit to be very beneficial in helping us move our organization forward. It is difficult to capture all of our new ideas in this response as the ideas continue to evolve as we work together.

We also wish to thank Dean Dickey and Dean Cunningham for their support during the review process. We hope to continue to work with them on implementing our strategic plan. The success of our efforts will also depend on continued partnership with IANR departments especially in the areas defined as research needed for southeast Nebraska. We hope these department partnerships grow as a result of this process.

This report contains responses to the overall recommendations followed by the responses for each of the issue based teams. The teams that worked on Engaging our Clientele continue to meet and implement ideas developed in the document. Goals and accomplishments from both the Issue teams and the Engagement teams will be part of our Annual Unit Accomplishment Report each year until the next review.

Response to the Overall Recommendations

1. Communication at all levels. Several plans are now in place to improve communication at all levels.

District Director/Department Heads This January, three IANR planning sessions opened the door to dialogue with department heads about common program goals and future efforts. The District Director participated in all of these sessions. In addition to these meetings, the new Gallup effort to have a networking time prior to the Vice Chancellor’s meeting will allow the District Director and department heads to stay connected on projects. The District Director Group also plans to meet with one department head each month to discuss ways we can partner on program efforts.

Educator and Specialists communication: Each year SREC will host a research update at the ARDC and/or at SCAL. We will work with educators and specialists to plan a program where current research and emerging issues are discussed. In addition to the research updates, SREC has two educators who serve on the advisory council for the Department of Agronomy/Horticulture, one educator on the ARDC citizen advisory board and one educator on the South Central Ag Lab advisory board. Our affiliate program with Animal Science keeps educators connected to the research and issues of the department. The SREC Director has recently discussed a stronger relationship with Ag Economics providing in-service training and time to work together on programs. Our relationship with Biological Systems Engineering continues to be very strong. SREC has one educator with a courtesy appointment in BSE. SREC also has one educator with a courtesy appointment to the School of Natural Resources and one educator with a courtesy appointment in the department of AgLEC. SREC will continue networking with new specialists. As new specialists join departments we will continue to invite them to programs. SREC issue team faculty invite specialists to our District meeting and planning sessions on a regular basis.

1a. Research Model We concur with the team and look to the Deans for guidance. We will entertain any suggestions to move forward to meet this goal.

1b. Emerging Issues In addition to the educators’ and specialists’ research updates at the ARDC and SCAL, SREC will begin a visioning project with educators and specialists. Through a series of programs, readings, tours and guest lectures we hope to increase our ability to vision and identify emerging trends.

2. Collaboration Between Teams We will be using our time together at Fall and Spring Conferences to
find ways to collaborate across the teams. Water and Value Added Agriculture efforts are areas where the Ag work group, CRD work group, CRE work group and the Health and Wellness group can network to complete educational programs.

3. **Water** Specific indicators and outcomes related to water are identified in several sections of the report. For the Annual Unit Planning document these outcomes will be pulled together for a single plan. We will also pull together faculty and staff around some key issues such as abandon wells, toxic algae and domestic water and irrigation efforts.

4. **Focused Educator Travel** Educators are encouraged to charge program fees to cover the cost of travel. Teams are encouraged to develop business plans for program efforts to study cost effectiveness.

5. **Focused Educator Reallocating Resources** IANR priorities and Extension emerging issues are always factored into new position requests (water, value added agriculture and livestock are examples of priority areas that are identified and have been requested).

6. **Stakeholders** Stakeholders and affiliated organizations will be called upon for support and assistance with marketing and advocacy. We will continue to use our extension board update sessions and VIP Day Events to market and advocate for Extension.

7. **Diversity** We will continue vigorous pursuit of minorities as faculty, staff and advisory board members.

8. **Student Recruitment** We will continue our strong student recruitment efforts.

9. **Urban Stakeholders** Extension staff in urban areas will continue to add new stakeholders to support urban programs. We will continue to use the Umbrella concept in marketing in the urban area.

10. **Partners** Extension staff will continue to partner with others and be recognized.

11. **Previous Report** A summary of the issues from the previous report recommendations not accomplished can be found in Section 6a Progress on Goals from the 2000 Review. We will direct extension staff to Section 6a for further review. A few items that had not been addressed are now part of the 2006 review document goals (such as value added agriculture and parenting and livestock) others are no longer emerging issues.

**Food Production and Natural Resource Systems**

**Response to the Recommendations**

**General Recommendations**

FP & NRS program areas should jointly develop umbrella priorities and indicators of success for some issues. Technology and web based resources are needed for improving clientele awareness and educator sharing.

**Response**

The FP & NRS program area teams will explore commonalities among their respective programs and issues. Umbrella priorities will be considered that identify common success indicators. Existing and emerging technologies (i.e. Webinars, podcasting, etc.) will be used to improve clientele access to Extension education opportunities. Teams will develop electronic resources that foster enhanced communication and sharing among Extension professionals. Southeast District Extension professionals...
will make a concerted effort to enhance and promote awareness of program subject matter expertise within the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Extension Division and among Extension clientele.

Risk Management & Production Management Recommendations
Evaluate the need for programs addressing emerging issues.

The Risk Management and Livestock Issues teams should partner on an educational initiative demonstrating economically and environmentally sustainable models for small and medium size animal agricultural systems.

Response
In the future, Southeast District Educators will evaluate the need for educational programs that address both emerging and non-economic issues. Web-based information and education resources will continue to be developed that address both emerging and non-economic issues by strengthening current relationships and developing new relationships with university faculty. The Risk Management and Livestock Issues teams will look to develop a partnership in order to explore the development of an educational initiative demonstrating economically and environmentally sustainable models for small and medium size animal agricultural systems.

Diversified Agriculture Recommendations
Partner with other University Departments.

Development of Web based information systems to deliver information and educational programs. There are many opportunities to incorporate other Extension program areas into this program area.

Response
Southeast District Educators will continue to identify and encompass a wide variety of resources including other UNL resources, other Land Grant Universities, Federal programs such as SARE and AFSC as well as resources outside of the University including such organizations as the Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society that serve the emerging needs of diversified agriculturists.

Web-based information and education resources will be developed that address diversified agricultural issues. The goal will be to provide information to the consumer at his or her convenience. These will include the use of pod casting, Breeze technology, archiving of programs, and others; however, the traditional informational program will continue to be one of many methods used in providing information to diversified agriculturists.

Diversified agriculture educators will explore partnerships with other Extension program teams to develop a comprehensive educational program for this growing and maturing audience.

Irrigated Agriculture Recommendations
Extension needs to lead the educational efforts on water issues in the state. Some issues need to be placed more in a management mode and more emphasis in the District placed on the emerging water issues. Educators working in this area need to have professional development opportunities to attend national meetings and workshops to help identify emerging issues.

