

ROLE OF THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE AS
PERCEIVED BY PERSONNEL OF OTHER SELECTED
SOUTHWEST OKLAHOMA USDA AGENCIES

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

All public organizations striving to be of service are concerned with the image clientele have of them. The Cooperative Extension Service is no exception. The Extension Service has made a variety of impressions on people coming in contact with it during its 65 plus year history. Those contacts with extension had various effects on people, because of differences in background, experiences, and the extent of their involvement with extension programs and activities. Also affecting their image of Cooperative Extension was how they perceived the effectiveness of the organization.

The Cooperative Extension Service had many audiences which it attempts to serve. No public or private agency can be everything to all people; nevertheless, Cooperative Extension is concerned about the public's understanding and appraisal of its programs in an environment of rapid economic and technological change.

Statement of the Problem

Several studies have been conducted to determine the basic awareness of Oklahoma residents or specific groups concerning Cooperative Extension functions. However, the perceptions of related agency administrators concerning effectiveness of present programs were needed to determine future program priorities.

Social and economic changes have created a need for Cooperative Extension to continually evaluate and adjust its organizational structure, subject matter, programs, and activities. Because of these kinds of changes, the awareness and comprehension of other agricultural agencies were needed to determine if Cooperative Extension was meeting the perceived needs of the clientele who utilize its programs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of Oklahoma Soil Conservation Service, Farmers Home Administration, and Agriculture Stabilization Conservation Service Administrators in 20 southwest Oklahoma counties concerning present Cooperative Extension programs and the implication of these perceptions for future programs.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To determine the effectiveness of current Extension programs as perceived by administrators of selected USDA agencies.
2. To identify priority areas essential to the success of future Extension programs as perceived by select USDA agency administrators.
3. To determine present and future goals of the Cooperative Extension Service as perceived by select USDA agency administrators.
4. To determine differences between respondent perceptions of current Extension program areas and priority for future programs.

Scope of the Study

The population of this study was limited to 59 administrators of

selected USDA agencies in the Southwest District of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. The 59 administrators surveyed were as follows: 20 SCS, 20 FmHA, and 19 ASCS.

A questionnaire was developed with recommendations and field tested with the assistance of area agents and county Extension personnel. After minor revisions the survey was mailed to the select agency heads. The administrators were asked to respond to questions regarding program areas of Cooperative Extension.

Administrators of the Forest Service, another USDA agency, was not utilized in this study since their programs did not service all counties in the Southwest District.

Assumptions of the Study

The following assumptions were made with regard to this study:

1. The responses made by the selected agency administrators were accurate and sincere.
2. The participating administrators were representative of the selected USDA agency heads.
3. The agency administrators would indicate their perceived priorities for current and future programming in the identified program areas.
4. Administrators in various USDA agencies may not possess the same level of awareness concerning the identified program areas of Cooperative Extension.
5. The responses to the questionnaire were given in a manner which the researcher intended.

Definitions of Terms

For better understanding of the study presented, the following definitions seemed relevant:

1. Cooperative Extension Service: The organization created by the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, which is a Cooperative function between the United States Department of Agriculture, the land-grant universities of each state, and local county government. The terms "Extension," "Extension Service," and "Extension Work" will occasionally be used and are to be thought of as synonymous with the defined term.

2. Perception: The term meaning aware of objects or conditions around us; some degree of understanding and recognition.

3. Role: The part played or carried out in real life.

4. Appraisal: As used in this study will refer to the value of Cooperative Extension Service as seen by ASCS, FmHA, and SCS.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to present an overview of related research that identified selected literature relative to this study. The presentation of this review was partitioned into four major areas and a summary to facilitate organization and clarity. The areas were History and Objectives of Cooperative Extension, Program Accountability, Perceptions of Cooperative Extension, and Extension Relationships With Organizations and Agencies.

Few studies have been done to ascertain the role of Cooperative Extension as perceived by other agencies. However, several authors have looked at perceptions of clientele, farmer attitudes toward Extension, the role of Extension agents as perceived by advisory committees, in addition to the history of the organization and the accountability of the programs.

History and Objectives of Cooperative Extension

Many of our country's leaders were agriculturalists. George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were among those who were concerned with better agricultural practices (20).

Kelsey and Hearne (11) suggested that extension work was largely the result of two factors: American agriculture and American education.

Educational activities in agriculture were enhanced with the establishment of the United States Department of Agriculture and the Land Grant Colleges System in 1862. President Abraham Lincoln signed legislation creating the USDA, still the only cabinet department for a specific industry. State and federal funds were channeled to farmers' institutes to assist the effort. The agricultural colleges undertook various forms of extension work such as field demonstrations, cooperative experiments, extension, and lectures (11).

Immediately preceding the formal establishment of Cooperative Extension work was the appearance of county agents in different parts of the United States. These "agricultural representatives" were employed by a variety of groups and organizations including the federal government, banks, counties, and land grant colleges (23).

The Scope Report (23, p. 3) of 1958 states, "Cooperative Extension work in agriculture and home economics is a partnership undertaking between each state land grant college or university and the United States Department of Agriculture in cooperation with local governments and local people."

The major function of the Cooperative Extension Service as stated in the Smith-Lever Act (11, p. 29) was "... to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics, and to encourage the application of the same. . . ."

The task of the Cooperative Extension Service is one of education. Understanding the basic purpose and philosophy of extension work prompted writers of the Scope Report (22, p. 4) to state: "The Cooperative Extension Service is the informal educational arm of both the Department

of Agriculture and the respective state land grant colleges and universities."

If Cooperative Extension is to respond to the purpose of the Smith-Lever Act and remain a vital and effective educational agency, it must continue to discover new and innovative methods of evaluation and program improvement.

Program Accountability

One responsibility of Extension is the informal evaluation of its educational programs to be sure objectives and goals are met. Bennett (3, p. 2) states: "Program evaluations may be relied upon to assist decision making to the extent that they provide high-quality evidence of accomplishment of program objectives and identify Extension's extent of such accomplishments."

