

strategic framework

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION • 2006-2011



vision

Washington State University Extension is the world-class outreach and engagement enterprise of the University serving the people of Washington and the global society in which we live. We are the best choice in the nation for complete and culturally appropriate educational and developmental programs that link the University's research and knowledge bases to society's needs and issues. Our close relationships within communities allow us to deliver personalized education that challenges and inspires individuals to achieve their highest goals. We create, interpret, and deliver knowledge to society that improves the health and well-being of individuals and the environment, fuels our state's economy, and enhances and enriches our communities.

mission

Washington State University Extension engages people, organizations and communities to advance economic well-being and quality of life by connecting them to the knowledge base of the university and by fostering inquiry, learning, and the application of research.



Washington State University Extension is important to the state because.....



... we work in partnership with communities to identify issues that the University's research and knowledge bases can address. Application of new knowledge and technologies contributes to the economic and cultural vitality of the state.

... as part of Washington State University, we provide unbiased, research-based information that gives people the knowledge to improve their health and livelihoods.

... we deliver educational programs that are adapted to critical needs in the community. As a result, outcomes are long-lasting and have deep impact on the health and well-being of all citizens and the environments in which they live.



... our presence in every county enables community members to come to WSU directly with their issues. The assistance that they receive helps them improve their lives.

... our strong local partnerships allow us to leverage human and capital resources in order to affect action on critical issues.

values

Land Grant Tradition: WSU Extension is a unique partnership of federal, state, and county governments that brings Washington State University to the people.



Positive Impact: We are committed to research-based programs that have a positive impact on people's lives and Washington's communities.

Capacity Building: WSU Extension programs create capacity to solve social, economic, and environmental issues among an increasingly diverse constituency.

Dynamic People: People in WSU Extension are empowered to act and are highly motivated, culturally diverse, open to change, entrepreneurial, and continuously learning.

Diversity and Respect: We believe that a healthy work environment in which diversity and pluralism are both welcome and represented enhances our work and creativity.



Learning Organization: We value our connection to Washington State University, the knowledge of our constituents, the professional expertise of our faculty and staff, and the dedication of our volunteers; we are committed to sustained professional growth and enrichment.

Partnerships: We value partnerships that expand opportunities for Washington State University, our learners, and communities across the state.

programming goals

Washington State University Extension will create outreach programs that address societal challenges and opportunities. Programming will be delivered statewide (and in some cases beyond state and national boundaries) by Extension Educators and through our extensive network of volunteers. Additionally, WSU Extension will work collaboratively with other WSU units and partner organizations to achieve program goals. Extension programming will be organized around seven goals. Our success will be measured by our ability to achieve these goals.





Goal I: Create and sustain vibrant communities and urban neighborhoods

Situation: Washington is a state of great contrast and diversity. It contains a vast rural landscape, though it is highly urbanized. It is also home to 24 tribal nations. The population of Washington reflects its fundamental connection to a broader global society. It is populated by people from throughout the world and continues to draw new residents from Southeast Asia, Mexico, Central and South America, Eastern Europe, and Africa. Even with this tremendous diversity, Washington's people share the common dream of building a life for themselves and their families, living in a vibrant community, and contributing to the future. In order to achieve this desired future, certain fundamental elements must be in place throughout the state. This includes 1) effective and informed local and state leadership; 2) highly functional community services; 3) universal access to quality life-long education (including K-12, academic degrees, and continuing education) and information; 4) effective strategies to address poverty; 5) a business environment that supports economic growth and entrepreneurship; 6) the ability to effectively resolve conflict; and 7) clean and safe communities that promote high quality of life. Washington State University Extension provides outreach programs that enhance community assets and opportunities and address societal challenges.

Sub-Goals:

- 1.1 Develop effective local and statewide leadership.
- 1.2 Increase access to higher education.
- 1.3 Reduce poverty in Washington communities.
- 1.4 Support delivery of efficient and equitable community services.
- 1.5 Increase access to and use of the Internet and other digital technologies.



Goal II: Create and sustain businesses, jobs, and the economic vitality of Washington

Situation: Washington is dependent upon the global economy as indicated by its ranking among the top five states in total exports, shipping products worth \$35 billion to offshore buyers annually. As a result of this export dependence, Washington's industries must produce products that are both price and quality competitive in a global marketplace. This requires continual technological advancement and a highly skilled workforce. Additionally, Washington's economy is highly dependent upon small firms. Fully 98% of all companies have fewer than 500 employees, and these small firms provide more than 60% of all jobs in the state. It is necessary to maintain a nurturing environment to support creation, expansion, and retention of the small businesses that drive the economic growth of the state.

