



**PRAIRIE VIEW  
A&M UNIVERSITY**  
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE  
AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Cooperative Extension Program

**TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
EXTENSION**

# **Operational Guidelines for Joint County Extension Programs in Texas**

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Prairie View A&M University  
Cooperative Extension Program

and

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service  
The Texas A&M University System

*Revised July 2016*

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**Memorandum of Understanding:**  
**Operational Guidelines for Joint County Extension Programs in Texas**

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Prairie View A&M University Cooperative Extension Program (referred to as Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension in remainder of document) have in place both formal and informal structures for administrative and programmatic coordination that maximize the efficient use of human and fiscal resources, and strengthen the services provided by both organizations. This document, *Operational Guidelines for Joint County Extension Programs in Texas*, reflects the management and operating protocol for a continued partnership that recognizes and values the diverse expertise and contributions of both Extension organizations.

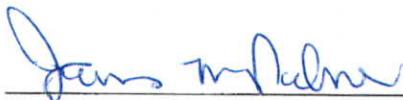
In the *Operational Guidelines*, the administrative coordination between Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is set forth in the areas of recruitment and selection of Extension agents, including applicant qualifications, position announcements, application and selection of procedures, and orientation. Supervisory roles are also coordinated.

*Operational Guidelines* also establishes a protocol for joint county collaboration in order to ensure program efficiency in the delivery of services while recognizing the contributions of both programs in implementing countywide activities.

The ability of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension to play pivotal roles in meeting individual, family and community needs is strengthened by their ability to work together with a common goal: improving the quality of life for Texas citizens.

We are committed to the "one-program" Extension concept, and we view this revised Memorandum of Understanding as a way to sustain the positive working relationship between Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. We are committed to goal of the two organizations working cooperatively to conduct quality educational programs for clientele, while avoiding duplication of effort. The targeted focus of Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension toward limited resources audiences provides a tremendous opportunity of better meeting the educational needs of a broad clientele base. The broad programmatic reach of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension service reaches Texans across the entire spectrum of leadership education, agriculture and natural resources, health and well-being and community development.

A strong relationship between Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in fulfilling the Extension mission enables the resident of Texas to receive the assistance they need without regard to which organization holds the expertise. We are committed to enhancing and building on this partnership throughout all levels of our organizations.



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Date: 8/1/16

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## **Overview of Cooperative Extension in Texas**

Cooperative Extension arose from the concept that the knowledge and results of research developed within the land-grant universities should be made available to all individuals in the state. Thus Cooperative Extension brought the fruits of public investment in land-grant universities to the people and gave renewed on lifelong learning. In Texas, as well as in seventeen other southern states, the United States Congress established two entities to provide Extension services: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (1862) and Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension (1890).

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is a separate state agency and component of The Texas A&M University System. It is headquartered in College Station and serves all counties from its offices in 251 of Texas' 254 counties. The mission statement of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is "improve the lives of people, businesses, and communities across Texas and beyond through high quality, relevant education."

Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension is part of the triad in Prairie View A&M University's College of Agriculture and Human Sciences and currently provides educational outreach activities in thirty-seven counties. Its mission is "to respond to the needs of underserved Texans through life changing learning opportunities that empower families, promote agriculture, strengthen communities, and foster leadership development in youth."

While the programs of both agencies focus on the same four broad areas – Agriculture and Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Sciences, 4-H and Youth Development, and Community and Economic Development, the primary audiences for these programs differ. The programs of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension are statewide and are aimed at all segments of the Texas population. The programs of Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension are targeted to limited resource families and individuals. The clientele and the expertise needed to identify and deliver services effectively to those individuals and families distinguish the work of the two entities.

## **History of Cooperative Extension**

The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 established the formal Extension System in the United States; however, outreach activities in some Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) predated this establishment by nearly forty years.

In 1875, Alabama A&M University began publishing a newsletter as a means of facilitating technology transfer to farmers. As early as 1881, Tuskegee University started outreach activities, organized an Extension department in 1889, and conducted its first conference for farmers in 1892. This annual activity continues today. In 1890, Dr. George Washington Carver implemented the legendary "result and method demonstrations" using a covered wagon to take information on new agriculture techniques to local farmers. This "moveable school," the first in the nation, spread rapidly within the United States and continued abroad.