It is of general concern that Extension continue doing the job for which it was originally designed. Extension has provided, through various programs, many worthwhile benefits to its clientele. However, Bennett (3, p. 3) raised the following question: "Are Extension programs succeeding?" This question is asked frequently by officials at all levels of government, legislators, university administrators, and extension workers themselves. As a result of formal evaluations, extension leaders have sought to develop a sound basis for presenting evidence of program success. In doing so, sound criteria in the analysis of program areas should be utilized to effectively arrive at a fair and effective evaluation of program areas. Bennett (3) further states that:

Program evaluation is part of the overall program development process, which includes: (1) identifying problems and selecting long-range objectives, (2) specifying these objectives

and strategy, activities, and budget designed to achieve them, (3) conducting activities, (4) evaluating the program's strategy and impact, (5) using this evaluation along with other information in subsequent program development (p. 3).

Any program that Extension has engaged in, educational or promotional, has been evaluated as to its effect upon Extension's clientele. To maintain a political base for continued funding and support, Extension is faced with perpetual scrutiny. Throughout the history of Cooperative Extension's existence, new dimensions, programs, and clientele have been developed and served. As a multi-faceted service, Extension must be accountable for each area of program responsibility. Extension has been described as being able to maintain continuity and stability while serving a public whose needs change with the advent of new technology and economic difficulties.

Wilson (25, p. 228) pointed out that: "The first in an attempt to evaluate Extension education is to identify the sources of demand for that education. . . . Thus, the demand for Extension education is derived from a demand for improved group and individual performance."

Perceptions of Cooperative Extension

A number of studies exploring the perception of various clientele groups of the Cooperative Extension Service have been conducted. A review of these studies (3, p. 48) indicates that "Extension's various publics are not in complete agreement as to what image the organization should be striving. A close relationship exists between the areas of interest of clientele groups and what they feel the organization should represent."

Most of these studies have focused on the concept of "perception." However, there is little difference in definitions of the term. The aforementioned studies have investigated various sub-facets of perception as they dealt with the different groups. For example, Blalock (6) divided perception into knowledge, appraisal, and scope.

Cosner (8), in a study involving the general public of Oklahoma, assessed the public's basic awareness of Extension. He indicated there was a low level of awareness of the general public in Oklahoma concerning the Cooperative Extension Service. In addition, Cosner recommended:

The CES should provide a planned public relations program to be used by all Extension personnel on a continuous basis. This program should communicate to the residents of Oklahoma and their legislators, at the state and county levels, the purpose, the program, and the needs of Extension work in Oklahoma (p. 106).

The Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service should establish a formal program to inform special clientele of Extension programs and services available. These specific clientele include: (a) those with low income levels, (b) those with low educational levels, (c) those of minority races/ethnic groups, (d) those with no involvement with agriculture, and (e) those who are less than 35 years of age (p. 107).

Blalock (5, p. 48), in a review of perception studies, summarized: "Evidence indicates we have assumed people knew far more about Cooperative Extension Service than they actually do."

A review of Moore's (14) study of program planning committee members in Montana, Ryneason's (19) study of selected agricultural business concerns in Wisconsin, Griffith's (9) study of formula feed operation in Kansas, and Amburgey's (1) study of commercial fertilizer manufacturers' and distributors' representatives in Arizona, reveals a great amount of diversity and considerable misunderstanding among respondents concerning Cooperative Extension's organizational affiliation (5).

A lack of agreement as to what Cooperative Extension's objectives and functions should be, the type of programs it should offer, and the clientele it should serve is further evidence (5).

There is considerable research concerning the perceptions of various groups and the objectives to which the Extension Service should address itself. The perception studies previously referred to, in addition to those by Lawson (12), Biever (4), Quinn (18), and Beavers (2), were concerned with specific objectives and functions. These studies indicate a continued emphasis on youth development, technology in agriculture, and home economics (5).

There is also great variation of opinion among clientele concerning priorities of Extension programs. Of the nine program areas contained in the Scope Report (22), perhaps the most controversial is "public affairs." Blalock's perception studies of feed operators, program planning committee members, home economic project leaders, fertilizer representatives, and agricultural business concerns indicated this area should be low priority. However, there was general agreement that Extension programs must stem from a broader base than production agriculture (5).

In an Ohio State University study, Oren (14) stated:

The interest and needs of Extension's clientele are constantly changing in scope and magnitude. This change demands that the Extension Service carefully and continually appraise and reappraise its educational efforts, so that it may better serve and meet the educational needs of its clientele (p. 1).

Gross (9) offered a summary to this study in this way:

Extension professionals can do a better job when they know how people feel about their programs. Information backed up by data is of benefit not only to the Extension professionals but also to the groups they're accountable to (p. 19).

Extension Relationships With Organizations and Agencies

Since many other organizations and agencies serve a similar clientele, it was pertinent to investigate these organizations and the methods and programs they utilize in serving the public.

Gross (9) found in his study concerning farmers having membership in various farm organizations that:

Farmers who belong to or participate in a farm organization are more likely to have a favorable attitude toward Extension than farmers who don't belong to any farm organization. This may serve as a valuable clue for Extension professionals when programming with new audience groups or with new programs. The fact that farmers belonged to a farm organization appeared to be a more important factor in their favorable attitudes than the particular farm organization to which they belong (p. 21).

Morrison (15) further concluded in his farm bargaining study that in order to move toward solution of problems connected with agricultural bargaining, immediate priorities should include:

(1) Coordination of farm groups' efforts to obtain further legislation to facilitate bargaining; . . . (3) publicly sponsored programs for educating farmers, farm leaders and others in the agricultural community. . . . These programs should be a major responsibility of Land-Grant Colleges and should be supplemented by whatever research and extension activities are necessary to develop and disseminate information relevant to farm bargaining (p. 150).

