

Introduction

University of Missouri Extension addresses local and state programming needs through stakeholder input and assessment of research and societal trends. Extension councils represent the local programming needs of their county residents. The data in this report represents a summary of MU Extension’s programmatic response to the most frequent comments from the 3,413 participants in Missouri’s Annual County Program Input Process (ACPI) during 2012, 2013 and 2014.

The Annual County Program Input Process (formerly APR)

Community stakeholders, including current and past council members, met in each county to gather input on issues critical to extension programming (Table 1). During 2012 and 2013, participants identified key issues in each county that were related to MU Extension’s five multi-disciplinary programming themes (Table 2). In addition, participants were asked to identify effective programmatic delivery methods and criteria to determine programs offered or discontinued in each county. 2014 priority issues were related to MU System’s commitment to fostering entrepreneurship as a driver for economic development. Discussion topics included strengths and barriers to entrepreneurship and addressed the question “What issues could MU Extension address in your communities to foster entrepreneurship as a means to economic development for the area and state?”

Table 1. ACPI Participation

Year	Counties	Participants
2012	111	1,180
2013	106	1,126
2014	110	1,107

Table 2. MU Extension’s Five Multi-Disciplinary Programming Themes

- Community, Workforce, Economic and Business Development
- Global Food Systems
- Educational Attainment
- Environmental Concerns
- Health Systems

All issues and comments were recorded and reported for local, regional and statewide analysis. The compiled data provides valuable information for local and regional extension planning and for specialists serving individual counties. The following is a brief summary of statewide findings from 2012, 2013 and 2014 ACPI processes followed by actions initiated by MU Extension.

Statewide findings related to MU Extension's five multi-disciplinary programming themes:

1. What are the community, workforce, economic and business development issues in your community?

➤ *Workforce development and training:*

Training adults and youth in the vocational and business skills that are in demand.

Actions

- Exploring a new comprehensive workforce approach in our Northeast Missouri programs.
- Documented that Missouri 4-H members spent almost nine times more leisure time engaged in science-related projects than their peers and are three times more likely to go into science-related careers.
- Developed and implemented a revitalized Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training program to help food stamp recipients develop the skills and knowledge necessary to re-enter the workforce.
- Collaborating with the University of Wisconsin to provide workforce training to Department of Transportation contractors.

➤ *Entrepreneurial training and small business development:*

Helping local citizens understand the importance of starting and supporting businesses in their communities and providing assistance in doing so.

Actions

- Teaching young people how to start a business, market products and handle inventory and capital through learning experiences such as Build-A-Business Camp, Show Me Wares and the MADE in Missouri State Entrepreneurship Competition.
- Connecting high-technology entrepreneurs with MU Business Information Center resources in collaboration with Columbia Regional Economic Development, Inc.
- Established a Center for International Trade, in collaboration with MU's Trulaske College of Business, to provide education, training and assistance to businesses exploring new international markets.
- Established a statewide Economic Gardening team to provide growing companies with new market analysis and development assistance.
- Established a Continuing Education and Service program in Engineering and Technology to provide customized educational experiences to manufacturers and businesses that leverage faculty, students and MU resources.
- Developing statewide curriculum for health-based business development.
- Developing statewide curriculum for strategic planning and continuous business improvements.

- *Education about financial management and budgeting:
Helping youth, adults and the elderly develop financial responsibility and independence.*
 - Action**
 - Offering federal and state tax return preparation to low-income families, using this as an opportunity to emphasize importance of financial planning management through Missouri Taxpayer Education Initiative (MoTax) and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) programs.

- *Improving local infrastructure and services:
Improving Internet capabilities, transportation options and general services.*
 - Actions**
 - Updating Missouri's Third-Class County Budget Trend Analysis.
 - Launched Build Your Board online training and certificate for nonprofits.