In 1906, T.M. Campbell was employed by Tuskegee as the first Negro outreach educator in the country. A month later, John B. Pierce of Hampton University filled a similar position in Virginia. Both worked as coordinators within the Negro Extension Program. In 1916, Otis S. O'Neal, a Negro county agent at Fort Valley State College, implemented the "Ham and Egg Show," a demonstration project on producing and processing swine and poultry, which continued annually for more than 50 years. Other educational programs included summer day camps, judging contests, and talent shows for Negro boys and girls. Negro Extension programs (as they were called at that time) were developed under the Smith-Lever Act by the 1890 institutions in some southern states. By 1921, there were 237 Black farm and home demonstration agents employed in 15 of the 16 southern and border states. Only Missouri had no Negro Extension agents. Cooperative Extension work was conducted through Prairie View A&M University as early as 1915. In 1941, the Extension program at Prairie View A&M University had personnel located in 51 Texas counties.

The 1862 institutions provided supervision and administration of these programs, a practice that would continue until 1972. The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 made no provision for the sharing of federal funds with these 1890 institutions. Federal funds were given to the states, which designated the institutions that would receive Extension funds and manage programs. While the number of Negro Extension agents was growing, little or no public funds were made available to the 1890 institutions to support Extension programs, with most states choosing not to share those dollars with Black land-grant institutions. In 1928, only four 1890 institutions received Extension funds. This Negro Extension System operated until the Civil Rights era when it was terminated with the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. It was not until 1972, after several amendments to the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 and the initiation of formula funding, that 1890 institutions began receiving federal funds for Extension work. The funding that year was \$4 million for Extension. Tuskegee Institute, a private institution, was included in the funding in recognition of its historic role in developing outreach educational programs.

The Indirect Funding Period under Public Law 89-106 lasted from 1972 to 1977, when all federal Extension funds earmarked for 1890 institutions were channeled through the 1862 land-grant institutions. Although with Public Law 89-106, day-to-day administration of 1890 Extension programs became the responsibility of coordinators at the 1890 institutions, the supervision (decision to employ, terminate or promote personnel, decisions related to travel, equipment and supplies) remained with the 1862 directors. Funds appropriated to conduct 1890 Extension programs were sent directly to the 1862 institutions.

The Direct Funding Period began with the enactment of Public Law 95-113 in 1977. Under its provision, 1890 institutions gained administrative control of their funds and Extension programs, receiving Extension funds directly from the federal government. Guidelines required continued cooperation between 1890 institutions and 1862 colleges and universities to maintain a single unified Extension program.

Over the years, Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension has paced itself to anticipate change and to embrace the challenges and opportunities of the future. Traditionally, it has focused its unique resources on high priority issues facing its targeted clientele as the needs of Texans grow in complexity. Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension offers credible, relevant and effective educational responses that have a positive and enduring impact on individuals, families, and communities.

***Missions of the  
Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension Program and  
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service***

<b>Prairie View A&amp;M University Cooperative Extension Program</b>	<b>TEXAS A&amp;M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE Texas A&amp;M University System</b>
<i>To respond to the needs of underserved Texans through life changing learning opportunities that empower families, promote agriculture, strengthen communities, and foster leadership development in youth."</i>	<i>To improve the lives of people, businesses, and communities across Texas and beyond through high quality, relevant education.</i>

## **OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR JOINT COUNTY EXTENSION PROGRAMS IN TEXAS**

### **I. OFFICE IDENTIFICATION AND SIGNAGE**

In counties with both Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension programs, one sign will be prominently displayed that shows the names and logos of both organizations.

### **II. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF EXTENSION AGENTS - CEP**

#### **Qualifications**

- ☐ Master's Degree required. Applicants with a Bachelor's Degree will be considered, and if selected must complete a Master's Degree from an accredited university within eight years of employment with the Cooperative Extension Program (CEP); failure to complete degree will result in termination; ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing; demonstrated ability to integrate technology, information, knowledge, and skills in applying solutions to issues identified by county stakeholders; computer skills required; willingness to work the necessary hours to fulfill job responsibilities (some evenings and weekends); must have a strong service ethic and desire to work with all audiences in assigned county, regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin. This position requires travel connected with official duties, including attendance at night and weekend meetings, participation in out-of-county events, access to a personal vehicle, and the ability to obtain/maintain a valid Texas driver's license.