Extension's philosophy of "helping people help themselves" and interdisciplinary cooperation has been the basis of Cooperative Extension since its early beginnings. Moss's (16) study of community leaders' perceptions of Extension programs showed that their opinions were "colored" by basic economic orientation. This was understandable since most of the leaders were business people. Schock and Matthews (21) further

revealed that opinion leaders and early adopters can be identified according to their interests.

Summary

The idea of determining the perceptions held by other organizations and/or related agencies is especially important when one considers the team effort involved in maintaining American agriculture as the most productive and efficient industry in the United States. The team work expressed in the name "cooperative" implies that "family" is involved in maintaining program continuity, stability, as well as the nation's supply of wholesome, nutritious food and a standard of living enjoyed by so many.

Cosgriffe (7, p. 87) probably expressed the teamwork that has been alluded to in a more investigative manner when concluding "The team needs individuals who think independently and defend their ideas." They further stated "such individuals usually force more options and stimulate more solutions to problems."

The conclusions of Cosgriffe further affirm the philosophy of Cooperative Extension over the past 70 years; that it is the people's link to research and the land-grant system. This in itself is a continuation of the philosophy of assisting people to help themselves and improve the quality of life for all Americans.

In light of this affirmation it would seem that Cooperative Extension must continually seek the opinions of their clientele and "sister" agencies to determine needs, methods of improving program effectiveness, and direction.

As a result of this literature review, it is significant to ascertain the continued importance of a viable team effort with related USDA agencies. The commonalities that may be present among clientele who possess a common background offer the possibility of new insight into the areas of program development and improvement.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the methodology utilized in conducting the study. The procedures and design were largely prescribed by the intent and purpose, which was to determine the perceptions of related USDA agency administrators in 20 southwestern Oklahoma counties concerning current Cooperative Extension program areas and implications for future programs. Specific objectives were also utilized to provide direction for conducting the investigation. The specific objectives were:

1. To determine the effectiveness of current Extension programs as perceived by administrators of selected USDA agencies.
2. To identify priority areas essential to the success of future Extension programs as perceived by selected USDA agency administrators.
3. To determine present and future goals of the Cooperative Extension Service as perceived by selected USDA agency administrators.
4. To determine differences between respondent perceptions of current Extension program areas and priority for future programs.

The Population

The population of this study included administrators of related USDA agencies in the 20 Oklahoma counties comprising Cooperative Extension's Southwest administrative district. USDA administrative positions

in the 20 counties surveyed were: 20 Soil Conservation Services (SCS), 20 Farmers Home Administrative (FmHA), 19 Agricultural Stabilization Conservation Services (ASCS), and 2 U.S. Forest Services (USFS). All USDA county positions were fully staffed with the exception of an ASCS position that was vacant. The two U.S. Forest Service administrators were not included in this study, as forest service programs are not common to all Southwest District counties.

A total of 59 questionnaires were mailed to the administrators of the three selected USDA agencies in early February, 1983. Approximately 66 percent of the administrators who received questionnaires participated in the survey. A follow-up of non-respondents consisted of a second mailing during late March. Six or 23.1 percent of these non-respondents returned usable survey instruments. A comparison of respondents from the first mailing revealed little difference according to age, years of service, and level of education with respondents from the second mailing (see Appendix B).

Geographically the study population was comprised of agency heads located in USDA county offices outlined in Figure 1 of Chapter IV. The selected counties included those generally south of Interstate 40 and west of Interstate 35. The exceptions were Carter, Love, and Murray counties in southcentral Oklahoma, and the addition of Roger Mills county which borders Wheeler County, Texas, on the west and has the South Canadian River as its northern boundary.

The Instrument

The survey instrument was restricted to a 'mail questionnaire' which consisted of a closed form document. An extensive list of selected

items and possible variables were developed with the assistance of area specialized agents and agricultural agents in the Southwest District. The program areas investigated were derived from the Cooperative Extension Program monthly activity report.

The format of the questionnaire included short answer items and statements requiring answers on an interval scale. The survey instrument was comprised of 25 short answer items and 40 items within the four program areas with designated categories regarding program effectiveness and priority for future programming. Agency administrations were asked to indicate their responses on a four-point "Likert-type" scale. Guidelines for instrument development followed those set forth by Levine and Gordon (13, p. 571). Some of the recommendations utilized were:

1. Questions were distinguished with boldface type, separated by dotted lines and/or extra space to insure that the participants have the option to respond appropriately.
2. Type was to vary with upper and/or lower case characters to emphasize key words, phrases, and/or instructions.
3. Short answer questions and interval type response should be conveniently arranged. Category designations and space for responses were utilized to avoid possible error.
4. Reductions were completed to insure a 'short' appearing survey instrument.

Members of the thesis committee and a panel of selected Extension personnel were instrumental in refining the instrument prior to distribution. A cover letter (Appendix C) accompanied the "mail questionnaire" along with a stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

Data Collection

Data were obtained from the "mail questionnaire" delivered to 59

county administrators that headed the three selected USDA agencies in the Southwest District.

Analysis of Data

Responses to questions involving an interval scale were assigned a numerical value from 1 to 4. Real limits for each program area were listed in Chapter IV along with the respective questions explained in the findings.

Questions with "yes" or "no" and ranking type responses were described according to frequency and percentage of administrators making a particular response. In addition, mean scores were calculated for areas which were rank ordered. Responses to fill-in-the-blank questions were also combined in groups with similar data responses.

Short, optional-type essay questions were asked to ascertain information that would enlighten the investigator concerning responses and data that will be discussed regarding conclusions and recommendations. However, these were not statistically treated.

Since sampling was not involved and the attempt was made to survey all of the administrators of the three selected USDA agencies, descriptive statistics were utilized to describe the data.

Although responses were not received for all 59 administrative heads, it was determined that statistical analyses which described the data in terms of frequencies, percentages, and means were more correct than sampling a small group. Calculation of frequency counts, percentages, and mean responses for each specific area by agency and program areas not only reveals average responses but also shows the distribution of administrators' responses.

