Recommendations (in chronological order)

• Answer the big question
  While the Futuring exercise began the discussion, Extension leadership must be able to articulate ‘who we are and what we do’ in such a way that the entire organization and our various constituencies understand the explanation. In other words, the entire organization must be aligned and able to explain in similar terms our mission and vision. The current mission is a starting place, but the answer to “who and what,” especially as we move into the future, goes farther than the mission. Our suggestion is to continue this discussion through an over-arching committee on Roles and Responsibilities and Organizational Re-design. We suggest 2 one and one-half day retreats with representatives from these two previous sub-committees, the steering committee, DAC, the Director of Extension, and a representative of outreach leadership at the University. One retreat would be in Jan. and one in February. We firmly believe that these meetings cannot be done via technology. They require face-to-face hammering out of details and coming to agreement (consensus). While the Futuring Conference and subsequent work by the task forces have provided good data, we now need to come to closure and make decisions. We need the decision makers at the table. The outcome of these two retreats will be Framework for the Future: A Strategic Plan for Cooperative Extension.

• Identify the disconnect(s) and fix it
  Four of the five groups mentioned the disconnect between campus and field, between specialists and agents, between specialists and specialists. While it is easy to say “it’s all about communication,” the problem is really not about our ability to communicate. We all have excellent communication skills; it is one of the criteria we use for hiring into Extension. It IS about the systems and mechanisms that either are not functioning or do not exist that facilitate communication; the design, if you will, of the organization. This may mean that a re-design of the organization is necessary. Certainly we need to re-establish or rebuild the conduits through which members of our organization communicate. However, we recommend that this action follow the first item listed above.

• Take an entrepreneurial view
  The report of the Funding subcommittee clearly establishes the critical need for additional sources of funding to support the mission and vision of Cooperative Extension. Equally important is maximizing the effectiveness of our efforts using our current funding. The steering committee recommends an aggressive approach to extramural funding, using organizational incentives to increase the interest in and acquisition of additional funding. Current efforts to improve the skill level of CSUCE professionals in securing revenue from extramural sources through training must continue, as well as the current emphasis on user fees. There are also good examples of successful extramural funding at all levels of the organization. Others need to learn from those who are succeeding in these efforts. One example of a successful model is when specialists identify and apply for new sources of funding which fit Extension’s mission and vision, partnering with county-based faculty for delivery. While cooperative discussions must occur for this partnership to work, Cooperative Extension already has evidence that this model (used in FSNEP, NEP, CO-CYFAR, etc.) is one that can work well. There are numerous other examples of successful extramural funding which could serve as models for others in the organization.
• Plug in marketing and technology to support the mission and vision of the organization.

The reports of these two committees reflect suggestions which also need to be considered and may move concurrently with the previous three recommendations. However, it is the opinion of the steering committee that these two need to support the outcome of the first three recommendations. Marketing and technology must support “who we are and what we do” and must be compatible with whatever re-design occurs as a result of the discussion around the disconnect.

• Invest in productive relationships and constituencies

Several of the reports referred in some way to the relationships we have with our partners and our clientele. In some instances these relationships were identified as strengths, in other instances as barriers to further growth and development of Extension programming. What appears clear is the need for the continued development of new relationships which may mean that it may not be possible to continue to maintain relationships which no longer serve the purpose of supporting re-focused Extension programming.

Assumptions About the Current Organizational Climate

• Importance –

The timing of this Futuring effort is especially critical in light of the simultaneous development of A Strategic Plan for Outreach at Colorado State University. The hope is that our work will feed into, as well as build upon that document.

Our work is also consistent with three of the strategies identified by the Kellogg Commission as necessary to make universities effective partners for engagement in the 21st Century:

- Institutional leaders must work to make engagement so much a priority that it becomes part of the core mission of the University. It must be reflected in the full range of activities, and in every endeavor.
- Interdisciplinary research, teaching, and learning must be encouraged as part of the engagement agenda.
- Secure funding streams must be sought to support engagement activities. Partnerships, fees, and internal allocations are all possibilities. The greatest promise seems to lie in developing new partnerships with public agencies and the private sector

(Quoted from “Connecting: Why Universities must Foster Engagement” by Grahan B. Spanier, President, The Pennsylvania State University, presented to Washington State University All-Extension Conference, October 15, 2002.)

Finally, it seems appropriate and timely to center our planning efforts around building flexibility into the CE system.

• Urgency (short turn around necessary)

Because of the impending Strategic Plan for Outreach, it is essential that our work be completed in the near-term. We do not have the luxury of taking six months or a year to conclude. We anticipate that these efforts would conclude with the development and acceptance of a Strategic Plan by March 1, 2004.
• **Excitement about potential** (recognition that more work is necessary; willingness to work)

Because of the work of the Futuring effort and task forces, the system is aware of and excited about the possibility of change. Now is the time to act. Individuals have indicated a willingness to do the work. The individuals who should be included in this planning effort feel a sense of ownership in the success of Extension in the future. They are committed and passionate about the scope and vision of Extension, and they are willing to become change leaders for the organization. They recognize the importance of this work and are willing to take the time necessary for research, discussion, and decision making. An example of this is the input provided by ESP as a result of a special meeting called for just this purpose. It takes only 5-12% of an organization doing things differently for change to occur in the culture. Extension must focus on these early adopters and recognize and reward their efforts.

• **Need time to work face to face**

We believe this important work demands and deserves face-to-face discussion with the highest levels of leadership within Extension and University outreach. The decision making that needs to occur around the issues discussed above cannot happen through technology alone. Hence, the recommendation that further work occur in face-to-face retreats.

• **Other models may help avoid unnecessary design work**

Several of the reports indicate that we may learn from others who have gone before us. It may be appropriate, prior to or between the two retreats, to identify how other states have changed the roles and responsibilities of their staff, as well as re-designed their systems to provide and strengthen the linkages necessary to support program deliver based on a consistent mission and vision.

**Appendices:** Complete reports of the task forces are attached.

Steering Committee Members:

Jacque Miller, Co-Chair
Judy Barth, Co-Chair
Jan Carroll
Nathan Moreng
Kipp Nye
Elisa Shackleton
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