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Self-Study Report: 11 IANR Strategic Plan

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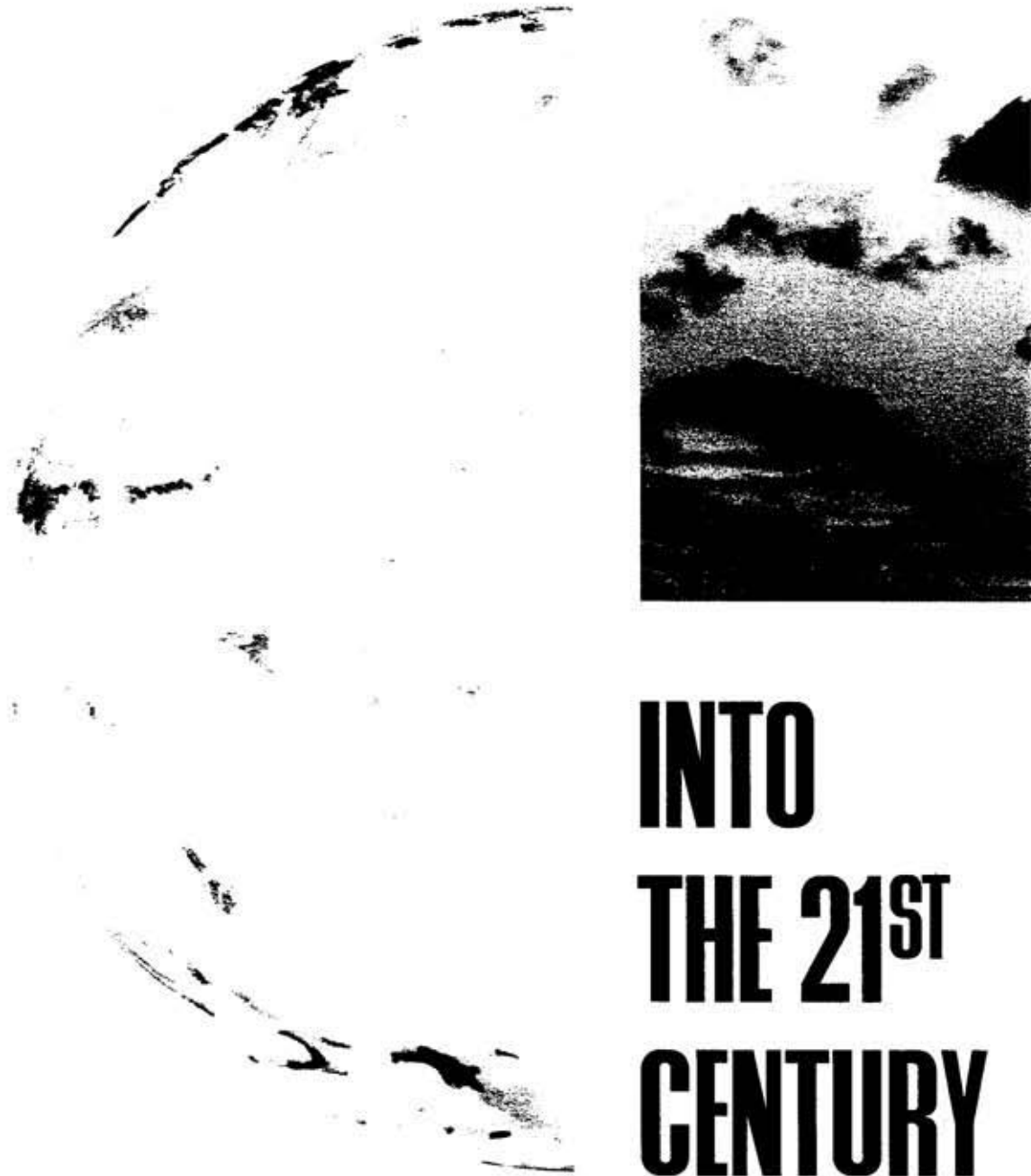
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IANR Strategic Plan

A STRATEGIC PLAN

for the
University of Nebraska
Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources



INTO
THE 21ST
CENTURY



University of
Nebraska-Lincoln
March 1995



IANR'S VISION

IANR will be the premier provider of educational, research, and outreach programs essential for shaping Nebraska's future as a leader in the 21st Century in the areas of food, agricultural and agribusiness systems, natural resources and human resources. IANR is dedicated to providing the highest quality programs that are ecologically sound, economically viable, socially responsible and scientifically appropriate.