To permit a more accurate description and analysis of the data, numerical values were assigned and real limits established for levels of effectiveness and program priority:

<u>Numerical Value</u>	<u>Range of Real Limits</u>	<u>Level of Effectiveness</u>	<u>Program Priority</u>
4	3.50-4.00	Excellent	High
3	2.50-3.49	Good	Medium
2	1.50-2.49	Fair	Low
1	0.00-1.49	Poor	None

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The major purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of related USDA agency administrators in 20 southwest Oklahoma counties concerning current Cooperative Extension program areas and implications for future programs.

The data for the study were collected in the spring of 1983, and involved the responses of SCS, FmHA, and ASCS administrators located in southwestern Oklahoma. The objective of this chapter was to present reliable information revealed by the analysis of data compiled.

Population

Figure 1 presents a geographic description of the Southwest Oklahoma Extension Service Administrative District. The district was comprised of 20 counties of the designated geographic area utilized for the study.

The population included 59 county administrators within the selected USDA agencies: SCS, FmHA, and ASCS. Each of the 59 county administrative heads were mailed a survey instrument and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. A follow-up reminder was sent to the non-respondents two weeks after the initial mailing. The mail questionnaire was selected as the data gathering instrument because it offered the most practical and

feasible method of collecting the data, even though a low percentage response and relatively incomplete responses might be expected.

Thirty-nine usable questionnaires were returned, which represented a 66 percent response. The 39 county administrators were dispersed among the three selected USDA agencies as follows: 16 Farmers Home Administration (FmHA), 12 Soil Conservation Service (SCS), and 11 Agricultural Stabilization Conservation Service (ASCS).

Selected Characteristics of Administrators

Participating in the Study

Data in Table I provide a breakdown of respondents by years of service. Five (12.82%) respondents surveyed indicated they had from 0 to 5 years of service, while ten (25.64%) revealed they had served from 11 to 15 years.

The data in Table II reveal the distribution of respondents by selected USDA agencies. The agency with the greatest number of respondents was the Farmers Home Administration with 16 (41.03%); 11 (28.21%) Agricultural Stabilization Conservation Service administrators and 12 (30.77%) Soil Conservation Service supervisors made up the balance of the 39 responses.

Data in Table III show that all 39 administrators had completed a Bachelor of Science degree, while 4 (10.26%) of 39 had completed a Master's degree program in addition to finishing an undergraduate program.

Table IV reveals that 17 of the 39 USDA supervisors held administrative posts in counties with almost a completely rural setting.

The responses, presented in Table V, show that a total of 74 different contacts were made with Extension programs by the respondents or

TABLE I
SUMMARY OF USDA ADMINISTRATORS BY YEARS OF SERVICE

Years of Service	ASCS		SCS		FmHA		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
0-5	4	36.37	0	0	1	6.25	5	12.82
6-10	2	18.18	5	41.67	2	12.50	9	23.07
11-15	1	9.09	3	25.00	6	37.50	10	25.64
16-20	1	9.09	1	8.33	3	18.75	5	12.82
21-25	2	18.18	2	16.67	2	12.50	6	15.38
26-plus	1	9.09	1	8.33	2	12.50	4	10.27
Total	11	100	12	100	16	100	39	100

TABLE II
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGENCY

Agency	Frequency Distribution	
	N	Percent
SCS	12	30.77
FmHA	16	41.02
ASCS	11	28.21
Total	39	100.00

TABLE III
SUMMARY OF RESPONDENTS BY DEGREE HELD

Education Level Completed	ASCS		SCS		FmHA		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
College Graduate (BS)	8	72.73	11	91.67	14	87.50	33	84.62
Master's Degree	2	18.18	1	8.33	1	6.25	4	10.26
Other	1	9.09	0	0	1	6.25	2	5.12
Total	11	100	12	100	16	100	39	100

TABLE IV
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY COUNTY SETTING

County Setting	Total	
	N	%
Almost Completely Rural	17	43.59
Mostly Rural, But Some Urban	13	33.33
About Evenly Divided Between Rural and Urban	4	10.26
Mostly Urban, But Some Rural	4	10.26
Almost Completely Urban	1	2.56
Total	39	100

TABLE V
PARTICIPATION OF RESPONDENTS AND/OR IMMEDIATE
FAMILY BY EXTENSION PROGRAM

Involvement by Program Areas	SCS N, %	FmHA N, %	ASCS N, %	Total N, %
4-H	10	9	2	21
Extension Homemakers	4	3	0	7
Agriculture	10	12	6	28
Rural Development	5	9	4	18
None	1	0	3	4
Total	30	33	15	78

TABLE VI
ASSIGNMENT OF VALUES AND LIMITS FOR LEVELS
OF EFFECTIVENESS AND PROGRAM PRIORITY

Numerical Value	Range of Real Limits	Level of Effectiveness	Program Priority
4	3.50-4.00	Excellent	High
3	2.50-3.49	Good	Medium
2	1.50-2.49	Fair	Low
1	0.50-1.49	Poor	None

members of their immediate family. Twenty-eight of these contacts were through agricultural programs while 21 were participation through 4-H programs and activities.

Findings of the Study

The purpose of this section is to present and analyze data collected relative to the perceptions of USDA agency administrators participating in this study. Findings of the study were presented for 4 major program areas and for 19 specific categories within those areas. The mean responses of administrators for each specific category were grouped by agency to facilitate comparisons and determine differences associated with each USDA agency surveyed.

To permit a more accurate description and analysis of the data, numerical values were assigned and real limits established for levels of effectiveness and program priority:

<u>Numerical Value</u>	<u>Range of Real Limits</u>	<u>Level of Effectiveness</u>	<u>Program Priority</u>
4	3.50-4.00	Excellent	High
3	2.50-3.49	Good	Medium
2	1.50-2.49	Fair	Low
1	0-1.49	Poor	None

Tables VI through XIV display administrators' responses concerning their perceptions of the level of effectiveness of current Extension programs and their priorities for future programs.