Response
The importance of irrigated agriculture and water use issues in Nebraska is well documented and efforts to conduct educational programs based on the latest research will be made. Efforts to team up with the UNL Water Center and other appropriate departments will be made.
Educators will be encouraged to look for professional development opportunities and attend national meetings and workshops to help identify emerging issues.

Plans are being made to form a District wide Water Task force or team.

Livestock Agriculture Recommendations
Livestock issues will require a re-direction of educator effort. The Risk Management and Livestock Issues teams should partner on an educational initiative demonstrating economically and environmentally sustainable models for small and medium size animal agricultural systems.

Educational programs targeting environmental issues specific to existing small, unregulated livestock systems should be delivered within the District.

Response
The livestock environment has changed significantly since the Southeast District Review commenced. For example, animal identification has changed from mandatory to voluntary status and is subject to more changes, so has lost its degree of importance to attention and educational efforts. The dramatic increase in the price of corn and emphasis on ethanol has rapidly changed the landscape for livestock production in Nebraska. Risk management becomes a more important program focus. Environmental and zoning are priority issues related to the expansion and emphasis on corn based ethanol.

The committee agrees that there will need to be re-direction of educator effort and an investment in educator in-service if educational programs are to address these issues across the District. A Nebraska Livestock Model based on the Nebraska Pork Model could be a result of those collaborations. We need to address and deliver issues specific to existing small, unregulated livestock systems. This will also require a cooperative effort with the animal science and biological systems departments, other issue teams (i.e. CRD)and other partners, including: livestock organizations, economic development groups and financial institutions.

The SREC Livestock Issues Committee is very cognizant of the need for a concerted effort to address those issues that impact our livestock industry. It agrees with the analysis that partnerships need to be established to insure an economically viable and environmentally compliant livestock system. Efforts must be made to show the value that livestock contributes to the local economy and well being of communities and that they can be environmentally friendly.

Building Strong Families Responses to the Recommendations

1. Alternative Funding Methods - The Building Strong Families group has discussed the need for securing community grants & creative programming grants. A recommendation will be forwarded to the state action team to pursue grant funding at a statewide level for larger projects. Some programs are, and will continue to be, fee-based; additional fee-based programs will be offered. Local scholarships & donations to support attendance by those in need of assistance will be sought.

2. Fifty - Sixty-five Age Programming - The newly formed Extension Statewide Aging Issues Team is focusing on middle to late forties through the age of sixty-five with information sound bites that will be distributed to the media in a variety of ways. A needs assessment of this age group will identify the topics to be included in the media messages. Our District is participating in the planning and activities of this team. We will continue to monitor and go forward with current plans, including a grandparenting series scheduled to take place later this year, the caretaker (2007) and long term care insurance (2008) community lessons, Pay Down Debt & financial health over-the-lifetime programming.
3. **Evaluation Specialist** - We need to identify a staff member who can coordinate evaluation of major statewide Building Strong Families programs, collect impact data and develop a popular report annually that will be used by the state action team, rather than an annual piece that is District-specific. Stakeholders already providing funding, in some situations, have required impact data to be shared on a regular basis. We plan to identify additional stakeholders in this District to receive our impact data. We also plan to include additional evaluation training as part of ongoing professional improvement.

4. **Health and Human Services Collaboration** - Nebraska Health and Human Service is service-oriented compared to University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension being education-oriented. We feel the Building Strong Families action team can best meet their needs by identifying specific areas where we can market programs for HHS staff and offer training at a broader level. We will continue to provide them with marketing materials for programs that might interest both their staff and clientele. We currently offer foster parents the opportunity to attend child care training and family night activities.

5. **Expand Collaboration** - Encourage all Building Strong Families team members to get to know the Extension support staff in counties they serve so that support staff feel more comfortable working with staff outside their county. Make sure that adequate marketing is done regarding programs and technology opportunities for learning in counties where a Building Strong Families staff member is not located. Request a presentation time slot at the fall conference (Front Door Forum) for support staff to help them understand how important their role is regarding programming generated outside their county. Make a concerted effort to connect more closely with the faith community by identifying and opening communication lines with District-wide representatives from the faith-based community, and find ways to collaborate.

6. **Request Technology Equipment and Training** - We must identify technology needs in the families area. Technology needs identification will also be addressed statewide at an upcoming professional development meeting. We will continue to assess and address educator technology in-service needs to keep us at a level where we have the skills and knowledge necessary to deliver educational programs in all areas of the District, especially those areas without the physical presence of an FCS Educator.

7. **Building Nebraska Families curriculum** - The Building Strong Family team’s use of the BNF curriculum is one example of how collaboration will be expanded. We will be meeting with secondary teachers in June 2007, to share information about resources available to them, including this curriculum. Additional train-the-trainer programs will be developed for audiences such as the faith community, family nights, HeadStart parent groups, community action agencies and others.

**Nutrition, Health and Wellness Response to the Recommendations**

1. **Farmers Market nutrition** - tie to diversified farming - get more dollars to vegetable farmers - communicate across teams: The Farmers Market Nutrition Program and the Seniors Farmers' Market Program provide Farmers Market food vouchers for low or limited income people in Nebraska. Although not specifically noted during the review process, Farmers Market Food Safety programs have been given in the District on an individual, as requested basis for consumer and senior center organizations. We will recommend developing a community lesson on Farmer’s Market nutrition and food safety, utilizing previously developed programming distributed through a District Internet presence.

2. **Overweight & obesity** - work to find tools to measure changes with many different discipline areas on campus - applied research and connect all the dots of physical activity with wellness, health, and obesity prevention: We will continue to communicate with specialists about their efforts in obtaining outside resource funding for research and programming efforts in the area of wellness, health and obesity prevention. Working in partnership with state specialists, we will pursue local resources to support...
campus research in this area. Educators across the District have been involved in school wellness plans with the Educational Service Units (ESU) and were a visible partner with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services in recent ESU meetings across the state. Many schools were already an educational partner and others were quite interested in learning what educational programs and resources Extension had to offer in SREC.

3. **Find ways to develop minority extension staff** - use innovative staffing patterns: Information regarding the SREC proposed diversity staffing plan can be found under the *Engaging Our Clientele* section of the District review document.

4. **Get credit for food safety programs with public health** - work with livestock staff and spend energy on raising the bar of programs to continuing education credits, credentialing credits, and even to classroom credits and use for student recruitment: We will continue to offer food safety programming certification for anyone who serves food to others. We currently offer continuing education for those requesting it. It is not possible to offer ServSafe or Employee ServSafe on the Internet, as they are copyrighted. We already offer food safety programming online for day care providers and others. We will continue to work with food science and nutrition specialists to meet the needs of our clientele. We will continue to offer food safety classes to high school students (Pro-Start) and work with 4-H and school enrichment (when the subject matter is aligned with state school curriculum standards) in the area of food safety and handwashing to prevent the spread of food-borne illness.