Sub-Goals:

- 2.1 Create living wage jobs through retention and expansion of existing businesses, supporting local entrepreneurs, facilitating the use of digital technologies, and educating the workforce of today and tomorrow.
- 2.2 Facilitate development and transfer of technologies developed at WSU resulting in new businesses, jobs, and tax revenues.
- 2.3 Support development of environmentally sustainable businesses.

Goal III: Enhance natural resources and environmental stewardship

Situation: Washington possesses abundant natural resources including a vast coastline, numerous rivers and streams, productive forests and rangelands, diverse flora and fauna, and clean air. Our natural resources and the quality of our environment greatly contribute to the economy and quality of life in Washington. Non-sustainable practices, increased population densities, and land conversion, fragmentation, and parcelization threaten our natural resources and environment. A healthy environment and economy require science-based management and informed environmental stewardship.



Sub-Goals:

- 3.1 Improve the economy and the quality of life in Washington through sustainable natural resource management and environmental stewardship.
- 3.2 Proactively resolve conflicts related to the use and management of natural resources.
- 3.3 Improve ecosystem management leading to healthier forests, rangelands, fish, and wildlife; and reduce impacts from disturbances such as invasive species, insects, diseases, and fire.
- 3.4 Solve the complex issues of water availability (both quality and quantity) and fisheries management and recovery through the application of best available research.
- 3.5 Control and reduce spread of non-native, invasive species.
- 3.6 Assure that trees and other plant materials are used appropriately and in proper locations in urban green spaces and urban forests to enhance quality of life, increase property values, minimize water and chemical use, and reduce property damage caused by insects, plant diseases, and fire.



Goal IV: Enhance economic opportunities for agricultural enterprises while protecting Washington's resources

Situation: Washington's agriculture is highly diverse, producing more than 300 different field crops, five major livestock species, and several aquacultural products. When production, transportation, processing, and marketing are included, the agricultural sector contributes more than \$30 billion per year to the state's economy. And as the second largest industry in the state, agriculture provides numerous jobs statewide and is the major economic driver for much of rural Washington.

Much of Washington's agricultural production is exported, and products that are consumed domestically must compete with imports on the basis of price, quality, and availability. Therefore, continued success of the agricultural sector is highly dependent upon its ability to remain competitive in a global marketplace.

In order to compete, agricultural producers and processors must also be responsive to consumer demand. Today's consumers remain highly focused on price and quality, but they are also concerned about how their foods are produced. Therefore, modern agriculture must be highly dynamic, anticipate change in demand, and respond with new and improved products.

Finally, the residents of Washington demand clean air and water and healthy ecosystems. Agriculture's future is tied to its ability to clearly demonstrate that it is a good steward of the state's natural environment.

Sub-Goals:

- 4.1 Increase profitability and global competitiveness of agricultural and food enterprises.
- 4.2 Reduce risk to agricultural producers associated with markets, regulations, trends, and changes in consumer preferences.
- 4.3 Increase application of alternative plant and animal production systems, including organic, value-added processing, bio-fuels production, and agri-tourism that reflect consumer demands and societal need.
- 4.4 Increase application of integrated pest management, conservation tillage, and riparian management strategies to increase profitability while safeguarding human health and protecting plant and animal species and the environment.

Goal V: Improve health and wellness of the residents of Washington

Situation: It is estimated that individual behaviors and environmental factors are responsible for about 70% of all premature deaths in the United States (Surgeon General’s Report: Healthy People 2010). Among the factors that impact the nation’s health are smoking, physical inactivity, poor food choices, overweight, and obesity. These factors have been linked to increased rates of the leading chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes.

In the United States, 30% of all adults 20 years of age and older (60 million adults) are obese. Additionally, the number of youth who are obese has more than tripled since 1980. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP) estimates that 16% of youth between the ages of 6 and 19 are now overweight or obese. The number of overweight children, adolescents, and adults has risen over the past four decades. Total cost (medical costs and lost productivity) attributable to obesity alone is estimated at \$99 billion annually (1995 data, CDCP). Chronic disease problems are exacerbated by the fact that nearly one-half of all American adults (90 million) have difficulty understanding and using health information (Institute of Medicine, Health and Literacy: A Prescription to End Confusion), including nutrition guidelines.

Sub-Goals:

- 5.1 Promote healthy weight through holistic approaches that address complex issues such as food choice, physical activity, family and workplace support, community environments, and other factors that impact health.
- 5.2 Increase health literacy and knowledge about the prevention and management of chronic diseases.
- 5.3 Reduce rates of food insecurity and hunger in Washington communities.
- 5.4 Reduce food-borne illness and death resulting from food contamination and poor food handling or improper processing.