Table VI (p. 24) reveals that the administrators with regard to Agriculture perceived the level of effectiveness merited a "good" ranking for five of the six subject matter areas. However, Agricultural

TABLE VII
SUMMARY OF RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE
LEVEL OF EFFECTIVENESS OF CURRENT
EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Program Areas and Categories	Levels of Effectiveness								Rank	Mean
	Poor		Fair		Good		Excellent			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
<u>Agriculture</u>										
Ag. Economics	0	0	8	20.51	25	64.10	6	15.38	2	2.95
Ag. Engineering	6	15.38	15	38.47	17	43.59	1	2.56	6	2.33
Agronomy	0	0	7	17.95	20	51.28	12	30.77	1	3.13
Animal Science	0	0	8	20.51	22	56.41	9	23.08	5	2.77
Entomology	1	2.56	9	23.08	25	64.10	4	10.26	4	2.82
Horticulture	3	7.69	7	17.95	20	51.28	9	23.08	3	2.90
<u>Home Economics</u>										
Clothing Textiles & Merchandising	0	0	8	20.51	29	74.36	2	5.13	2	2.85
FRCD	2	5.13	11	28.20	22	56.41	4	10.26	3	2.72
Food & Nutrition	0	0	9	23.08	24	61.54	6	15.38	4	2.67
Education & Commu- nity Service	0	0	4	10.26	27	69.23	8	20.51	1	3.10
Housing Design & Consumer Resources	3	7.69	9	23.08	25	64.10	2	5.13	4	2.67
<u>Rural Development</u>										
Human Health	1	2.56	16	41.03	20	51.28	2	5.13	2	2.59
Comprehensive Com- munity Service	2	5.13	19	48.72	18	46.15	0	0	4	2.41
Community Service & Facilities	2	5.13	21	30.77	21	53.84	4	10.26	1	2.69
Economic Manpower & Career Devel- opment	5	12.82	13	33.34	20	51.28	1	2.56	3	2.44
<u>4-H</u>										
Youth Leadership Development	1	2.56	5	12.82	23	58.98	10	25.64	2	3.08
Organization De- velopment	0	0	8	20.51	23	58.98	8	20.51	3	3.00
Project Clubs	1	2.56	5	12.82	19	48.72	14	35.90	1	3.18
Voluntary Leader Development	1	2.56	7	17.95	26	66.67	5	12.82	4	2.90

TABLE VIII
SCS RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE
CURRENT EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Program Areas and Categories	Levels of Effectiveness								Rank	Mean
	Poor		Fair		Good		Excellent			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
<u>Agriculture</u>										
Ag. Economics	0	0	2	16.67	8	66.66	2	16.67	5	3.00
Ag. Engineering	2	16.67	4	33.33	5	41.67	1	8.33	6	2.42
Agronomy	0	0	1	8.33	4	33.33	7	58.33	1	3.50
Animal Science	0	0	2	16.67	3	25.00	7	58.33	2	3.42
Entomology	0	0	2	16.67	7	58.33	3	25.00	4	3.08
Horticulture	0	0	2	16.67	3	25.00	7	58.33	2	3.42
<u>Home Economics</u>										
Clothing Textiles & Merchandising	0	0	2	16.67	10	83.33	0	0	3	2.83
FRCD	0	0	4	33.33	6	50.00	2	16.67	3	2.83
Food & Nutrition	0	0	0	0	8	66.67	4	33.33	1	3.33
Education & Commu- nity Service	0	0	1	8.33	8	66.67	3	25.00	2	3.17
Housing Design & Consumer Resources	0	0	4	33.33	8	66.67	0	0	5	2.67
<u>Rural Development</u>										
Human Health	0	0	6	50.00	6	50.00	0	0	3	2.50
Comprehensive Com- munity Service	0	0	8	66.67	4	33.33	0	0	4	2.33
Community Service & Facilities	0	0	6	50.00	5	41.67	1	8.33	1	2.58
Economic Manpower & Career Devel- opment	0	0	5	41.67	7	58.33	0	0	1	2.58
<u>4-H</u>										
Youth Leadership Development	1	8.33	2	16.67	6	50.00	3	25.00	2	2.92
Organization De- velopment	0	0	3	25.00	7	58.33	2	16.67	2	2.92
Project Clubs	1	8.33	2	16.67	4	33.33	5	41.67	1	3.08
Voluntary Leader Development	0	0	2	16.67	9	75.00	1	8.33	2	2.92

TABLE IX
FMHA RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE
CURRENT EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Program Areas and Categories	Levels of Effectiveness								Rank	Mean
	Poor		Fair		Good		Excellent			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
<u>Agriculture</u>										
Ag. Economics	0	0	6	37.50	8	50.00	2	12.50	1	2.75
Ag. Engineering	3	18.75	6	37.50	7	43.75	0	0	6	2.25
Agronomy	0	0	6	37.50	8	50.00	2	12.50	1	2.75
Animal Science	0	0	5	31.25	11	68.75	0	0	3	2.69
Entomology	1	6.25	6	37.50	9	56.25	0	0	4	2.50
Horticulture	3	18.75	3	18.75	9	56.25	1	6.25	4	2.50
<u>Home Economics</u>										
Clothing Textiles & Merchandising	0	0	4	25.00	11	68.75	1	6.25	2	2.81
FRCD	1	6.25	5	31.25	9	56.25	1	6.25	4	2.63
Food & Nutrition	0	0	5	31.25	10	62.50	1	6.25	3	2.75
Education & Commu- nity Service	0	0	2	12.50	12	75.00	2	12.50	1	3.00
Housing Design & Consumer Resources	2	12.50	5	31.25	8	50.00	1	6.25	5	2.50
<u>Rural Development</u>										
Human Health	0	0	8	50.00	7	43.75	1	6.25	1	2.56
Comprehensive Com- munity Service	1	6.25	10	62.50	5	31.25	0	0	3	2.25
Community Service & Facilities	1	6.25	5	31.25	10	62.50	0	0	1	2.56
Economic Manpower & Career Devel- opment	3	18.75	6	37.50	7	43.75	0	0	2	2.31
<u>4-H</u>										
Youth Leadership Development	0	0	2	12.50	11	68.75	3	18.75	2	3.06
Organization De- velopment	0	0	3	18.75	10	62.50	3	18.75	3	3.00
Project Clubs	0	0	2	12.50	9	56.25	5	31.25	1	3.19
Voluntary Leader Development	1	6.25	3	18.75	11	68.75	1	6.25	4	2.75