5. **Be open to very different partnerships for solving health issues and look to foundations for funding in combination with other teams** Extension is always looking for new partners in our local, district and state communities. We strive to add our own unique spin on health education to avoid duplicating the services of other agencies. We will continue to work with partners to pursue larger outside grants. This will allow for further educational programming that we may not be able to obtain on our own.

6. **Stretch yourselves to find ways to weave technology into other venues**: We will continue to develop and expand our technology-based programming to meet the needs of our clientele based on stakeholder input (consumers to teachers to health professionals). As their needs vary, so will our educational approaches. As demands for current, research-based education has increased, Extension in SREC has seen an increase in educational needs of professionals in the area of health and nutrition. We are sought out as the "experts" in the subject and contacted to "train the trainer" for a variety of professions.

7. **Use outside data sources to enhance and strengthen outcome reports** We will continue to pursue opportunities to present our programming efforts and outcome data at local, state and national conferences. UNL Extension Educators will continue to utilize the Extension Accomplishment Report System (EARS) which is accessible to the public as another avenue to share efforts. UNL Extension will continue to lead the statewide effort to coordinate our State Nutrition Action Plan that aligns all FNS funded programs and other state programs to work towards increasing fruit and vegetable consumption.

8. **Opportunities for Nutrition, Health and Wellness to interact with other program areas** (share technology with other teams): Breeze presentations and Web based downloadable programs will continue to be used as a way to reach others to combine resources as we work across program areas. Several nutrition topics in the areas of Building Strong Families have been a part of their website resources and new ones will continue to be linked as they are developed. Working with the Food Production and Natural Resources Team in the area of safe foods, healthy food products and farmers markets will also continue to be shared. We will pursue training in new areas of technology as the training and infrastructure becomes available to Extension and in turn will share what we have developed with other teams.

**Community & Residential Environment Response to the Recommendations**

1. CRE staff will develop a set of common evaluation questions and indicators of success to measure and demonstrate more cohesiveness among the programs, document outcomes and more clearly communicate the impact of a diverse set of programs with CRE.

Response to Outside Review Team  
Southeast Research & Extension Center
2. CRE staff will explore avenues for collecting input from 4-H and other youth organizations. Youth will be engaged through activities such as 4-H camp, school enrichment activities, water festivals, Bug Bash, and 4-H youth representatives in leadership positions.

3. We appreciate the Review team’s recognition of the CRE staff’s current programming efforts in water conservation and water quality, and staff will continue to give these areas high priority in the future. Many existing water conservation and water quality programming efforts will continue. In addition, new programming efforts currently underway include an acreage owner seminar with a water focus being delivered by SREC and NEREC faculty, a landscape water conservation demonstration project being presented in cooperation with Omaha Metropolitan Utilities District, a home water conservation community lesson being developed with a TCD Specialist, and home and landscape water conservation NebGuides being written in cooperation with appropriate specialists and faculty from the National Drought Mitigation Center.

4. We recognize that energy conservation is an important issue. In response, the state CRE team formed a work group to evaluate community and residential energy needs and develop future programming. SREC faculty will participate in this team effort. In addition, SREC faculty will be involved with the newly formed Ethanol Action Team.

5. The CRE team will seek opportunities for the communication of needs, current programming content and successful teaching methods regarding water issues to the food production, community resource development, 4-H youth development and other teams. We will share with them our indicators of success so that we can collectively report programming impact.

Community Resource Development Response to the Recommendations

1. Expand youth involvement – Youth will build and enhance leadership and decision-making skills as they participate in and help facilitate community visioning, Inter-generational Dialogues, Leadership Plenty classes, Home Town Competitiveness, EYSC (Engaging Youth Serving Communities) and other community and neighborhood experiences.

2. Expand Entrepreneurship Opportunities – Extension staff will bridge the gap between a number of CRD and Diversified Agriculture programs to advance economic development through value-added agriculture, alternative agriculture, agri-tourism, and entrepreneurship. Collaborative programming through the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension, including UNL’s Kimmel Education and Research Center, Center for Applied Rural Innovation (CARI), Home Town Competitiveness, 4-H Department and others will target both youth and adults. Youth will evaluate Nebraska entrepreneurial career opportunities during participation in the community based 4-H Entrepreneurship Investigation (ESI) curriculum and Cyber Fair activities (Nebraska State Fair).

3. Offer partnerships to other teams in creating appropriate relationships with other colleges -- The CRD team has a strong collaborative relationships with UNL’s Center of Applied Rural Innovation (CARI), College of Architecture, College of Education and Human Sciences, Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education & Communication, Department of Agricultural Economics, Food Processing Center, and with College of Public Affairs and Community Service on the UNO campus. As programming continues to evolve, CRD team members welcome the opportunity to collaborate with others to strengthen educational opportunities for Nebraska citizens.

4. Find ways to include all Southeast District counties in the CRD programs so each community member has the opportunity to increase their capacities, thus strengthening the community.
Members of the CRD team continually develop strong programming with community and regional partnerships and collaboration based on community, region and organizational programming needs. CRD team members are willing to travel throughout the District and state to offer train-the-trainer education for staff and community organization members. To extend CRD programming reach, technology such as satellite, Polycom, Breeze, podcasts, TV, radio as well as print, reach clientele at the time they prefer to seek and gain information or to reinforce concepts taught. Individual skills and community capacity increases as learners participate in leadership development programs, and community/neighborhood visioning and planning activities.

The use of specific technology through the use of the BIT Mobile and other mobile computer labs increase Information Technology skills for farmers, entrepreneurs, small businesses, public officials, and agencies focused on tourism throughout the District.

5. **Consider additional partnerships.** – Additional collaboration and partnerships will help expand Extension programming reach within and beyond District lines. Active collaboration with Nebraska Indian Community College (NICC) is formalized by a USDA/CSREES Tribal College Extension Services grant. CRD staff are currently working with the Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) to develop a leadership curriculum for public officials. This effort will possibly include UNO College of Public Affairs and Community Service and the University of Nebraska-Kearney. To reduce duplication of efforts, collaborate with Neighborhood Center for Greater Omaha, the Douglas and Sarpy County Health Departments and a number of others to meet needs of urban clientele. Other partner entities include but are not limited to: Home Town Competitiveness, Southeast Resource Network, the Rural Enterprise Assistance Project (REAP), the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, the Nebraska Telecommunications Association (NTA), Network Nebraska, Nebraska Information Technology Committee, Nebraska Secretary of State, Technologies Across Nebraska, Community Colleges, Nebraska Educational Technology Association, USDA, 4-H, and local and District economic and leadership development contacts.