#### **Position Announcements**

- ☐ The Cooperative Extension Program (CEP) Program Leader will develop position announcements with input from the appropriate District Extension Administrator (DEA) and County Extension Director (CED). The DEA or CED is responsible for communicating Regional Program Director (RPD) input, if any, to the CEP Program Leader.
- ☐ The CEP Program Leader will determine the number of days and advertising venues with DEA or CED.
- ☐ The CEP Program Leader is responsible for notifying DEA, CED, and RPD when a position is posted and the closing date.
- ☐ The DEA or CED are responsible for increasing local awareness of the vacancy and directing interested candidates to the appropriate PVAMU website or personnel.
- ☐ The CEP Administrative Officer will coordinate the employment process according to the Prairie View A&M University Human Resource requirements.

### **Coordination of Application Procedures**

- ☐ The CEP Administrative Officer will be responsible for coordination of the employment process.
- ☐ The PVAMU Human Resource Office screens applicants and releases candidate(s) to the CEP-Program Leader, who in turn forwards applicant information to the DEA, CED, and RPD for evaluation and review.

### **Selection Procedures**

- ☐ The CEP Program Leader/DEA or CED and RPD will cooperatively determine who to interview and will also work with the CEP Administrative Officer to coordinate interviews at appropriate county office or agreed upon location.
- ☐ All search committee members must take required TAMUS training before conducting interviews.
- ☐ The CEP Program Leader and DEA or CED will coordinate efforts to include county staff, as appropriate, to view candidate presentations that are part of the interview process.
- ☐ Based on the PVAMU hiring process requirements, the search committee will make a recommendation for the position to the CEP Administrator.
- ☐ The CEP Administrator will have final approval.
- ☐ An offer letter of employment, signed by the Prairie View A&M University Provost and CEP Administrator, will be sent to the applicant for a signature of acceptance or rejection including salary and preferred date of employment.
- ☐ Unsuccessful candidates are notified by the PVAMU Human Resource department once an applicant has been selected.
- ☐ The CEP Associate Administrator, CEP Program Leader, and CEP Administrative Officer will coordinate employment process for the successful candidate. District Extension on Administrators and County Extension Directors in urban counties will also be involved as appropriate.

### **Orientation**

- ☐ The new Extension Agent-CEP will report to Prairie View A&M University for a minimum of the first two days of work. On the first day of work, the employee goes through university processing with the Human Resources Department. The second day of work, the CEP Program Leader and Administrative Officer will coordinate an orientation on the CEP and its philosophy.
- ☐ New Extension CEP agents will participate in the First Step Program during the first month of employment as appropriate.
- ☐ The DEA and CED, appropriate RPD, district 4-H specialist and CEP 4-H specialist will be responsible for joint county orientation.
- ☐ The new Extension Agent-CEP will attend Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Foundation and Program Excellence Academy for new faculty orientation training at the earliest opportunity.
- ☐ The new Extension Agent-CEP will complete the study guide with the addition of relevant CEP items and submit to DEA/CED within six months of employment.



- ☐ The DEA/CED and CEP Program Leaders will determine an equivalency ratio as well as submit and file joint recommendations for new incoming agents to CEP and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension state offices within the first month of employment.

### **III. SUPERVISORY ROLES**

- ☐ The CEP Program Leaders will provide general programmatic supervision, leadership and coordination.
- ☐ The DEA/CED will provide direct supervision of CEP Agents.
- ☐ A mentor will be assigned by the DEA/CED with concurrence from the appropriate CEP Program Leader for all new Extension agents.
- ☐ The mentor/mentee guide will be used and will be coordinated with the CEP Program Leader during this process.
- ☐ Regular communication regarding program implementation and evaluation will be ongoing among DEA/CED and program leaders. Input will be solicited from appropriate RPD.
- ☐ The DEA/CED and a CEP Program Leader will conduct a six-month probationary evaluation and a performance review annually for all new CEP employees. There is also a joint non-official probationary evaluation at three months. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension may offer additional check-in periods.
- ☐ The mentor/mentee relationship will continue for a twelve month period, which coincides with the time frame for AgriLife mentor/mentee relationships.

#### **Job Descriptions**

- ☐ The job description for Extension Agents-CEP will be developed jointly by the CEP Program Leader and the DEA/CED. The DEA/CED is responsible for communicating RPD input, if any, to the CEP-Program Leader.
- ☐ All Extension Agents-CEP will have identified 4-H and Youth Development and Community Development responsibilities.