TABLE X
ASCS RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE
CURRENT EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Program Areas and Categories	Levels of Effectiveness								Rank	Mean
	Poor		Fair		Good		Excellent			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
<u>Agriculture</u>										
Ag. Economics	0	0	0	0	9	81.82	2	18.18	2	3.18
Ag. Engineering	1	9.09	5	45.45	5	45.45	0	0	6	2.36
Agronomy	0	0	0	0	8	72.73	3	27.27	1	3.27
Animal Science	0	0	1	9.09	8	72.73	2	18.18	3	3.09
Entomology	0	0	2	18.18	8	72.73	1	9.09	4	2.91
Horticulture	0	0	2	18.18	8	72.73	1	9.09	4	2.91
<u>Home Economics</u>										
Clothing Textiles & Merchandising	0	0	2	18.18	8	72.73	1	9.09	2	2.91
FRCO	1	9.09	2	18.18	7	63.64	1	9.09	4	2.73
Food & Nutrition	0	0	4	36.36	6	54.55	1	9.09	4	2.73
Education & Commu- nity Service	0	0	1	9.09	7	63.64	3	27.27	1	3.18
Housing Design & Consumer Resources	1	9.09	0	0	9	81.82	1	9.09	2	2.91
<u>Rural Development</u>										
Human Health	1	9.09	0	0	7	63.64	1	9.09	2	2.73
Comprehensive Com- munity Service	1	9.09	1	9.09	9	81.82	0	0	2	2.73
Community Service & Facilities	1	9.09	1	9.09	6	54.55	3	27.27	1	3.00
Economic Manpower & Career Devel- opment	2	18.18	2	18.18	6	54.55	1	9.09	4	2.55
<u>4-H</u>										
Youth Leadership Development	0	0	1	9.09	6	54.55	4	36.36	1	3.27
Organization De- velopment	0	0	2	18.18	6	54.55	3	27.27	3	3.09
Project Clubs	0	0	1	9.09	6	54.55	4	36.36	1	3.27
Voluntary Leader Development	0	0	2	18.18	6	54.55	3	27.27	3	3.09

TABLE XI
SUMMARY OF RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS FOR PRIORITIES IN FUTURE EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Program Areas and Categories	Program Priority								Rank	Mean
	High		Medium		Low		None			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
<u>Agriculture</u>										
Ag. Economics	33	84.62	6	15.38	0	0	0	0	1	3.85
Ag. Engineering	10	25.64	23	58.98	5	12.82	1	2.56	5	3.08
Agronomy	26	66.67	13	33.33	0	0	0	0	3	3.67
Animal Science	27	69.23	12	30.77	0	0	0	0	2	3.69
Entomology	19	48.72	18	46.15	2	5.13	0	0	4	3.48
Horticulture	15	38.46	12	30.77	12	30.77	0	0	5	3.08
<u>Home Economics</u>										
Clothing Textiles & Merchandising	6	15.38	22	56.41	11	28.21	0	0	5	2.87
FRCD	16	41.02	19	48.72	4	10.26	0	0	3	3.31
Food & Nutrition	25	64.10	14	35.90	0	0	0	0	1	3.64
Education & Commu- nity Service	16	41.02	23	58.98	0	0	0	0	2	3.41
Housing Design & Consumer Resources	15	38.46	15	38.46	9	23.08	0	0	4	3.15
<u>Rural Development</u>										
Human Health	12	30.77	22	56.41	5	12.82	0	0	2	3.18
Comprehensive Com- munity Service	12	30.77	22	56.41	5	12.82	0	0	2	3.18
Community Service & Facilities	13	33.33	22	56.41	4	10.26	0	0	1	3.23
Economic Manpower & Career Develop- ment	7	17.95	22	56.41	9	23.08	1	2.56	4	2.90
<u>4-H</u>										
Youth Leadership Development	31	79.49	8	20.51	0	0	0	0	1	3.79
Organization De- velopment	18	46.15	18	46.15	3	7.69	0	0	4	3.38
Project Clubs	21	53.85	15	38.46	3	7.69	0	0	3	3.46
Voluntary Leader Development	21	53.85	16	41.02	2	5.13	0	0	2	3.49

TABLE XII
SCS RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS FOR PRIORITIES IN FUTURE EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Program Areas and Categories	Program Priority								Rank	Mean
	High		Medium		Low		None			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
<u>Agriculture</u>										
Ag. Economics	9	75.00	3	25.00	0	0	0	0	2	3.75
Ag. Engineering	3	25.00	8	66.67	0	0	1	8.33	6	3.08
Agronomy	9	75.00	3	25.00	0	0	0	0	2	3.75
Animal Science	10	83.33	2	16.67	0	0	0	0	1	3.83
Entomology	6	50.00	6	50.00	0	0	0	0	4	3.50
Horticulture	7	58.33	2	16.67	3	25.00	0	0	5	3.33
<u>Home Economics</u>										
Clothing Textiles & Merchandising	3	25.00	7	58.33	2	16.67	0	0	4	3.25
FRCD	6	50.00	6	50.00	0	0	0	0	2	3.50
Food & Nutrition	9	75.00	3	25.00	0	0	0	0	1	3.75
Education & Communi- ty Service	6	50.00	6	50.00	0	0	0	0	2	3.50
Housing Design & Consumer Resources	3	25.00	8	66.67	1	8.33	0	0	5	3.17
<u>Rural Development</u>										
Human Health	4	33.33	7	58.33	1	8.33	0	0	1	3.25
Comprehensive Com- munity Service	2	16.67	8	66.67	2	16.67	0	0	2	3.00
Community Service & Facilities	2	16.67	8	66.67	2	16.67	0	0	2	3.00
Economic Manpower & Career Devel- opment	1	8.33	8	66.67	3	25.00	0	0	4	2.83
<u>4-H</u>										
Youth Leadership Development	9	75.00	3	25.00	0	0	0	0	1	3.75
Organization De- velopment	4	33.33	7	58.33	1	8.33	0	0	4	3.25
Project Clubs	5	41.67	6	50.00	1	8.33	0	0	2	3.33
Voluntary Leader Development	6	50.00	4	33.33	2	16.67	0	0	2	3.33