- *Bringing and keeping people in the community:
Encouraging young people, adults, employees and businesses to remain in the community by creating local employment and developing community amenities.*
 - Actions**
 - Strengthened collaboration with state and federal agencies.
 - Broadened work on regional and community economic development, e.g., Strengthening Economies Together (SET V), and Strengthening Our Communities.
 - Launching Resilient Communities programs.
 - Building community and creating economic development opportunities through Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Arts programs.
 - Provided top-level training for Community Development faculty in facilitation processes.
 - Developing LOFT, an online community leadership program that targets millennials (ages 18–35), and is coached by MU faculty.
 - Engaging over 25,000 4-H members annually in community leadership and service opportunities that help them develop problem-solving skills and practical experience.

2. What are the global food systems issues in your county?

- *Educating people about agriculture and food systems:
Educating people about the origins of their food and how to keep it safe.*
 - Action**
 - Collaborated with Kansas State University to hire a Consumer Food Safety Specialist who works with regional faculty in both states to educate consumers in food supply and safety concerns.

- *Producing, distributing and marketing local foods:
Highlighting the economic importance of, and teaching methods for, developing local food outlets that include local farmers market development and education.*

Actions

- Provided Food Entrepreneurship: A New Way of Thinking about Local Food and Jobs workshops across the state and created new Web resources.
- Strengthened Missouri Farm-to-School program collaborations between nutrition faculty, agriculture and natural resources faculty, and the Missouri Department of Agriculture, resulting in increased use of locally grown foods in schools and other institutional settings.
- Secured a grant from the Healthcare Foundation of Greater Kansas City to explore producer needs and food hub models that would support producer direct sales to institutions.

- *Healthy eating and lifestyles:
Promoting healthy eating, wellness, local food use and preservation, and nutrition education.*

Actions

- Developed rural grocery store and corner store models as well as training to improve access to healthy food while creating viable community-supported economic enterprises.
- Strengthened Missouri Farm-to-School program collaborations between nutrition faculty, agriculture and natural resources faculty, and the Missouri Department of Agriculture, resulting in increased use of locally grown foods in schools and other institutional settings.
- Secured a grant from the Healthcare Foundation of Greater Kansas City to explore producer needs and food hub models that would support producer direct sales to institutions.
- Conducting Kids in the Kitchen experiences that helps kids learn to prepare nutritious snacks and meals.
- Providing Camp Food and Fitness, an MU campus experience for aspiring chefs.
- Providing gardening, food, food preservation and nutrition projects to 4-H members.
- Established 185 school and community gardens in 46 Missouri counties, in collaboration with Family Nutrition Education Programs (FNEP) faculty and staff. Participants grew and harvested 7,772 pounds of produce with a retail value of over \$21,137.
- Engaging over 500 4-H members annually in over 20,000 hours of physical activity through Move Across Missouri.
- Developed Eat Smart in Parks (ESIP) initiative as a collaborative effort to promote healthy food options in Missouri's state and local parks. This initiative includes Eat Smart in Parks policy and training for state and local parks' staff who implement the program.

- Developing a healthy eating and proper nutrition online curriculum for young athletes.
 - Coordinating and managing Missouri Council on Activity and Nutrition's (MOCAN) 50 agency and industry partners.
 - Educated over 200,000 youths and adults through SNAP-Ed Connection family nutrition education programs.
- *Agriculture production management:
Educating agricultural producers about topics like food safety, alternative crop production, technology and business planning.*
- Action**
- Developing statewide hay production, agricultural leases, estate planning and business succession, and commercial horticulture production curricula.
- *Disaster management:
Working to alleviate the economic and environmental stress of weather disasters such as drought.*
- Actions**
- Providing local-level flood, tornado and drought recovery education with families, organizations, farms, businesses and communities.
 - Reorganized and strengthened funding for the multi-disciplinary Community Emergency Management Program.
 - Developed and delivering training for Community Organizations Assisting in Disaster (COAD), which includes agricultural disasters.

3. What are the educational attainment issues in your community?

- *Job and employment skills:
Workforce preparation, GED completion, job-seeking skills and job mentoring.*
- Actions**
- Developed and delivering Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Tackling the Tough Skills curriculum.
 - Piloting in five counties the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) program, developed in collaboration with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
- *Personal and life skills:
Personal finance, financial planning, life skills education, communications, leadership and intergenerational mentoring.*
- Actions**
- Developing leadership skills and confidence in 25,000 4-H members through leadership, communications and expressive arts activities.
 - Conducted 54 Take Control of Your Finances workshops with 552 displaced workers who indicated a high degree of commitment to apply their learning.

