

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI Extension

A statewide random telephone survey was conducted with 1,005 Missourians, April-June 2005. The purpose was to examine public opinions about University of Missouri Extension and its services and programs. The survey confirmed:

- 57% of respondents were aware of University of Missouri Extension.
 - Awareness was greatest among older adults; residents of rural areas and medium-size towns; those with a high school diploma or higher; adults who have lived at their current address five years or longer; and adults with access to the Internet.
 - Three-fourths of respondents had access to the Internet.
- Between 5% and 11% of respondents had participated in various Extension programs.
 - 85% of those gave an above-average rating in usefulness to programs in which they participated.
- Residents were interested in a variety of programs:
 - Well-being of children and teens/youth at risk
 - Family health
 - Continuing education/professional development
 - Environmental quality
 - Nutrition/food safety
 - Personal finance
- Respondents saw University of Missouri Extension as a valuable resource:
 - 85% saw Extension as a credible and objective resource for local communities throughout Missouri;
 - 84% expected Extension to have “science-based knowledge;”
 - 77% said Extension makes higher education more accessible;
 - 76% said it’s important to have an Extension office in every county.
- Respondents said Extension should be available to both urban and rural audiences.
- Demographics:
 - 50.2% of respondents were men, 49.8% were women.
 - 86% were Caucasian, 7% African American, 2.8% American Indian
 - Average age of the sample population was 48.1 years.
 - 41% lived in on a farm, in a rural area or small town; 40% lived in a medium-sized town or suburb; 19% lived in an urban area.

For more information, see Public Opinion Survey:
<http://extension.missouri.edu/planofwork/index.htm>

Community Conversations on Entrepreneurship Final Report

Executive Summary

In the fall of 2005, the University of Missouri Extension, through its Community Enterprise and Entrepreneurial Development (CEED) initiative, engaged in a process to satisfy an important question: ***Is entrepreneurship a viable economic development strategy for Missouri?*** CEED, a cross-disciplinary Extension approach to stimulating entrepreneurial communities, in partnership with Regional Planning Commissions, held sixteen Community Conversations across Missouri to look for answers. It also sought to gauge the value of and interest in entrepreneurship for economically disadvantaged communities, especially those in rural regions.

Possibly the most important revelation resulting from the Community Conversations on Entrepreneurship is the communities' willingness to state what they believe they can do to encourage and support entrepreneurship. Many realize that the power to change local economies for the better will come from within each community. Ten recommendations derived from the rich input of these meetings are suggested for both community and state action as detailed below.

1. Communities can undertake an agenda for change by supporting entrepreneurship efforts in their areas with the following initiatives:
 - Work with local school boards to integrate entrepreneurship education in grades K-12.
 - Provide entrepreneurship training, technical assistance, leadership development, and mentoring to community youth and young adults.
 - Work with local leadership to develop explicit, local policies supporting entrepreneurial activity, including the formation of accessible capital pools for enterprise financing.
 - Create leadership development opportunities for local officials, and other residents, especially in regard to entrepreneurship.
 - Improve the social and economic climate for local entrepreneurs and businesses, by valuing them, nurturing networks of entrepreneurs, increasing local collaborations, and celebrating community success.
2. Adopt entrepreneurship as a recognized and effective economic development strategy for Missouri, especially in rural areas.
3. Focus increased attention on entrepreneurship and leadership development for youth, by supporting existing initiatives more visibly through financial and technical support, and by starting new initiatives as needed.
4. Integrate entrepreneurship, as a state-based initiative in collaboration with local efforts, into K-12 curriculum in the public schools; and support related activities, such as teacher training and orientation, and entrepreneurship clubs and organizations for youth.
5. Fund training, technical assistance, and financing services for entrepreneurship commensurate with the level of economic activity it represents within the state. Ensure that such services are inclusive and target the most economically distressed areas of the state.

6. Establish a Statewide Task Force on Entrepreneurship to review current state policies and practices regarding small business; and to establish new state policies and practices regarding entrepreneurship. Policies should address the 'asynchronous' issue between the political lifecycle and the entrepreneurship lifecycle. Ensure that all regions are represented and that at least one-third of the task force is composed of entrepreneurs, representing the full range of types of entrepreneurs (See Appendix I).
7. Develop a Statewide Entrepreneurship Development System (EDS) that coordinates cross-disciplinary resources (existing and to be developed), provides technical assistance and access to capital for entrepreneurs, and fosters local leadership, resources, and entrepreneurial networks.
8. Establish a five-year plan to install and implement high speed internet throughout Missouri. Consider the expansion of small business incubators, and evaluate and plan for basic infrastructure improvements in the neediest of areas.
9. Value natural assets, and devise an incentive plan that permits value-added entrepreneurship, but protects natural assets.
10. Develop a state-recognized community leadership course for delivery across state that emphasizes entrepreneurship and the generation of local solutions to place-based issues.

Communities are clear that they would like a role to play in a number of the statewide recommendations described. As this report goes on to document, communities value the assets that they have, recognize that they have some serious obstacles to overcome, but generally believe in themselves, their youth, and the culture of their communities as the means to a brighter future, with entrepreneurship as a viable economic strategy that fits their circumstances.