### 4-H Youth Development Response to the Recommendations

1. **Need a clearer link between how the recognition model will support the mission of 4-H Youth Development, the “so, what?”**

   **Response:** A proposed change to the logic model for the Nebraska Diamond Clover program includes a number of life skills that 4-Hers will develop when using the new recognition program. The life skills that 4-Hers will develop include: planning and organizing, goal setting, keeping records, communication, social skills, community service volunteering, leadership, responsible citizenship, self motivation, and self esteem. The 4-Hers life skill development will take place in the intermediate and long term outcome and impact. Goals for the new recognition program is to recruit and retain 4-Hers in the program as they get older and more involved in additional activities.

2. **A focused implementation plan to take the state strategic plan forward within the context of the unique need of this region.**

   **Response:** The new strategic 4-H plan has been well received by 4-H staff throughout the District. The four outcome areas identified were: Healthy Lifestyles, Science, Engineering and Technology, Life Skill Development and Career Development. Work groups have formed around the eight curriculum areas identified in the strategic plan and have started to form partnerships with other action teams in the District and across the state. Extension staff involved in 4-H programming identified curriculum area work groups they would like to be involved in. The work groups are developing 4-H curriculum and educational activities to help 4-Hers experience and learn the eight critical elements identified for the 4-H program.
3. Strengthen connections between specialists and educators, particularly in development of new and innovative curriculum that ties to the current needs/interests of today’s youth.

Response: The 4-H Curriculum Committee works to select new 4-H project material, revise outdated material and review technology components in 4-H projects. The committee is made up of Extension staff, specialists and youth that work with curriculum for the 4-H program. When a need is identified for new or revised curriculum a team of specialists, educators and writers are identified and guidelines are developed for the curriculum. Other action teams may be contacted to see if there is interest in participating in the 4-H curriculum development process. The healthy lifestyles action team and NEP staff will develop common indicators that can be used in programming related to their common educational efforts. A continued effort will be made to facilitate interaction between 4-H extension staff and specialists in the various departments at UNL. In-service trainings will be designed to allow more interaction between 4-H staff and specialists in various departments that conduct research related to Youth Development.

4. Develop a clear plan for evaluating efforts tied to relevant objectives either related to the content of youth development work, or the context of youth development work (content/context).

Response: The State 4-H Youth Development Action Team is developing outcome indicators to measure the impact of the 4-H program as it relates to the goals for the program. A series of questions has been submitted to IRB so results can be used to publish outcome and impact for the 4-H program.

5. Engage youth in practices and decisions that cut across all program areas (water quality, mapping communities for tourism, etc.).

Response: All counties include or will include youth on their 4-H Councils to make sure they have input at the local level for 4-H programming. Two new state youth advisory groups are being formed to provide an opportunity for them to provide input into the State 4-H program. The Youth Curriculum Committee and Youth Multimedia Team are being formed so they have a chance to provide their ideas for the curriculum development process and participation in various technology education and development activities. Youth and adult partnerships will continue to be an important part of the 4-H youth development effort.

6. Build a clearer data collection process for understanding impact on student recruitment (including asking applicants if they were in 4-H).

Response: Efforts are being made to include the question “Were you a 4-H member?” on the application forms for the University of Nebraska. The student recruitment work group will continue this effort in the future. 4-H staff will have the opportunity to add names to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln student recruiting database program.

7. Fully and intentionally consider the balance among delivery methods and what value they bring to the program.

Response: Each county does a needs assessment to determine the best opportunity for them to deliver the 4-H program to their respective communities. Resources, personnel, school system structure and partnerships are all included in the evaluations.

8. Diversity issues need to be addressed more fully by considering ways the program may need to change to meet the needs of diverse youth.
Response: Efforts are continually being studied to identify the best avenue to deliver the 4-H program to a diverse audience including urban vs. rural, ethnically diverse audiences and male vs. female participants. Delivery methods, local populations and geographic locations are additional factors that are considered.

9. Provide youth input on all planning teams.

Response: Youth input is always valued and every effort is made to include youth on planning teams for various 4-H programming.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve communications at all levels.</td>
<td>District Director meets with Department Heads to discuss unit goals.</td>
<td>January 2007</td>
<td>On going monthly meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SREC hosts research updates with SCAL and ARDC</td>
<td>Summer 2007 SCAL</td>
<td>Rotate programs each summer.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work with specialists to plan programs on current research and emerging issues.</td>
<td>Water Inservice June 2007</td>
<td>On going as others identified</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Continue to serve on department advisory boards and have courtesy appointments.</td>
<td>On going</td>
<td>On going</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work with new specialists and invite specialists to planning meetings</td>
<td>On going</td>
<td>On going</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work with technology committee and advisory committee on electronic sharing.</td>
<td>Spring 2008</td>
<td>On going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide regional educator/assistant meetings to discuss program sharing and improve communications between staff and with the Director.</td>
<td>Spring 2008</td>
<td>Each Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Model</td>
<td>Will look to the Deans for guidance</td>
<td>Unit planning &amp; special meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognize Emerging Issues</td>
<td>Begin visioning discussions with educators and specialists (multi-discipline) studying emerging trends.</td>
<td>Spring 2008</td>
<td>On going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration Between Teams</td>
<td>Time at spring and fall conference will be spent discussing collaboration on issues identified by the team.</td>
<td>Spring and Fall Conference</td>
<td>At least twice a year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Outcomes related to water will be pulled together for each annual unit plan. First water inservice planned</td>
<td>January 2007</td>
<td>Water team meets as needed.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>June 2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Focused Educator</td>
<td>We will continue to build travel expenses into programming.</td>
<td>On going</td>
<td>On going</td>
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<td></td>
<td>We will continue to consider IANR priorities when requesting position.</td>
<td>On going</td>
<td>On going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders and Partners</td>
<td>We will continue to involve stakeholders in our work. Including VIP Days and Board updates</td>
<td>On going</td>
<td>On going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Recruitment</td>
<td>Leadership committee will meet regularly to implement plans.</td>
<td>Summer 2007</td>
<td>On going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>Leadership committee will meet regularly to implement plans.</td>
<td>Spring 2007</td>
<td>On going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Committee</td>
<td>Leadership has identified first inservice training date and program.</td>
<td>Late Summer 2007</td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Group Plan Implementations</td>
<td>Refine indicators identified in the logic models, of unit plan aligning them with IANR plan.</td>
<td>Each district conference</td>
<td>Complete 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop ways to report across the indicators.</td>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
<td>Complete 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide opportunities to change plans as issues emerge.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>On going</td>
</tr>
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Response to Outside Review Team

May 2007
We wish to thank the Review Team for their time and efforts related to the Southeast Research and Extension Center’s Five Year Review. We found the exchange of ideas that took place during the team’s visit to be very beneficial in helping us move our organization forward. It is difficult to capture all of our new ideas in this response as they continue to evolve as we work together.