- *Youth-focused:*
Preparation for college and post-secondary training — including school partnerships, afterschool and extracurricular activities — and improving graduation rates.

Actions

- Bringing 8,500 youths and 10,145 volunteers to events on the University of Missouri campus, thereby promoting continuance to post-secondary education.
- Engaging underserved youth in the Youth Futures program, 4-H programs, campus experiences, and providing caring adult mentors — all of which promote college attendance and completion.
- Launched 4-H Online, a customer support system facilitating data management and state event enrollment.
- Developing a 4-H member learning platform to foster skills and portfolio development.

- *Technology:*
Technology training for all ages and community access to high-speed Internet.

Actions

- Provided technology-related learning experiences, including robotics and digital media, to 16,000 4-H members.
- Expanding 4-H Robotics programs by providing basic robotics kits.

- *Healthy food:*
Programming for gardening, community gardens, food preparation and preservation, and obesity.

Actions

- Conducting Kids in the Kitchen experiences that help kids learn how to prepare nutritious snacks and meals.
- Providing Camp Food and Fitness, an MU campus experience for aspiring chefs.
- Providing Gardening, Food, Food Preservation and Nutrition Projects to 4-H members.
- Established 185 school and community gardens in 46 Missouri counties, in collaboration with Family Nutrition Education Programs (FNEP) faculty and staff.

4. What are the environmental concerns in your community?

- *Energy:*
Alternative energy education, conservation, renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Action

- Provided energy conservation workshops, using the Exploring Energy Efficiency and Alternatives (E3A) curriculum, in all regions.

- *Water quality and quantity:*
Water quality and pollution, water conservation and water supply.
Actions
 - Training and facilitating water quality and quantity monitoring in critical state areas in collaboration with Our Missouri Waters, a Missouri Department of Natural Resources program.
 - Addressing the aging infrastructure for water and wastewater in rural communities in collaboration with Missouri Department of Natural Resources and others.
- *Recycling:*
Expanded awareness, expanding recycling options and composting.
- *Chemical usage:*
Agricultural and landscape chemical and pesticide application training, hazardous waste disposal and reduction.
Action
 - Developing Healthy Yards for Clean Streams curriculum.
- *Natural resource conservation and stewardship:*
Soil and natural resources conservation, and natural resources stewardship.
Actions
 - Providing learning experiences to 15,000 Missouri 4-H members through shooting sports, sports fishing and camping projects and activities.
 - Coordinating the Missouri Exploring Energy Efficiency and Alternatives (E3) effort focused on reducing environmental impacts from commercial and public enterprises as well as leveraging resources from federal, state and local organizations.

5. What are the health systems issues in your community?

- *Affordable and accessible health care:*
The Affordable Care Act, insurance, Medicare, affordability and health provider shortages.
Action
 - Provided 230 health care reform legislation workshops to over 3,000 Missourians, reaching an additional 400,000 through mass media.
- *Substance abuse:*
Drugs (including prescription), alcohol, and tobacco abuse
- *Healthy eating and lifestyles:*
Obesity; promoting healthy eating, wellness and health management, food production and safety, nutrition, fitness and exercise; and access issues.
Actions
 - Engaging over 500 4-H members annually in over 20,000 hours of physical activity through Move Across Missouri.

- Established 185 school and community gardens in 46 Missouri counties, in collaboration with Family Nutrition Education Programs (FNEP) faculty and staff.
- Developed Eat Smart in Parks (ESIP) initiative as a collaborative effort to promote healthy food options in Missouri's state and local parks. This initiative includes Eat Smart in Parks policy and training for state and local parks' staff who implement the program.
- Developing a healthy eating and proper nutrition online curriculum for young athletes.
- Coordinating and managing Missouri Council on Activity and Nutrition's (MOCAN) 50 agency and industry partners.
- Educated over 200,000 youths and adults through SNAP-Ed Connection family nutrition education programs.