The information presented will give the reader a comprehensive view on how these recommendations were generated. It offers:

- some background on the origins of the Community Conversations,
- a backdrop to Conversation responses via the socio-economic context in various regions of Missouri;
- a catalog and description of those responses by region, and statewide for consideration; and
- finally some reflections worth pondering in respect to entrepreneurship and to the many people who participated in the Community Conversations.

All of the recommendations are geared toward exploring a new and different way of viewing and shaping the economic prospects for Missouri's communities.

www.extension.missouri.edu/CEED

Equal Opportunity / ADA Institution

Diversity Discussions Executive Summary

PURPOSE & PROCESS

The purpose of the Diversity Discussions was to gather input from diverse audiences across the state to expand information gathered in the stakeholder input plan of work process. The 12 Diversity Discussions, totaling 130 residents from varying racial and ethnic groups, were held across the eight regions.

QUESTIONS ASKED

The following questions were asked:

1. With **which** underserved audiences/populations should Extension work?
2. What **needs** do each of these audiences have? (personal/community betterment)
3. For each need, what **results** should be achieved?
4. How can Extension best **connect** with these audiences?
5. Can you tell us which needs are **most important**?

RESULTS

Participants indicated that Extension should work with the following:

Racial/Ethnic Groups

- Hispanic/Latino Families
- African American Urban Youth
- Hmong Communities

Age Groups

- Urban Youth
- Elderly
- Teens

Status

- Parents
- Single Parents
- Under Employed/Displaced Workers

Income Level

- Persons with Low Incomes

Others

- Business Owners
- Service Providers
- Government Leaders
- Inmates

Priority Needs Identified for Extension

Adult Audiences

- Nutrition education
- Personal finance education
- Business start-up assistance
- English as a second language programs
- Programs in Spanish for providers
- Accessible, affordable education
- Employment training

Youth Audiences

- Character building
- Life skills
- Career preparation
- Teen parenting
- Youth and teen pregnancy prevention

How can Extension best connect with these ADULT audiences?

Participants indicated that they are not best reached by brochures. They identified a number of places that are better for reaching them. The best way of reaching them was through **radio and television**. Other effective ways of reaching them are through:

- Churches & Libraries
- Word of mouth
- Key diversity leaders
- Phone calls
- Service providers
- Effective advertising through internet
- Spanish newspapers
- Unemployment agencies

How can Extension best connect with these YOUTH audiences?

Participants indicated that in order to reach youth, we must go where they spend their time. They are best reached by advertising in the following places:

- Schools
- Teen clubs & youth organizations
- Malls
- Media – TV and radio
- Community centers
- Parks
- Churches, libraries
- After school programs

SUMMARY

The most important finding was that diverse populations indicated that they had not been aware of Extension and what it offered. Surprisingly, the programs that they named were much the same as those that were named by those participating in the phone survey and the plan of work discussions across the state; however, the participants did not realize that we offered such programs. With this in mind, the key to meeting the needs of these populations is to REACH them. Another idea that was widely expressed was the hope that faculty offering programs to diverse audiences learn more about their culture and their needs.

Prepared by Dr. Julie Middleton, Director of Organizational Development . For more information, visit the web:

<http://muextension.missouri.edu/survey/facilitation/divpowlook.aspx>

State Program Themes

Agriculture and Natural Resources <http://cafnr.missouri.edu/outreach/stateagnrextension.asp>

- Ag business management
- Integrated crop management and horticulture
- Livestock production systems
- Natural resources
- Environmental quality

Business Development <http://www.missouribusiness.net>

- Workforce preparedness
- Market development
- Technology development
- Film industry development
- Small business development
- Government contract assistance
- Water and waste management

Community Development <http://extension.missouri.edu/main/community/index.shtml>

- Leadership capacity
- Inclusive communities
- Local government
- Community non-profit organizations
- Community enterprise and entrepreneurial development
- Community Informatics
- Community decision-making
- Community emergency preparedness

4-H Youth Development <http://mo4h.missouri.edu/>

- Choosing healthy lifestyles
- Creating economic preparedness
- Building character
- Developing adult and youth leadership
- Enhancing community viability
- Improving communications
- Applying science and technology

Human Environmental Sciences <http://extension.missouri.edu/hes/>

- Housing
- Disaster preparedness
- Aging
- Parenting
- Childcare
- Nutrition, health and physical activity
- Food safety
- Personal financial management
- Strengthening families
- Poverty

Continuing Education <http://extension.missouri.edu/education/>

- Continuing education for professionals in:
 - Nursing
 - Medicine
 - Veterinary medicine
 - Law enforcement
 - Business
 - Economics
 - Fire and rescue
 - Labor
- On-line degree programs
- Independent study and MU High School
- Lifelong learning

Emerging Issues

Agriculture and Natural Resources

- Land Use – Protecting Missouri’s agricultural land & natural resources for the production of food & fiber
- Rural Entrepreneurship – including expansion of our value added & alternative agriculture efforts
- Alternative energy & fuels

Business Development

- Support for entrepreneurs
- Workforce training and education

Community Development

- Local government
- Community economic vitality
- Community planning

4-H Youth Development

- Retain youth in communities through workforce preparedness, entrepreneurship, leadership development

Human Environmental Sciences

- Obesity & health
- Family relationships;
- Finance
- Aging
- Housing

Continuing Education

- Emergency planning and response
- Access to online degree programs