We also wish to thank Dean Dickey and Dean Cunningham for their support during the review process. We hope to continue to work with them on implementing our strategic plan. The success of our efforts will also depend on continued partnership with IANR departments especially in the areas defined as research needed for southeast Nebraska. We hope these department partnerships grow as a result of this process.

This report contains responses to the overall recommendations followed by the responses for each of the issue based teams. The teams that worked on Engaging our Clientele continue to meet and implement ideas developed in the document. Goals and accomplishments from both the Issue teams and the Engagement teams will be part of our Annual Unit Accomplishment Report each year until the next review.

Response to the Overall Recommendations

1. Communication at all levels. Several plans are now in place to improve communication at all levels.

   **District Director/Department Heads** This January, three IANR planning sessions opened the door to dialogue with department heads about common program goals and future efforts. The District Director participated in all of these sessions. In addition to these meetings, the new Gallup effort to have a networking time prior to the Vice Chancellor’s meeting will allow the District Director and department heads to stay connected on projects. The District Director Group also plans to meet with one department head each month to discuss ways we can partner on program efforts.

   **Educator and Specialists communication:** Each year SREC will host a research update at the ARDC and/or at SCAL. We will work with educators and specialists to plan a program where current research and emerging issues are discussed. In addition to the research updates, SREC has two educators who serve on the advisory council for the Department of Agronomy/Horticulture, one educator on the ARDC citizen advisory board and one educator on the South Central Ag Lab advisory board. Our affiliate program with Animal Science keeps educators connected to the research and issues of the department. The SREC Director has recently discussed a stronger relationship with Ag Economics providing in-service training and time to work together on programs. Our relationship with Biological Systems Engineering continues to be very strong. SREC has one educator with a courtesy appointment in BSE. SREC also has one educator with a courtesy appointment to the School of Natural Resources and one educator with a courtesy appointment in the department of AgLEC. SREC will continue networking with new specialists. As new specialists join departments we will continue to invite them to programs. SREC issue team faculty invite specialists to our District meeting and planning sessions on a regular basis.

   1a. **Research Model** We concur with the team and look to the Deans for guidance. We will entertain any suggestions to move forward to meet this goal.

   1b. **Emerging Issues** In addition to the educators’ and specialists’ research updates at the ARDC and SCAL, SREC will begin a visioning project with educators and specialists. Through a series of programs, readings, tours and guest lectures we hope to increase our ability to vision and identify emerging trends.

2. **Collaboration Between Teams** We will be using our time together at Fall and Spring Conferences to
find ways to collaborate across the teams. Water and Value Added Agriculture efforts are areas where the Ag work group, CRD work group, CRE work group and the Health and Wellness group can network to complete educational programs.

3. Water Specific indicators and outcomes related to water are identified in several sections of the report. For the Annual Unit Planning document these outcomes will be pulled together for a single plan. We will also pull together faculty and staff around some key issues such as abandon wells, toxic algae and domestic water and irrigation efforts.

4. Focused Educator Travel Educators are encouraged to charge program fees to cover the cost of travel. Teams are encouraged to develop business plans for program efforts to study cost effectiveness.

5. Focused Educator Reallocating Resources IANR priorities and Extension emerging issues are always factored into new position requests (water, value added agriculture and livestock are examples of priority areas that are identified and have been requested).

6. Stakeholders Stakeholders and affiliated organizations will be called upon for support and assistance with marketing and advocacy. We will continue to use our extension board update sessions and VIP Day Events to market and advocate for Extension.

7. Diversity We will continue vigorous pursuit of minorities as faculty, staff and advisory board members.

8. Student Recruitment We will continue our strong student recruitment efforts.

9. Urban Stakeholders Extension staff in urban areas will continue to add new stakeholders to support urban programs. We will continue to use the Umbrella concept in marketing in the urban area.

10. Partners Extension staff will continue to partner with others and be recognized.

11. Previous Report A summary of the issues from the previous report recommendations not accomplished can be found in Section 6a Progress on Goals from the 2000 Review. We will direct extension staff to Section 6a for further review. A few items that had not been addressed are now part of the 2006 review document goals (such as value added agriculture and parenting and livestock) others are no longer emerging issues.

Food Production and Natural Resource Systems Response to the Recommendations

General Recommendations
FP & NRS program areas should jointly develop umbrella priorities and indicators of success for some issues. Technology and web based resources are needed for improving clientele awareness and educator sharing.

Response
The FP & NRS program area teams will explore commonalities among their respective programs and issues. Umbrella priorities will be considered that identify common success indicators. Existing and emerging technologies (i.e. Webinars, podcasting, etc.) will be used to improve clientele access to Extension education opportunities. Teams will develop electronic resources that foster enhanced communication and sharing among Extension professionals. Southeast District Extension professionals
will make a concerted effort to enhance and promote awareness of program subject matter expertise within the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Extension Division and among Extension clientele.

**Risk Management & Production Management Recommendations**
Evaluate the need for programs addressing emerging issues.

The Risk Management and Livestock Issues teams should partner on an educational initiative demonstrating economically and environmentally sustainable models for small and medium size animal agricultural systems.

**Response**
*In the future, Southeast District Educators will evaluate the need for educational programs that address both emerging and non-economic issues. Web-based information and education resources will continue to be developed that address both emerging and non-economic issues by strengthening current relationships and developing new relationships with university faculty. The Risk Management and Livestock Issues teams will look to develop a partnership in order to explore the development of an educational initiative demonstrating economically and environmentally sustainable models for small and medium size animal agricultural systems.*

**Diversified Agriculture Recommendations**
Partner with other University Departments.

Development of Web based information systems to deliver information and educational programs. There are many opportunities to incorporate other Extension program areas into this program area.

**Response**
*Southeast District Educators will continue to identify and encompass a wide variety of resources including other UNL resources, other Land Grant Universities, Federal programs such as SARE and AFSIC as well as resources outside of the University including such organizations as the Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society that serve the emerging needs of diversified agriculturists.*

Web-based information and education resources will be developed that address diversified agricultural issues. The goal will be to provide information to the consumer at his or her convenience. These will include the use of pod casting, Breeze technology, archiving of programs, and others; however, the traditional informational program will continue to be one of many methods used in providing information to diversified agriculturists.

Diversified agriculture educators will explore partnerships with other Extension program teams to develop a comprehensive educational program for this growing and maturing audience.

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Extension needs to lead the educational efforts on water issues in the state. Some issues need to be placed more in a management mode and more emphasis in the District placed on the emerging water issues. Educators working in this area need to have professional development opportunities to attend national meetings and workshops to help identify emerging issues.