➤ *Aging and elder care:*

Issues specific to aging, health and care for the elderly.

Actions

- Provided A Matter of Balance fall-prevention programs to over 300 older adults.
- Provided Stay Strong, Stay Healthy (SSSH) program to 376 older adults.
- Provided Advanced SSSH to 95 participants.

➤ *Mental health:*

Access to education, providers, resources and caregiver training; stress management and mental wellness.

Actions

- Launched the *Mental Health First Aid* program that teaches professionals the signs and symptoms of mental health issues, from depression to severe mental illness, and assists individuals and families seeking screening and treatment.
- Training teens to deliver the Marshall Mentor Program curriculum at youth camps, clubs and afterschool programs. The curriculum fosters understanding of empathy, strength, courage, perseverance, kindness and forgiveness, and challenges youth to put these traits into action.
- Educated 600 professionals to recognize and refer youth with mental health issues.

Statewide findings related to the University of Missouri System's commitment to foster entrepreneurship as a driver for economic development:

Definition of entrepreneur: an entrepreneur is someone with the ability to identify a need, define it, invest in it, build business opportunity around it and repeat that process.

6. What are some of the barriers to entrepreneurship in your county?

➤ *Feasibility:*

Limited business opportunities, lack of local consumer support, low population base to support new businesses, limited or fixed incomes.

➤ *Employment barriers:*

Lack of high-tech skills and preparation, lack of available workforce with good work ethic, no workforce training available, low wages, job competition from nearby areas, limited employment opportunities, limited opportunities for higher educated (underemployment).

Action

- Documented that Missouri 4-H members spent almost nine times more leisure time engaged in science-related projects than their peers and are three times more likely to go into science-related careers.

➤ *Infrastructure:*

Land cost and availability, transportation, insufficient telecommunications infrastructure, poor infrastructure of water quantity and quality, sewer, electricity.

➤ *Lack of business knowledge and understanding:*

Business and finance education, business technology education and support, business transition and succession support, startup and existing business support.

Action

- Developing a curriculum for farm and business succession planning.

➤ *Financial:*

Lack of startup capital, lack of investors and investment opportunities, overly conservative local banks.

➤ *Leadership and collaboration:*

Lack of networking or communication, lack of economic development leadership, lack of community vision or poor attitude.

Actions

- Revising Experience in Community Enterprise and Leadership (EXCEL) program.
- Developing LOFT, an online community leadership program that targets millennials (ages 18–35), and is coached by MU faculty.
- Launching Resilient Communities curriculum focused on community economic development.

7. What issues could MU Extension address in your communities to foster entrepreneurship as a means to economic development for the area and state?

➤ *Startup business education:*
Developing a business plan, market opportunity and feasibility analysis, marketing through Internet and social media, finance management, accounting and fees, taxes and regulations.

➤ *Online education:*
Webinars, recorded trainings, online clearinghouse of resources.

Action

- Developing a new curriculum for health-related business development.

➤ *Focus on youth as entrepreneurs: Schools:*
Business and finance education, high school “work-ready” certification, 4-H and FFA.

Action

- Teaching youth how to start a business, market products, and handle inventory and capital through learning experiences such as Build-A-Business Camp, Show Me Wares and the MADE Competition.

➤ *Provide startup business resources:*

➤ *Identify assets and resources:*

➤ *Business funding:*

➤ *Different approaches to economic development:*
Entrepreneurial fairs and regional tours.

Actions

- Strengthened collaboration with state and federal agencies.
- Broadened work on regional community economic development through Strengthening Economies Together (SET V) and Strengthening Our Communities.
- Launching Resilient Communities program.
- Expanded Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Arts programs to build community and create economic development.

- Provided top-level training for community development faculty in facilitation processes
- Developing LOFT, an online community leadership program that targets millennials (ages 18–35), and is coached by MU faculty.
- Revising EXCEL community leadership curriculum.

NOTE: The discussion of entrepreneurship occurred one year ago. We have not included in this summary programs already being conducted by our various program areas.