TABLE XIII
FMHA RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS FOR PRIORI-
TIES IN FUTURE EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Program Areas and Categories	Program Priority								Rank	Mean
	High		Medium		Low		None			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
<u>Agriculture</u>										
Ag. Economics	14	87.50	2	12.50	0	0	0	0	1	3.88
Ag. Engineering	4	25.00	8	50.00	4	25.00	0	0	5	3.00
Agronomy	9	56.25	7	43.75	0	0	0	0	2	3.56
Animal Science	8	50.00	8	50.00	0	0	0	0	3	3.50
Entomology	5	31.25	10	62.50	1	6.25	0	0	4	3.38
Horticulture	4	25.00	7	43.75	5	31.25	0	0	6	2.94
<u>Home Economics</u>										
Clothing Textiles & Merchandising	2	12.50	9	56.25	5	31.25	0	0	5	2.81
FRCD	5	31.25	9	56.25	2	12.50	0	0	3	3.19
Food & Nutrition	12	75.00	4	25.00	0	0	0	0	1	3.75
Education & Commu- nity Service	5	31.25	11	68.75	0	0	0	0	2	3.31
Housing Design & Consumer Resources	8	50.00	4	25.00	4	25.00	0	0	4	3.13
<u>Rural Development</u>										
Human Health	3	18.75	11	68.75	2	12.50	0	0	3	3.06
Comprehensive Com- munity Service	5	31.25	10	62.50	1	6.25	0	0	1	3.25
Community Service & Facilities	5	31.25	10	62.50	1	6.25	0	0	1	3.25
Economic Manpower & Career Devel- opment	3	18.75	9	56.25	3	18.75	1	6.25	4	2.88
<u>4-H</u>										
Youth Leadership Development	14	87.50	2	12.50	0	0	0	0	1	3.88
Organization De- velopment	8	50.00	7	43.75	1	6.25	0	0	4	3.44
Project Clubs	10	62.50	5	31.25	1	6.25	0	0	2	3.56
Voluntary Leader Development	9	56.25	7	43.75	0	0	0	0	2	3.56

TABLE XIV
ASCS RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS FOR PRIORITIES IN FUTURE EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Program Areas and Categories	Program Priority								Rank	Mean
	High		Medium		Low		None			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
<u>Agriculture</u>										
Ag Economics	10	90.91	1	9.09	0	0	0	0	1	3.91
Ag. Engineering	3	27.27	7	63.64	1	9.09	0	0	6	2.91
Agronomy	8	72.73	3	27.27	0	0	0	0	3	3.73
Animal Science	9	81.82	2	18.18	0	0	0	0	2	3.82
Entomology	8	72.73	2	18.18	1	9.09	0	0	4	3.64
Horticulture	4	36.36	3	27.27	4	36.36	0	0	5	3.00
<u>Home Economics</u>										
Clothing Textiles & Merchandising	1	9.09	6	54.55	4	36.36	0	0	4	2.73
FRCD	5	45.45	4	36.36	2	18.18	0	0	3	3.27
Food & Nutrition	4	36.36	7	63.64	0	0	0	0	2	3.36
Education & Commu- nity Service	5	45.45	6	54.55	0	0	0	0	1	3.45
Housing Design & Consumer Resources	4	36.36	3	27.27	4	36.36	0	0	3	3.27
<u>Rural Development</u>										
Human Health	5	45.45	4	36.36	2	18.18	0	0	2	3.27
Comprehensive Com- munity Service	5	45.45	4	36.36	2	18.18	0	0	2	3.27
Community Service & Facilities	6	54.55	4	36.36	1	9.09	0	0	1	3.45
Economic Manpower & Career Devel- opment	3	27.27	5	45.45	3	27.27	0	0	4	3.00
<u>4-H</u>										
Youth Leadership Development	8	72.73	3	27.27	0	0	0	0	1	3.37
Organization De- velopment	6	54.55	4	36.36	1	9.09	0	0	3	3.45
Project Clubs	6	54.55	4	36.36	1	9.09	0	0	3	3.45
Voluntary Leader Development	6	54.55	5	45.45	0	0	0	0	2	3.55

Engineering was one of the six that was perceived as having only a "fair" level of effectiveness, illustrated by an overall mean score of 2.33. Agronomy had the highest overall mean score (3.13) of the six subject matter areas.

The data in Tables VIII, IX, and X show SCS and ASCS administrator perceptions indicated the level of effectiveness for Agronomy to be "excellent" with a "good" ranking for FmHA heads. Respondents from all three USDA agencies ranked Agricultural Engineering as having a "fair" level of effectiveness with mean responses ranging from 2.25 to 2.42.

Mean responses revealed that Farmers Home administrators perceived the overall level of effectiveness of Agriculture to be somewhat less than their colleagues in the Soil Conservation Service and Agricultural Stabilization Conservation Service.

Home Economics

An analysis of data in Table VII indicates that administrators perceived the level of effectiveness to be "good" for all five subject areas in Home Economics. Average means ranged from 3.10 for "Education and Community Service" to 2.67 for "Food and Nutrition" and "House Design and Consumer Resources."