**Response**
*The importance of irrigated agriculture and water use issues in Nebraska is well documented and efforts to conduct educational programs based on the latest research will be made. Efforts to team up with the UNL Water Center and other appropriate departments will be made.*

Response to Outside Review Team
Southeast Research & Extension Center
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Plans are being made to form a District wide Water Taskforce or team.

**Livestock Agriculture Recommendations**

Livestock issues will require a re-direction of educator effort. The Risk Management and Livestock Issues teams should partner on an educational initiative demonstrating economically and environmentally sustainable models for small and medium size animal agricultural systems.

Educational programs targeting environmental issues specific to existing small, unregulated livestock systems should be delivered within the District.

**Response**

The livestock environment has changed significantly since the Southeast District Review commenced. For example, animal identification has changed from mandatory to voluntary status and is subject to more changes, so has lost its degree of importance to attention and educational efforts. The dramatic increase in the price of corn and emphasis on ethanol has rapidly changed the landscape for livestock production in Nebraska. Risk management becomes a more important program focus. Environmental and zoning are priority issues related to the expansion and emphasis on corn based ethanol.

The committee agrees that there will need to be re-direction of educator effort and an investment in educator in-service if educational programs are to address these issues across the District. A Nebraska Livestock Model based on the Nebraska Pork Model could be a result of those collaborations. We need to address and deliver issues specific to existing small, unregulated livestock systems. This will also require a cooperative effort with the animal science and biological systems departments, other issue teams (i.e. CRD) and other partners, including: livestock organizations, economic development groups and financial institutions.

The SREC Livestock Issues Committee is very cognizant of the need for a concerted effort to address those issues that impact our livestock industry. It agrees with the analysis that partnerships need to be established to insure an economically viable and environmentally compliant livestock system. Efforts must be made to show the value that livestock contributes to the local economy and well being of communities and that they can be environmentally friendly.

**Building Strong Families Responses to the Recommendations**

1. **Alternative Funding Methods** - The Building Strong Families group has discussed the need for securing community grants & creative programming grants. A recommendation will be forwarded to the state action team to pursue grant funding at a statewide level for larger projects. Some programs are, and will continue to be, fee-based; additional fee-based programs will be offered. Local scholarships & donations to support attendance by those in need of assistance will be sought.

2. **Fifty - Sixty-five Age Programming** - The newly formed Extension Statewide Aging Issues Team is focusing on middle to late forties through the age of sixty-five with information sound bites that will be distributed to the media in a variety of ways. A needs assessment of this age group will identify the topics to be included in the media messages. Our District is participating in the planning and activities of this team. We will continue to monitor and go forward with current plans, including a grandparenting series scheduled to take place later this year, the caretaker (2007) and long term care insurance (2008) community lessons, Pay Down Debt & financial health over-the-lifetime programming.
3. **Evaluation Specialist** - We need to identify a staff member who can coordinate evaluation of major statewide Building Strong Families programs, collect impact data and develop a popular report annually that will be used by the state action team, rather than an annual piece that is District-specific. Stakeholders already providing funding, in some situations, have required impact data to be shared on a regular basis. We plan to identify additional stakeholders in this District to receive our impact data. We also plan to include additional evaluation training as part of ongoing professional improvement.

4. **Health and Human Services Collaboration** - Nebraska Health and Human Service is service-oriented compared to University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension being education-oriented. We feel the Building Strong Families action team can best meet their needs by identifying specific areas where we can market programs for HHS staff and offer training at a broader level. We will continue to provide them with marketing materials for programs that might interest both their staff and clientele. We currently offer foster parents the opportunity to attend child care training and family night activities.

5. **Expand Collaboration** - Encourage all Building Strong Families team members to get to know the Extension support staff in counties they serve so that support staff feel more comfortable working with staff outside their county. Make sure that adequate marketing is done regarding programs and technology opportunities for learning in counties where a Building Strong Families staff member is not located. Request a presentation time slot at the fall conference (Front Door Forum) for support staff to help them understand how important their role is regarding programming generated outside their county. Make a concerted effort to connect more closely with the faith community by identifying and opening communication lines with District-wide representatives from the faith-based community, and find ways to collaborate.

6. **Request Technology Equipment and Training** - We must identify technology needs in the families area. Technology needs identification will also be addressed statewide at an upcoming professional development meeting. We will continue to assess and address educator technology in-service needs to keep us at a level where we have the skills and knowledge necessary to deliver educational programs in all areas of the District, especially those areas without the physical presence of an FCS Educator.

7. **Building Nebraska Families curriculum** - The Building Strong Family team’s use of the BNF curriculum is one example of how collaboration will be expanded. We will be meeting with secondary teachers in June 2007, to share information about resources available to them, including this curriculum. Additional train-the-trainer programs will be developed for audiences such as the faith community, family nights, HeadStart parent groups, community action agencies and others.

**Nutrition, Health and Wellness Response to the Recommendations**

1. **Farmers Market nutrition** - tie to diversified farming - get more dollars to vegetable farmers - communicate across teams: The Farmers Market Nutrition Program and the Seniors Farmers' Market Program provide Farmers Market food vouchers for low or limited income people in Nebraska. Although not specifically noted during the review process, Farmers Market Food Safety programs have been given in the District on an individual, as requested basis for consumer and senior center organizations. We will recommend developing a community lesson on Farmer’s Market nutrition and food safety, utilizing previously developed programming distributed through a District Internet presence.

2. **Overweight & obesity** - work to find tools to measure changes with many different discipline areas on campus - applied research and connect all the dots of physical activity with wellness, health, and obesity prevention: We will continue to communicate with specialists about their efforts in obtaining outside resource funding for research and programming efforts in the area of wellness, health and obesity prevention. Working in partnership with state specialists, we will pursue local resources to support

Response to Outside Review Team
Southeast Research & Extension Center
campus research in this area. Educators across the District have been involved in school wellness plans with the Educational Service Units (ESU) and were a visible partner with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services in recent ESU meetings across the state. Many schools were already an educational partner and others were quite interested in learning what educational programs and resources Extension had to offer in SREC.

3. Find ways to develop minority extension staff - use innovative staffing patterns: Information regarding the SREC proposed diversity staffing plan can be found under the Engaging Our Clientele section of the District review document.

4. Get credit for food safety programs with public health - work with livestock staff and spend energy on raising the bar of programs to continuing education credits, credentialing credits, and even to classroom credits and use for student recruitment: We will continue to offer food safety programming certification for anyone who serves food to others. We currently offer continuing education for those requesting it. It is not possible to offer ServSafe or Employee ServSafe on the Internet, as they are copyrighted. We already offer food safety programming online for day care providers and others. We will continue to work with food science and nutrition specialists to meet the needs of our clientele. We will continue to offer food safety classes to high school students (Pro-Start) and work with 4-H and school enrichment (when the subject matter is aligned with state school curriculum standards) in the area of food safety and handwashing to prevent the spread of food-borne illness.