Goal VI: Empower youth and families to achieve social, economic, and educational success

Situation: It is both shortsighted and expensive to focus attention and resources on interventions directed entirely at troubled youth with acute problems. It is much more effective to focus attention on holistic approaches that prevent problems and reduce cost to society by strengthening the resiliency of youth and families and enabling them to overcome adversity. Research demonstrates that increasing “protective factors” for young people and their families is effective in reducing risk behaviors such as substance abuse, violence, school dropout, and delinquency.

In 2002, 16.7% of Washington’s children lived in poverty. (Washington



Counts in the 21st Century). Poverty exacerbates other risk factors, and is the central reason that many children and families experience physical and emotional abuse, neglect, poor health, substance abuse, early pregnancy, and violence. Children and youth need to be in environments where they have the opportunity to acquire the basic skills to become responsible family and community members, participants in the workforce, and contributing citizens.

An emerging situation in Washington is the record high level of deployment of National Guard and Reserve troops. Currently, 46% of Washington's National Guard members are deployed for up to 555 days. Children with parents in the military face unique challenges when their parents are deployed for extended periods. These unique challenges often are not well understood by teachers and others such as counselors and clerics. It is difficult for youth in military families to become connected with other youth, caring adults, and community programs and services, which are sensitive to their specific situations and needs.

Sub-Goals:

- 6.1 Reduce risk behaviors by improving decision making, communication, and leadership, and by increasing wise use of resources and acceptance of differences while developing useful and marketable skills, healthy lifestyle choices, self-responsibility, citizenship, and related life skills of youth and adults.
- 6.2 Increase the level of formal educational attainment among Washington youth and adults.
- 6.3 Increase rates of family bonding and child success.
- 6.4 Increase readiness for science, engineering, and technology among youth.
- 6.5 Improve quality and safety of child care.

Goal VII: Enhance the energy security of the Pacific Northwest through increased efficiency and through development and application of renewable energy resources

Situation: The world's economy is highly dependent upon the availability of affordable energy. As the economies of third world countries develop, there will continue to be substantial increases in worldwide energy consumption. The consequences for the United States, which currently consumes 25% of the world's energy, will be immense from a supply, cost, and security perspective.

Sub-Goals:

- 7.1 Reduce per capita consumption of energy.
- 7.2 Increase production and utilization of renewable energy systems.
- 7.3 Decrease greenhouse gas emissions.



strategic initiatives

In the context of this plan, “strategic initiatives” are new crosscutting efforts that result in enhanced reach and effectiveness of the entire organization. Each strategic initiative will be framed around a goal statement and includes one or more sub-goals. Success of these initiatives will be evaluated based upon WSU Extension’s ability to achieve these sub-goals.





Strategic Initiative I: Strengthen WSU Extension's Capacity to Address Critical Urban Issues

Situation: Based upon U.S. Census Bureau data for 2000, almost 82% of the residents of Washington reside in densely populated urban centers or clusters. Though this is most notable along the I-5 corridor, urban centers and clusters exist in many locations throughout the state, such as Spokane, the Tri-Cities, and Yakima. WSU must address the extension, research, and educational needs of this large and growing population in order to remain relevant and politically viable in future years.

Sub-Goals:

- 1.1 Create effective Extension and credit-bearing programs to address urban needs and issues.
- 1.2: Create incentives for WSU researchers to engage with Extension to address critical urban issues.
- 1.3 Recruit and retain Extension educators with the skills to effectively engage urban audiences.



Strategic Initiative II: Strengthen WSU Extension's Role as an Integral Part of the University

Situation: In 2000, WSU Extension transitioned out of the College of Agriculture and Home Economics and became a university-wide entity led by its own dean. Though much progress has been made toward establishing Extension's role as the premier catalyst for university-wide engagement, the process is still unfinished. More integration is also needed among Extension professionals on campus, at research and extension centers, and in the counties.

Sub-Goals:

- 2.1 Create incentives to encourage engagement among Extension educators, other WSU faculty, and communities across the state.
- 2.2 Increase collaboration between county-based Extension educators and departmentally based faculty across the WSU system.
- 2.3 Assure that Extension planning and programming are congruent with the WSU strategic plan and other crucial university-wide initiatives.
- 2.4 Enhance the world-class experiences for students through internships and service learning directly engaging students in Extension programs and Extension educators with the recruiting and undergraduate education functions at WSU.
- 2.5 Increase involvement of Extension faculty in the training and mentoring of graduate students.