INTRODUCTION



Irv Omtvedt
NU Vice President and
IANR Vice Chancellor

We anticipate the changes during the next decade which will impact Nebraska food, agricultural and agribusiness industries, the management of natural resources and the quality of life opportunities for our people are expected to exceed those that occurred during the past 50 years. To ensure the programs of the University of Nebraska Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR) remain responsive and effective in the future, it is urgent for us to



assess our program priorities and operational procedures to strengthen Nebraska's agricultural and natural resources systems. While doing so, we must also prepare students and clientele to make the necessary adjustments to succeed during a period of rapid change and uncertainty.

The intent of this Strategic Plan is to provide IANR with the program and operational directions to move us aggressively and positively into the 21st Century. The issues, problems and opportunities are becoming increasingly complex. IANR cannot be all things for all people. Setting priorities and establishing collaborative partnerships will be essential.

Feedback received from clientele, faculty, staff, students and administrators at numerous "listening sessions" held on campus and across the state was integrated into this strategic planning process. Additional discussions involving faculty, staff and administrators helped develop a shared vision for the future. This Strategic Plan is consistent with the direction established by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln strategic agenda. Since strategic planning is a dynamic process, we will continue to evaluate, get feedback and make proactive mid-course changes as deemed appropriate. IANR's planning process is further complemented by its selection as one of 12 institutions to participate in the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Food Systems Education initiative, a visioning process for the year 2020.

The Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources is committed to providing proactive leadership to high-priority, overarching objectives directed at student recruitment/retention/placement, distance education and program balance. Faculty and staff development, diversity and gender equity, communications,

program linkages and operational effectiveness will also be given priority consideration in the operational priorities for IANR.

The three programmatic themes that serve as the core for this Strategic Plan are:

- Enhance economically viable and sustainable food and biomass systems
- Improve natural resources management and promote environmental quality
- Strengthen the quality of life of individuals and families and contribute to community viability.

Long-term action objectives have been identified for each of these program themes, and program action plans will be developed for each of these areas.

Our goal is to meet the needs of Nebraskans and be recognized nationally by clientele and peers as a leader in research and higher education programs relating to agriculture and natural resources. This plan is the compass that will provide that direction. Internal initiatives to reallocate existing resources and to obtain additional funding from external sources to support needed changes will be essential, since sufficient increases in state and federal appropriated funds are unlikely.

This Strategic Plan encourages change and continuous improvement. By working as a team, we can make the commitments needed to move the teaching, research, extension and service programs of IANR toward higher levels of contribution in Nebraska, the Nation and the World. ■

ASSUMPTIONS

“Food and agriculture will continue to be important to Nebraska’s economy.”

“Natural resources and environmental concerns will increase.”

“Nebraska’s population will be more diverse and shift to trade and urban centers.”

“IANR will provide proactive program leadership.”



IANR OVERARCHING OBJECTIVES

The following overarching objectives are strategic to IANR's direction. IANR places high priority on providing quality education that is accessible to traditional and non-traditional students. Increased accessibility through distance education is a high priority, as is providing a continual flow of research-based information.

Student Programs: Recruitment/Retention/Placement

- Empower faculty, staff, students, employers and alumni to recruit, retain and place students.
- Update curricula to include preparation for living and working in a rapidly changing society and functioning in a global community.
- Provide state-of-the-art course offerings that meet the needs of both traditional and non-traditional students on and off campus.
- Provide students with increased accessibility to needed student services.
- Collaborate in offering quality programs, including transfer programs from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, community colleges, state colleges and other institutions.

Distance Education

- Utilize the IANR statewide network to facilitate the delivery of University of Nebraska resources to meet clientele needs.
- Collaborate with other institutions to meet distance education needs as appropriate.
- Enhance learning opportunities through distance education in Nebraska.
- Improve the use of telecommunications, information management and data transmission to meet the needs of society.

Program Balance

- Balance programs in response to the changing needs in food, agriculture, agribusiness, natural resources, environment, individuals, families and communities.
- Offer a balance of programs that meet current clientele needs, as well as fundamental research programs that provide a knowledge base for the future.
- Respond in a timely manner and be accountable to clientele needs.
- Refocus IANR's program to give increased impact to urban audiences.