5. Be open to very different partnerships for solving health issues and look to foundations for funding in combination with other teams: Extension is always looking for new partners in our local, district and state communities. We strive to add our own unique spin on health education to avoid duplicating the services of other agencies. We will continue to work with partners to pursue larger outside grants. This will allow for further educational programming that we may not be able to obtain on our own.

6. Stretch yourselves to find ways to weave technology into other venues: We will continue to develop and expand our technology-based programming to meet the needs of our clientele based on stakeholder input (consumers to teachers to health professionals). As their needs vary, so will our educational approaches. As demands for current, research-based education has increased, Extension in SREC has seen an increase in educational needs of professionals in the area of health and nutrition. We are sought out as the “experts” in the subject and contacted to “train the trainer” for a variety of professions.

7. Use outside data sources to enhance and strengthen outcome reports: We will continue to pursue opportunities to present our programming efforts and outcome data at local, state and national conferences. UNL Extension Educators will continue to utilize the Extension Accomplishment Report System (EARS) which is accessible to the public as another avenue to share efforts. UNL Extension will continue to lead the statewide effort to coordinate our State Nutrition Action Plan that aligns all FNS funded programs and other state programs to work towards increasing fruit and vegetable consumption.

8. Opportunities for Nutrition, Health and Wellness to interact with other program areas (share technology with other teams): Breeze presentations and Web based downloadable programs will continue to be used as a way to reach others to combine resources as we work across program areas. Several nutrition topics in the areas of Building Strong Families have been a part of their website resources and new ones will continue to be linked as they are developed. Working with the Food Production and Natural Resources Team in the area of safe foods, healthy food products and farmers markets will also continue to be shared. We will pursue training in new areas of technology as the training and infrastructure becomes available to Extension and in turn will share what we have developed with other teams.

Community & Residential Environment Response to the Recommendations

1. CRE staff will develop a set of common evaluation questions and indicators of success to measure and demonstrate more cohesiveness among the programs, document outcomes and more clearly communicate the impact of a diverse set of programs with CRE.
2. CRE staff will explore avenues for collecting input from 4-H and other youth organizations. Youth will be engaged through activities such as 4-H camp, school enrichment activities, water festivals, Bug Bash, and 4-H youth representatives in leadership positions.

3. We appreciate the Review team’s recognition of the CRE staff’s current programming efforts in water conservation and water quality, and staff will continue to give these areas high priority in the future. Many existing water conservation and water quality programming efforts will continue. In addition, new programming efforts currently underway include an acreage owner seminar with a water focus being delivered by SREC and NEREC faculty, a landscape water conservation demonstration project being presented in cooperation with Omaha Metropolitan Utilities District, a home water conservation community lesson being developed with a TCD Specialist, and home and landscape water conservation NebGuides being written in cooperation with appropriate specialists and faculty from the National Drought Mitigation Center.

4. We recognize that energy conservation is an important issue. In response, the state CRE team formed a work group to evaluate community and residential energy needs and develop future programming. SREC faculty will participate in this team effort. In addition, SREC faculty will be involved with the newly formed Ethanol Action Team.

5. The CRE team will seek opportunities for the communication of needs, current programming content and successful teaching methods regarding water issues to the food production, community resource development, 4-H youth development and other teams. We will share with them our indicators of success so that we can collectively report programming impact.

**Community Resource Development Response to the Recommendations**

1. **Expand youth involvement** – Youth will build and enhance leadership and decision making skills as they participate in and help facilitate community visioning, Inter-generational Dialogues, Leadership Plenty classes, Home Town Competitiveness, EYSC (Engaging Youth Serving Communities) and other community and neighborhood experiences.

2. **Expand Entrepreneurship Opportunities** – Extension staff will bridge the gap between a number of CRD and Diversified Agriculture programs to advance economic development through value-added agriculture, alternative agriculture, agri-tourism, and entrepreneurship. Collaborative programming through the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension, including UNL’s Kimmel Education and Research Center, Center for Applied Rural Innovation (CARI), Home Town Competitiveness, 4-H Department and others will target both youth and adults. Youth will evaluate Nebraska entrepreneurial career opportunities during participation in the community based 4-H Entrepreneur Ship Investigation (ESI) curriculum and Cyber Fair activities (Nebraska State Fair).

3. **Offer partnerships to other teams in creating appropriate relationships with other colleges** -- The CRD team has a strong collaborative relationships with UNL’s Center of Applied Rural Innovation (CARI), College of Architecture, College of Education and Human Sciences, Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education & Communication, Department of Agricultural Economics, Food Processing Center, and with College of Public Affairs and Community Service on the UNO campus. As programming continues to evolve, CRD team members welcome the opportunity to collaborate with others to strengthen educational opportunities for Nebraska citizens.

4. **Find ways to include all Southeast District counties in the CRD programs so each community member has the opportunity to increase their capacities, thus strengthening the community.**
Members of the CRD team continually develop strong programming with community and regional partnerships and collaboration based on community, region and organizational programming needs. CRD team members are willing to travel throughout the District and state to offer train-the-trainer education for staff and community organization members. To extend CRD programming reach, technology such as satellite, Polycom, Breeze, podcasts, TV, radio as well as print, reach clientele at the time they prefer to seek and gain information or to reinforce concepts taught. Individual skills and community capacity increases as learners participate in leadership development programs, and community/neighborhood visioning and planning activities.

The use of specific technology through the use of the BIT Mobile and other mobile computer labs increase Information Technology skills for farmers, entrepreneurs, small businesses, public officials, and agencies focused on tourism throughout the District.

5. Consider additional partnerships. – Additional collaboration and partnerships will help expand Extension programming reach within and beyond District lines. Active collaboration with Nebraska Indian Community College (NICC) is formalized by a USDA/CSREES Tribal College Extension Services grant. CRD staff are currently working with the Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) to develop a leadership curriculum for public officials. This effort will possibly include UNO College of Public Affairs and Community Service and the University of Nebraska-Kearney. To reduce duplication of efforts, collaborate with Neighborhood Center for Greater Omaha, the Douglas and Sarpy County Health Departments and a number of others to meet needs of urban clientele. Other partner entities include but are not limited to: Home Town Competitiveness, Southeast Resource Network, the Rural Enterprise Assistance Project (REAP), the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, the Nebraska Telecommunications Association (NTA), Network Nebraska, Nebraska Information Technology Committee, Nebraska Secretary of State, Technologies Across Nebraska, Community Colleges, Nebraska Educational Technology Association, USDA, 4-H, and local and District economic and leadership development contacts.