#### **Annual Program Plan**

- ☐ The Cooperative Extension Program Leaders will participate in the county program planning conferences and provide agenda items related to the CEP. The DEA/CED will coordinate dates with CEP Program Leader.
- ☐ The CEP agents/program aide(s) will submit a draft plan of work to the CEP Program Leaders at the same time that they are submitted to the DEAs/CEDs.
- ☐ The CEP Program Leader and DEA/CED/RPD will provide input to the annual program plan of CEP agents and program aide(s).
- ☐ The CEP Program Leader and RPD will review and/or approve the Plan of Work. The CEP Program Leaders will ensure the achievement of the NIFA goals through relevant outcome and output plans.
- ☐ The annual program plan will be integrated within the total county plan to ensure a coordinated one program county concept.

**Performance Appraisal Process**

- ☐ The CEP Program Leader and DEA/CED will jointly conduct performance appraisals for CEP county staff with input from appropriate RPD.
- ☐ The CEP Program Leader and DEA/CED will jointly determine CEP agent ratings. The Performance Appraisal System for county Extension agents of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and Prairie View A&M University will be used for CEP Extension Agents/Aides.

**Monthly Reports**

- ☐ The CEP county staff is expected to complete monthly reports in Texas by the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the month. Commissioners' court reports are also required.
- ☐ Extension Agents-CEP /program aide(s) will coordinate their inputs with total county reports.
- ☐ The CEP county staff is required to respond to all headquarters (CEP) request for any additional programmatic information.

**Career Ladder**

- ☐ The DEA/CED and CEP Program Leaders will submit and file joint recommendations for initial rank of new incoming agents to Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension state offices.
- ☐ The CEP Extension agents will participate in the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Career Ladder System.
- ☐ The CEP agents are responsible for notifying CEP Program Leaders of application for a career ladder promotion before submission.

**IV. TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION**

- ☐ The CEP Program Leader and Associate Director of Operations will recommend to the CEP Administrator the travel allocations based on county needs and available resources.
- ☐ Advance leave forms must be provided to the DEA/CED by the Extension Agent upon approval by the CEP Program Leader. Out-of-county travel must be approved in advance by the CEP Program Leader.
- ☐ Travel will be processed through the CEP fiscal office.

**Personal Leave/Sick Leave**

- ☐ CEP county staff is responsible for requesting personal leave/sick leave online via the Texas A&M University System Single Sign On System. CEP-Program Leader is responsible for notifying CEDs/DEAs when leave has been approved.
- ☐ Request for leave should be submitted in advance of planned vacation.
- ☐ County office, CEDs/DEAs and CEP Program Leader should be notified when emergency leave occurs.

**V. REQUEST FOR CEP SPECIALISTS**

- ☐ Requests for CEP specialists to conduct educational programs and activities in the counties will be made formally or informally by the county staff person. The appropriate CEP Program Leader and DEA/CED should be informed of all county requests when they are made.
- ☐ The CEP specialists conducting special programs should coordinate with the county staff and involve them in program activities for clientele groups.
- ☐ In the event CEP specialists have certain programs or technical information they would like to share with the county staff, they may schedule themselves in the counties with their supervisor's approval. The DEA/CED should be aware of intended visits.
- ☐ Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension agents can also request Texas A&M AgriLife Extension specialists to assist with program delivery or to seek special assistance, and appropriate CEP program leaders should be informed.

**VI. COUNTY STAFF RELATIONSHIPS**

- ☐ The DEA/CED or designated Texas A&M AgriLife Extension staff person will present the new CEP Extension Agent to the Commissioner's Court or follow the county protocol used for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension agents. The CEP Program Leader will attend the Court meeting also.
- ☐ The CEP staff members are full members of the county Extension staff.
- ☐ The CEP county staff will participate in all county interpretation events.
- ☐ The CEP agents will participate in all county office conferences and provide support staff weekly schedules.
- ☐ The CEP agents will provide input for hiring, supervision, and evaluation of county support staff.

**VII. JOINT PROGRAM COLLABORATION**

In order to ensure the visibility and recognize the contributions of both programs in implementing county-wide activities involving both Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, the following protocol should be followed:

**County Program Collaboration**

- ☐ Both organizations' names should be displayed on program materials, posters, signs, etc.
- ☐ Staff persons with responsibilities to assist with the implementation of a program or project should be kept fully informed and updated on the current status.
- ☐ Recognition will be given to both organizations when implementing grant proposals jointly.
- ☐ All county staff persons should respond positively when assistance is requested for conducting training, meetings and other activities.
- ☐ Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension staff should coordinate programming when working with the same audience.