CHANGE

“The out-migration of Nebraska’s trained and educated citizens is a critical issue.”

“Global concerns such as increased world population, the depletion of fossil fuels such as oil and the loss of farmland will impact Nebraska.”

“There is increased poverty and stress on families.”

“Nebraska’s rural population is declining.”

“The average age of Nebraska’s population is becoming older.”

PROGRAM THEMES

IANR's program themes and long-term program objectives include generating and disseminating knowledge and providing quality educational programs. These objectives dictate the focus and priority direction for IANR's programs. The action plans that follow for IANR and its units will address the long-term program objectives. These action plans will consider policy, environmental and societal impacts. Collaborative partnerships will be emphasized.

ENHANCE ECONOMICALLY VIABLE AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD AND BIOMASS SYSTEMS

- Develop profitable and sustainable plant and animal systems.
- Enhance the value-added processing of agricultural commodities and waste materials.
- Improve food safety and food quality.
- Improve plant and animal health through integrated pest management and other sustainable practices.
- Contribute to commodity and product marketing and economic development.
- Enhance the understanding of plant and animal biology fundamentals.

IMPROVE NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND ENHANCE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- Provide a scientific basis for developing land and water use policies and practices of importance to Nebraska.
- Enhance environmental quality and improve the sustainability of resource systems.
- Create education programs that address the integration of resource needs with the carrying capacity of natural resource systems.
- Reduce soil erosion and improve water quality by developing improved management practices.
- Develop ecosystem improvement programs consistent with enhanced biodiversity.
- Provide programs to enhance rural and urban landscapes.

STRENGTHEN THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES AND CONTRIBUTE TO COMMUNITY VIABILITY

- Enhance the development of basic lifeskills among Nebraska's children, youth and adults.
- Contribute to improved human nutrition and health.
- Provide programs to enhance the development of new businesses.
- Emphasize leadership development programs.
- Partnership with others to improve the resiliency of families and the viability of communities.

ASSUMPTIONS

“Distance education’s role will be increasingly important.”

“Nebraska must compete in the global economy. Value-added exports will increase.”

“Appropriated funds will be limited.”

“IANR must set priorities and focus programs.”



IANR'S OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES

Assessing the effectiveness of current IANR efforts and identifying ways to improve operational priority areas is a continuous process. IANR's Strategic Plan discussions with clientele, faculty, staff and students suggest that Action Plans for improving IANR's program effectiveness and efficiency should consider the following:

Faculty and Staff Development

- Improve faculty and staff career, personal and professional development opportunities, including retraining for new position needs.
- Provide training on new methods for program delivery.
- Ensure that personnel evaluation processes, rewards and recognition are consistent with IANR's priorities.
- Involve office/service and managerial/professional staff more effectively in program implementation.
- Facilitate and reward teamwork, including interdisciplinary team problem-solving approaches.
- Reduce faculty tasks that do not contribute to program outcomes.

Diversity and Gender Equity

- Implement initiatives to increase participation of under-represented groups by recruiting and retaining students, faculty, staff and administrators from these areas.
- Develop culturally diverse and gender-sensitive support systems for students, faculty, and staff.
- Provide program content that meets the needs of diverse clientele and recognizes evolving gender roles and contributions.

Communications and Communicating Program Impacts

- Give high priority to improving internal and external communications.
- Emphasize program impacts and output as related to program inputs.
- Enhance the public understanding of IANR programs and the roles of agriculture, agribusiness, natural resources and human resources in society.
- Emphasize elementary and secondary school enrichment programs for presenting information on food, agriculture, agribusiness, natural resources and human resources.
- Be responsive and effective in providing essential clientele-oriented services.

CHANGE

“The number of Nebraska farms is decreasing; the number of larger farms is increasing.”

“Further changes in Nebraska’s food system structure are anticipated.”

“Animal welfare/ rights issues and regulations impacting agriculture are expected to increase.”

“New electronic communications technologies will be in more Nebraska homes.”