4-H Youth Development Response to the Recommendations

1. Need a clearer link between how the recognition model will support the mission of 4-H Youth Development, the “so, what?”

Response: A proposed change to the logic model for the Nebraska Diamond Clover program includes a number of life skills that 4-Hers will develop when using the new recognition program. The life skills that 4-Hers will develop include: planning and organizing, goal setting, keeping records, communication, social skills, community service volunteering, leadership, responsible citizenship, self motivation, and self esteem. The 4-Hers life skill development will take place in the intermediate and long term outcome and impact. Goals for the new recognition program is to recruit and retain 4-Hers in the program as they get older and more involved in additional activities.

2. A focused implementation plan to take the state strategic plan forward within the context of the unique need of this region.

Response: The new strategic 4-H plan has been well received by 4-H staff throughout the District. The four outcome areas identified were: Healthy Lifestyles, Science, Engineering and Technology, Life Skill Development and Career Development. Work groups have formed around the eight curriculum areas identified in the strategic plan and have started to form partnerships with other action teams in the District and across the state. Extension staff involved in 4-H programming identified curriculum area work groups they would like to be involved in. The work groups are developing 4-H curriculum and educational activities to help 4-Hers experience and learn the eight critical elements identified for the 4-H program.
3. Strengthen connections between specialists and educators, particularly in development of new and innovative curriculum that ties to the current needs/interests of today's youth.

**Response:** The 4-H Curriculum Committee works to select new 4-H project material, revise outdated material and review technology components in 4-H projects. The committee is made up of Extension staff, specialists and youth that work with curriculum for the 4-H program. When a need is identified for new or revised curriculum a team of specialists, educators and writers are identified and guidelines are developed for the curriculum. Other action teams may be contacted to see if there is interest in participating in the 4-H curriculum development process. The healthy lifestyles action team and NEP staff will develop common indicators that can be used in programming related to their common educational efforts. A continued effort will be made to facilitate interaction between 4-H extension staff and specialists in the various departments at UNL. In-service trainings will be designed to allow more interaction between 4-H staff and specialists in various departments that conduct research related to Youth Development.

4. Develop a clear plan for evaluating efforts tied to relevant objectives either related to the content of youth development work, or the context of youth development work (content/context).

**Response:** The State 4-H Youth Development Action Team is developing outcome indicators to measure the impact of the 4-H program as it relates to the goals for the program. A series of questions has been submitted to IRB so results can be used to publish outcome and impact for the 4-H program.

5. Engage youth in practices and decisions that cut across all program areas (water quality, mapping communities for tourism, etc.).

**Response:** All counties include or will include youth on their 4-H Councils to make sure they have input at the local level for 4-H programming. Two new state youth advisory groups are being formed to provide an opportunity for them to provide input into the State 4-H program. The Youth Curriculum Committee and Youth Multimedia Team are being formed so they have a chance to provide their ideas for the curriculum development process and participation in various technology related education and development activities. Youth and adult partnerships will continue to be an important part of the 4-H youth development effort.

6. Build a clearer data collection process for understanding impact on student recruitment (including asking applicants if they were in 4-H).

**Response:** Efforts are being made to include the question “Were you a 4-H member?” on the application forms for the University of Nebraska. The student recruitment work group will continue this effort in the future. 4-H staff will have the opportunity to add names to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln student recruiting database program.

7. Fully and intentionally consider the balance among delivery methods and what value they bring to the program.

**Response:** Each county does a needs assessment to determine the best opportunity for them to deliver the 4-H program to their respective communities. Resources, personnel, school system structure and partnerships are all included in the evaluations.

8. Diversity issues need to be addressed more fully by considering ways the program may need to change to meet the needs of diverse youth.
**Response:** Efforts are continually being studied to identify the best avenue to deliver the 4-H program to a diverse audience including urban vs. rural, ethnically diverse audiences and male vs. female participants. Delivery methods, local populations and geographic locations are additional factors that are considered.

9. Provide youth input on all planning teams.

**Response:** Youth input is always valued and every effort is made to include youth on planning teams for various 4-H programming.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve communications at all levels.</td>
<td>District Director meets with Department Heads to discuss unit goals.</td>
<td>January 2007</td>
<td>On going monthly meetings.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SREC hosts research updates with SCAL and ARDC</td>
<td>Summer 2007 SCAL</td>
<td>Rotate programs each summer.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Work with specialists to plan programs on current research and emerging issues.</td>
<td>Water Inservice June 2007</td>
<td>On going as others identified</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Continue to serve on department advisory boards and have courtesy appointments.</td>
<td>On going</td>
<td>On going</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Work with new specialists and invite specialists to planning meetings</td>
<td>On going</td>
<td>On going</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Work with technology committee and advisory committee on electronic sharing.</td>
<td>Spring 2008</td>
<td>On going</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide regional educator/assistant meetings to discuss program sharing and improve communications between staff and with the Director.</td>
<td>Spring 2008</td>
<td>Each Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Model</td>
<td>Will look to the Deans for guidance</td>
<td>Unit planning &amp; special meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognize Emerging Issues</td>
<td>Begin visioning discussions with educators and specialists (multi-discipline) studying emerging trends.</td>
<td>Spring 2008</td>
<td>On going</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaboration Between Teams</td>
<td>Time at spring and fall conference will be spent discussing collaboration on issues identified by the team.</td>
<td>Spring and Fall Conference</td>
<td>At least twice a year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Outcomes related to water will be pulled together for each annual unit plan. First water inservice planned</td>
<td>January 2007 June 2007</td>
<td>Water team meets as needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused Educator</td>
<td>We will continue to build travel expenses into programming.</td>
<td>On going</td>
<td>On going</td>
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<td></td>
<td>We will continue to consider IANR priorities when requesting position.</td>
<td>On going</td>
<td>On going</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stakeholders and Partners</td>
<td>We will continue to involve stakeholders in our work. Including VIP Days and Board updates</td>
<td>On going</td>
<td>On going</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Recruitment</td>
<td>Leadership committee will meet regularly to implement plans.</td>
<td>Summer 2007</td>
<td>On going</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>Leadership committee will meet regularly to implement plans.</td>
<td>Spring 2007</td>
<td>On going</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology Committee</td>
<td>Leadership has identified first inservice training date and program.</td>
<td>Late Summer 2007</td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Group Plan Implementations</td>
<td>Refine indicators identified in the logic models, of unit plan aligning them with IANR plan.</td>
<td>Each district conference</td>
<td>Complete 2008</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Develop ways to report across the indicators.</td>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
<td>Complete 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide opportunities to change plans as issues emerge.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>On going</td>
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