

Kentucky Extension Advisory Council Meeting

February 27-28, 2024

Meeting Summary Points

- Delegates participated in an optional tour to the James B. Beam Institute and recently renovated Thomas Poe Cooper House on campus at University of Kentucky. Learn more about the James B. Beam Institute at <https://beaminstitute.ca.uky.edu/>.
- Kentucky State University (KSU) administrative updates (Dr. Jerusha Lay) highlighted KSU's role as an 1890 land-grant university and mission focused on underserved communities, families, farmers, individuals and youth. Dr. Lay provided an update on agent hiring, both for county offices co-located with UK agents and in regional centers. She reviewed the priority program areas: agriculture and natural resources (focusing on small farms, urban ag and ag tech), nutrition education, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences (emphasizing family development and financial management) and community resource development (with focus on disaster preparedness, local food systems and community leadership). Follow Kentucky State University Cooperative Extension on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/kysuCEP>) for details regarding the monthly Third Thursday workshops, summer 4-H programs for youth, small farm conferences, and more.
- University of Kentucky (UK) administrative updates (Dr. Laura Stephenson) thanked council delegates for responding to and promoting the recent Extension Community Assessment. She encouraged attendees to review the data when released later this spring and to prepare for local discussions as part of the new plan of work development process. Dr. Stephenson shared that over 80 new agents have been hired in the past two years and that the commitment to fill county vacancies within the agent funding model remains. She highlighted key campus-based faculty and specialist hiring in progress, including positions in entomology, family and community health, mental health, fruit production, controlled environment horticulture, ag health and safety, Extension evaluation and youth livestock programs.
- Dr. Lola Adedokun, Director, Extension Evaluation, University of Kentucky shared that more than 36,000 people responded to the Extension Community Assessment, with more than 70% indicating they were not currently participating in Extension programs. She reviewed preliminary findings, but emphasized to the group that data analysis was not yet final. She encouraged everyone to keep abreast for release of the final data later this spring.



- Dr. Julie Zimmerman, Milton Coughenour Professor of Rural Sociology in the Department of Community and Leadership Development at University of Kentucky, provided an overview of companion secondary data that will be available with the release of the final Extension Community Assessment results. More than 300 variables correlated to the assessment questions will be available to aid counties in examining top issues and setting priorities for programming beginning in 2025. She also highlighted key demographic trends for Kentucky's population, including counties with increasing and decreasing population, race and ethnicity by select age groups, and percent of population age 65+ by county. She shared that additional data profiles are available via Kentucky by the Numbers at <http://kybtn.ca.uky.edu>.
- Extension program leaders shared key trends.
 - Melissa Bond, Program Leader, Community Arts Extension, reminded delegates of the county profiles available at <https://cedik.ca.uky.edu>. She also highlighted a few key data points from the newly released Census of Agriculture and from specific Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK) programs.
 - Dr. Jennifer Hunter, Assistant Director, Family and Consumer Sciences, reviewed key trends and Extension programs related to food and nutrition, health and wellness, substance use prevention and recovery, financial stability and resource management, parenting and child development, and adult development and aging.
 - Mike Meyer, Associate 4-H Program Leader, reviewed the 4-H Thrive model focused on finding your spark and thriving through progressive experiences. He highlighted data from the 2023 Kentucky 4-H Annual Report. Last year, 170,431 youth were enrolled in Kentucky 4-H, 13,723 youth and adult volunteers supported 4-H programming, and a record 13,635 youth attended 4-H summer camp.
 - Courtney Jenkins, Extension Specialist for Professional Development, Agriculture and Natural Resources reviewed key trends in agriculture, natural resources and horticulture. She focused on Extension's programming and reach related to consumer and home horticulture, forest health and management, commercial horticulture, wildlife habitat and damage management, small ruminants, leadership development, beef cattle, farm management and economics, and local food systems.
- Dr. Ken Jones, Director of Program and Staff Development, provided an overview of the next steps in Extension's plan of work cycle, emphasizing that the plan of work is a joint UK and KSU endeavor. Counties will begin the development of a new four-year plan of work later this year.
- Dr. Carrie Knott, Director, Princeton Research and Education Center, briefed the council on the rebuilding process at the Princeton Center. Ten buildings lost to the December 2021 tornadoes have been rebuilt. Four additional projects are underway, including the Grain and Forage Center of Excellence, the farm shop, the field research building, and a residence hall for housing students and post docs working at the center. Additional projects are in design. While the loss of more than 40 structures was devastating, the rebuilding process has provided an opportunity to be strategic in the design of new facilities.

- Daniel Wilson, East Region Extension Director and Director of UK's Robinson Center, provided an update on the recovery and rebuilding process following the 2022 floods that damaged more than a dozen buildings at the center. The cattle research facility has been rebuilt and both office buildings located at the center have been fully renovated. Construction of a pavilion, a multipurpose agriculture building and chemical storage is slated for this year. Events and field research at the center returned to full operation in 2023.
- The council business meeting included a welcome of new delegates and appointment of bylaws, council engagement and nominating committees. Delegates were encouraged to mark their calendars for the summer meeting scheduled for July 25, 2024.
- Delegates were asked to share the call for nominations for the 2024 Randall Barnett County Extension Council Award. All counties are welcome to submit a nomination and the winning council will receive a plaque along with a \$500 monetary award. Additional information is available at <http://psd.ca.uky.edu/randallbarnett>.