Program Linkages

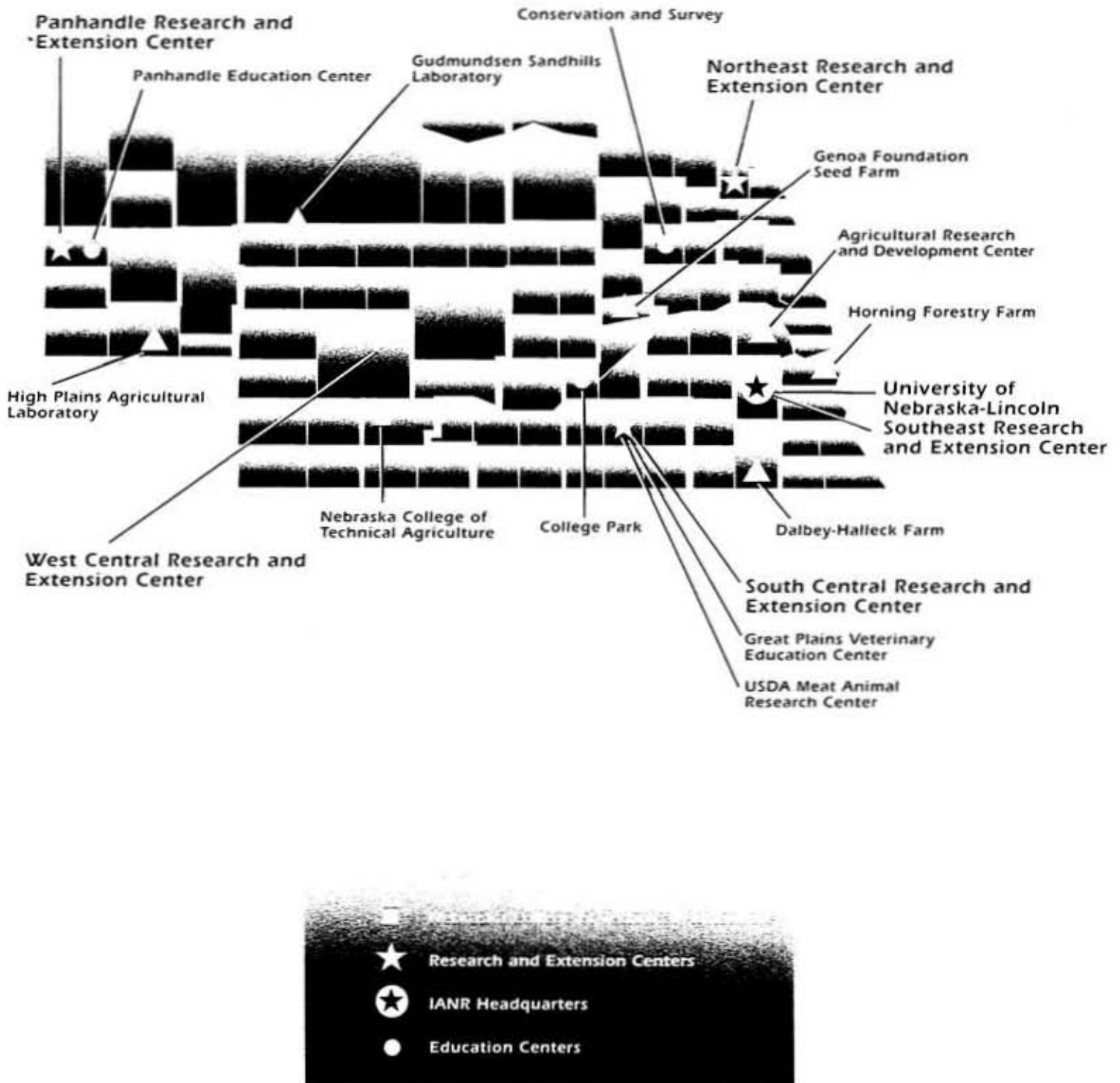
- Give high priority to strengthened collaborative program linkages with other components of the University of Nebraska and other universities, colleges, community colleges; with international, federal, state and local government agencies; with organizations; and with private businesses.
- Develop collaborative programs within the region with emphasis on contiguous states.

Organizational Effectiveness

- Seek both internal and external input and assess organizational program efficiencies and implement appropriate structural changes.
- Explore alternatives and make changes in procedures, policies and operations to strengthen effectiveness and increase efficiency.

Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources

STATEWIDE NETWORK



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