- ☐ Appropriate titles and affiliations should be included on all county interpretation and accomplishment documents.
- ☐ Both Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension logos should be on programming events and materials.

#### **District Programs**

- ☐ The CEP Agents and Program Aides will support district events and activities.
- ☐ Agents/Program Aides are responsible for notifying Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension supervisors of scheduling conflicts.
- ☐ Both Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension logos should be on programming events and materials.

### **VIII. TRAININGS AND CONFERENCES FOR COUNTY STAFF**

- ☐ The CEP agents and program aide(s) will attend CEP State Extension Training Conference and other required CEP trainings.
- ☐ Extension Agents-CEP will attend Texas A&M AgriLife Extension state, regional or district trainings, as deemed appropriate by the CEP Program Leader and DEA/CED, with consideration given to the travel budget. This will be determined well in advance of event so that any responsibilities assigned to an agent will be covered.
- ☐ The DEAs, CEDs, RPDs and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension agents will be invited and are encouraged to attend Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension, State Extension Training Conference and other CEP trainings.

### **IX. EXTENSION LEADERSHIP ADVISORY BOARD AND PROGRAM COMMITTEES**

- ☐ Leadership Advisory and Youth Boards should be supported by CEP agents and inclusive of CEP target audience.
- ☐ The CEP agents are expected to organize program committees that focus on the needs of limited resource audiences.

### **X. COUNTY SUPPORT FOR CEP**

- ☐ *Office Space:* DEA/CED will work with the Commissioner's Court and county staff to furnish office space for CEP county staff.
- ☐ *Equipment and Furniture:* Will be provided by the county. Computer equipment for CEP county staff is provided by the CEP administration.
- ☐ *Secretarial Support:* Will be provided by the county.
- ☐ *Office Supplies:* Will be provided by the county (e.g., paper, pencils, pens, etc.).
- ☐ *Demonstration Supplies:* Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension will provide demonstration supplies. The CEP Program Leader will allocate funds for demonstration supplies to CEP county staff persons.
- ☐ *Telephones:* Will be provided by the county.
- ☐ *Other Supplies:* Letterhead, postage, business cards, name tags and envelopes will

- be provided by Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension.
- ☐ *Computer support:* Texas A&M AgriLife and Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension Information Technology will provide basic computer services to support CEP county staff statewide based on the specifications found in the Intrasystem Cooperation contract for IT services. The CEP county staff will be provided access to the Internet when it is available to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension county staff.
- ☐ The DEA/CED will assess the current financial capabilities of each county Commissioners' Court and work with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension/ Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension administration to establish an action plan for enhanced support for CEP. Consideration will be given to potential salary and travel support as well as programmatic support.

## **XI. METHOD FOR SELECTING COUNTIES FOR PRAIRIE VIEW COOPERATIVE EXTENSION**

- ☐ Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension administration will inform Texas A&M AgriLife Extension administration and coordinate with Associate Director of County Operations of the opportunity to implement a program in a specific county. Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension will consider county characteristics including poverty level and geographic location, except when program implementation in a specific county is desired.
- ☐ The DEAs/CEDs will submit a request through Texas A&M AgriLife Extension to associate director for county operations and CEP administration providing appropriate justification for adding county position(s).

### **Staffing Patterns**

- ☐ As vacancies occur, Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension administration and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension administration will review staffing patterns based on current priorities, program objectives and available resources. Final decision will be made by Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension administration.

## **XII. COORDINATION CONFERENCES**

- ☐ Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension administration, DEAs/CEDs, CEP program leaders and RPDs will participate in quarterly conferences and annual coordination conference at PVAMU.
- ☐ Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension program leaders will participate in Texas A&M AgriLife Extension program leader meetings as appropriate.
- ☐ Senior Administrative Staff from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension will meet annually to discuss strategies for enhancing program coordination.
- ☐ Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension administrators and specialists will be invited to participate in Texas A&M AgriLife Extension headquarters staff



conferences.

- ☐ Texas A&M AgriLife Extension administration, RPDs and specialists will be invited to participate in Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension headquarters staff conferences.
- ☐ State level planning committees will include representation from both Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension concerning issues that have implications for both programs.

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, political beliefs and marital or family status.