



NASULGC survey-Colorado findings

The National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges contracted with a consulting firm, Copernicus, to survey the nation regarding the value of the Extension brand. Colorado State University agreed to fund additional surveying to make the results relevant to our state. The research study explored three questions: (1) where are we today regarding Extension branding nationwide and in Colorado; (2) what is our potential to increase relevance; and (3) how do we improve our brand value.

The consulting firm presented this information at a recent national Extension director's meeting. There they noted different characteristics about Extension revealed in the study, including:

- Trustworthy Source
- Current/Reliable Information
- Expert Review
- Convenient Access
- Great Staff
- Quality of Life
- Change Agents
- In-person Support
- Scope of Work is Inclusive
- University/Nationwide Network
- Nearly a Century of Experience

Additionally, they said that “Most important for Extension is to reinforce that it is a resource people can TRUST. It provides information/programs that are Current/Reliable, reviewed by Experts and delivered by Great Staff.”

We have an opportunity to meet with the consulting firm to dig deeper into the Colorado findings.

The summary below was sent out to all CSU Extension employees through the Director’s Update in December:

A total of 335 interviews were conducted from June to July 2008 in Colorado. Interviews were conducted online and lasted about 15 minutes. Participants were members of a representative online panel; criteria included gender, age, urban/rural, ethnicity, education and household income.

Main points:

- General awareness and knowledge of “land grant” universities is very low in Colorado, similar to the rest of the country.
- Awareness of CSU Extension is higher (50%) in Colorado than in other states (38%). However, very few know that CSU Extension is part of a larger national network.
- Awareness of 4-H in Colorado (77%) is much higher than awareness of Extension (50%). Awareness of Master Gardener is lower (22%) than awareness of Extension. Very few people that that higher 4-H or Master Gardener is part of Extension.
- When asked to indicate agreement or disagreement on the types of programs needed by consumers, the top two programs noted were (1) programs that teach people how to better manage finances (80%) and (2) programs that help youth develop leadership skills (83%).
- If consumers sought help from some resource in the areas Extension focuses on, the top three areas sought were: (1) personal health (54%), (2) personal finance (39%), and (3) gardening and landscaping (30%).
- In these same areas, however, few people who needed help relied on Extension. One percent used Extension for personal health; 2% used Extension for personal finance; and 15% used Extension for gardening and landscaping. Note that 18% relied on Extension for ag/farming/ranching in Colorado.
- Those who have used Extension give it very strong ratings. Seventy seven percent rated the information /guidance as either excellent or very good. The same cannot be said of other resources people have used. Only 49% rates other resources as excellent or very good.

- The top characteristics that motivate consumers to use a resource are: trustworthy source, great staff, convenient access, current and reliable information, expert review, and quality of life.
- Extension and the internet can help strengthen the Extension brand. Eighty-six percent of Coloradoans surveyed said that the internet is the first place they turn to when they need some information. However, they were concerned that there is so much information on the internet that it's difficult to know what to trust and to know what is relevant and up to date.
- People are very interested in using multiple ways (in-person classes included) to access Extension programs. Extension can broaden access to its programs and services using multiple teaching methodologies.
- The issues which CSU Extension should address are:
 - Energy – biofuels, solar, wind, biomass (85%)
 - Youth development in science, technology, engineering and math (85%)
 - Water resources management (84%)
 - Water quality (83%)
 - Environmental conservation (79%)
 - Youth violence (78%)
 - Youth development with respect to environment and health (78%)
 - Keeping seniors healthy (77%)
 - Parenting for at-risk families (77%)
 - Drought and fire management (75%)
 - Nutrition for low income families (75%)
 - Crime prevention and management (73%)
 - Urban youth development to encourage college attendance (73%)
 - Food safety – personal and restaurant (69%)
 - General nutrition (69%)
 - Poverty (68%)

- Improving crop yield and productivity (67%)
- Landscaping – soil, composting, weed control, insects, xeriscape (58%)
- Small business development support (57%)
- Accurate information in climate and atmospheric sciences (54%)
- Youth in agriculture (50%)
- Farm and ranch marketing and management (48%)
- Livestock management practices (47%)
- Farm and ranch pest management (47%)
- Small acreage management for new land owners (40%)

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