Strategic Initiative III: Increase the Diversity of WSU Extension’s Faculty, Staff, Volunteer Base, and Those We Serve

Situation: As the diversity of people in Washington intensifies, our commitment to diversity must strengthen to assure health and economic well-being of all residents of the state. In addition to ethnicity and nationality, diversity exists on the basis of socio-economic status, gender, age, sexual orientation, and other physical, mental, and societal variables. Many of our residents have unique needs that can be effectively addressed through WSU Extension in collaboration with partner organizations and agencies. Effective engagement with diverse audiences requires programming that is both relevant and culturally appropriate. WSU Extension personnel must either possess in-depth understanding of the traditions and experiences of the target audience or work closely with partner organizations, agencies, and individuals that possess these abilities.

Sub-Goals:

- 3.1 Develop, implement, and evaluate systems to effectively recruit and retain diverse personnel.
- 3.2 Effectively identify needs of diverse sectors of Washington State society and deliver appropriate educational and developmental interventions positively addressing needs and leading to measurable outcomes.
- 3.3 Improve the cultural competency of existing personnel to address the needs of the diverse populations within the state.
- 3.4 Proactively leverage Extension resources to advance the WSU priority to increase the diversity of the WSU student population.
- 3.5 Expand cross-cultural teaching and learning experiences for WSU Extension personnel, program participants, and WSU students through Extension’s global engagement.

Strategic Initiative IV: Create the Premier Extension Web Presence for Delivery of Educational Programming and Materials to Diverse Audiences

Situation: Society has become much more dependent upon the Internet as a source of information. Nationally, extension web sites are becoming an increasingly significant mechanism for interaction between the organization and the general public. However, many if not most of these sites are not well designed for the public’s need. They are often difficult to use and confusing to the lay user.

Internet Protocol teaching and learning tools are also increasingly utilized within higher education and the private sector for interactive education and training. These teaching technologies are particularly valuable in



meeting the needs of place-bound and schedule-bound persons where required attendance at scheduled classes or workshops can be a barrier.

A fundamentally new approach is needed to make WSU Extension's web presence the most effective mechanism for positioning the organization and distributing information and active on-line learning processes.

Sub-Goals:

- 4.1 Segregate the internal and external components of the WSU Extension web site into intranet and extranet functions.
- 4.2 Increase use of Internet-based teaching and information distribution by faculty and staff.
- 4.3 Expand online publications and WSU Extension's visibility from online information searches, etc.
- 4.4 Develop customized web-based technologies that allow users to interact with WSU Extension's educational and informational offerings.
- 4.5 Provide appropriate tools to facilitate uniform brand presence while recognizing the importance of county and other partnerships.



Strategic Initiative V: Enhance Economic Well-Being and Quality of Life in Washington and the Broader World Through Strategic International Engagement

Situation: Because of improvement in communication and transportation and reduced barriers to trade, the world has become much more interactive and interdependent. Ideas are exchanged more readily than ever before exposing individuals to a myriad of concepts and ideologies reflective of diverse cultures throughout the world.

Washington State is very dependent upon international markets for its agricultural and natural resource-based commodities and for the broader array of products and services produced in the state. For example, fully one third of the total value of agricultural production in Washington State is exported to other countries. Additionally, leading Washington industries such as software, aviation manufacturing, and finance increasingly operate in a global environment. And because of expanded international trade and communication, the modern workforce transcends international boundaries. As a result, businesses today expect their employees to successfully interact with diverse cultures and clearly understand the importance of these cultures to the global markets that they serve.

International engagement provides many positive outcomes for WSU Extension. First, it strengthens our ability to reach out to recent immigrants here at home. This is of critical importance as new migrants enter the state and look to Extension to help them realize their economic and personal goals. Global engagement also provides opportunities for

WSU Extension to support expansion and diversification of markets for products produced by Washington's agricultural, manufacturing, and service industries. Because jobs and businesses transcend international borders, it is imperative that we prepare our youth to succeed in a global world through cultural competency skill building realized by interacting with other cultures, languages, and practices. Finally, international engagement creates a unique opportunity to learn new techniques and to discover new technologies that can be applied in Washington State improving economic well-being, quality of life, and environmental situations for all.

Sub-goals:

- 5.1 Enhance the global competitive position for Washington's exports by identifying new techniques and markets abroad.
- 5.2 Improve the global cultural competency of WSU Extension personnel, the broader WSU community, and youth and adults across the state through participation in international programs.
- 5.3 Advance scholarship of global engagement within WSU Extension.
- 5.4 Proactively engage internationally to reduce poverty, improve health status, and increase educational attainment leading to more resilient and productive societies within targeted developing countries.
- 5.5 Enhance the technical capacity of WSU Extension personnel to deliver outcome-based programming in international settings.



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