Examination of data in Tables VIII, IX, and X shows that all areas in Home Economics were perceived as "good" by administrators of all three agencies with average means ranging from a high of 3.00 to 3.18 for "Education and Community Service" to a low of 2.50 to 2.91 for "House Design and Consumer Resources."

Rural Development

A summary of administrators' responses indicating their perceptions of the level of effectiveness for four specific topics within the program area of Rural Development is presented in Table VII.

Data in Table VII show that the 39 administrators perceived the level of effectiveness of current Extension programs was "good" for "Community Service and Facilities" (mean of 2.69) and "Human Health" (mean of 2.59). "Comprehensive Community Service" and "Economic Manpower and Career Development" were rated as "fair" based on their current level of effectiveness with average means of 2.41 and 2.44, respectively.

According to data presented in Tables VIII, IX, and X, respondents of each of the three agencies indicated the most effective program in the area of Rural Development was "Community Service and Facilities." Further analysis of the data in these tables disclosed that ASCS administrators perceived the overall level of effectiveness for Rural Development programs higher than did administrators of the other two agencies.

4-H

The overall perception of the four subject matter areas of 4-H was rated as "good" in terms of current programming. It was interesting to note the range in mean responses for the 4-H program area ranged from a low of 2.90 for "Volunteer Leader Development" to a high of 3.18 for "Project Clubs."

According to data presented in Tables VII, VIII, and IX, administrative heads of all three selected USDA agencies perceived that the 4-H program was most effective in the areas of "Project Clubs" and "Youth

Leadership Development" which had respective overall mean scores of 3.18 and 3.08. The least effective 4-H area as perceived by all three USDA agencies was "Volunteer Leadership Development."

Priorities for Future Program

Agriculture

In Table XI, a summary of responses by USDA administrators reveals a "high" priority for future programs with regard to "Agricultural Economics," "Animal Science," and "Agronomy" with respective overall mean scores of 3.85, 3.69, and 3.67. However, respondents only indicated a "medium" priority with regard to future programs in "Entomology," "Horticulture," and "Agricultural Engineering." In addition, however, SCS and ASCS administrators perceived Entomology as being a "high" priority with respective overall mean scores of 3.50 and 3.64.

Home Economics

Data provided in Table XI show that agency heads perceived the priority for future programming in Home Economics was "high" for the "Food and Nutrition" area and "medium" for the five subject matter areas.

It was interesting to note when responses were compared by agency, the priorities for future programs in Home Economics was rated somewhat higher by SCS administrators than ASCS and FmHA county supervisors. The lowest priority for future Home Economics programs were in the areas of "Clothing, Textiles & Merchandising" and "Housing Design & Consumer Resources" as perceived by administrators in all three selected USDA agencies shown in Tables XII, XIII, and XIV.

Rural Development

USDA administrators indicated that they perceived all four specific areas of Rural Development as being a "medium" priority with overall mean scores ranging from 3.23 for "Community Service & Facilities" to 2.90 for "Economic Manpower and Career Development" (Table XI).

ASCS administrators seem to rank all four specific areas of Rural Development somewhat higher than either Farmers Home supervisors or Soil Conservation administrators.

4-H

Table XI reveals that agency administrators seem to perceive the priority for future 4-H program development should be in the area "Youth Leadership Development" which was considered as a "high" priority, while the other 4-H programs were considered as only being a "medium" priority.

When compared by agency, Farmers Home administrators perceived that the priority for future 4-H program development was somewhat higher than ASCS and SCS administrators. Administrators of the three selected USDA agencies all perceived the lowest priority for future 4-H program development was in the area of "Organizational Development," as shown by Tables XII, XIII, and XIV.

Current Program Effectiveness

To assist in determining the level of awareness by agency administrators in Extension sponsored programs, the respondents were asked if they had a favorable impression of Extension programs. The numbers and percentages of responses having favorable impressions are shown in Table

XV. The data indicate that 84.62 percent or 33 respondents had favorable impressions of Extension programs.

Data in Table XVI indicate respondents' perceptions concerning the effectiveness of Extension in keeping up-to-date with research and providing educational information to the public. Over 41 percent of the respondents indicated that Extension is doing an excellent job of keeping up-to-date with Extension educational programs. However, two (5.13%) did report that Extension was doing only a "fair" job of maintaining up-to-date program information.

Data in Table XVII reveal that 13 (33.33%) of the respondents indicated that educational meetings were the most effective way to deliver information to the people. The data further showed that demonstrations and newsletters were the least effective ways to provide information to clientele.

To assist in determining needs for future Extension programs, respondents were asked to list three program ideas. Of the 117 responses received, 22 different program ideas were given. Table XVIII, in revealing a summary of responses, shows computer technology was the most prominently identified need with 17 (14.53%) responses, followed by Lo-Till research with 13 (11.11%).

Table XIX reveals when respondents were asked to indicate their perception as to the present goal of the Cooperative Extension Service, 11 (28.21%) indicated the primary goal of Extension was education, while 9 (23.07%) felt that the improvement of the overall standard of living was Extension's goal.

The data in Table XX indicate the perceptions of respondents as to what the goals of Extension should be. Eleven (28.21%) respondents

TABLE XV
RESPONDENTS HAVING FAVORABLE IMPRESSIONS
OF EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Favorable Replies	ASCS		SCS		FmHA		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No	1	9.09	1	8.33	4	25.00	6	15.38
Yes	10	90.91	11	91.67	12	75.00	33	84.62

TABLE XVI
RESPONDENTS' VIEWS CONCERNING THE PERFORMANCE
OF EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Extension Performance	SCS		FmHA		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Fair	2	16.67	0	0	0	5.13
Good	6	50.00	10	62.50	5	53.85
Excellent	4	33.33	6	37.50	6	41.02

TABLE XVII
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE METHODS
OF INFORMING EXTENSION CLIENTELE

Methods of Transferring Information	SCS		FmHA		ASCS		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
News Releases	1	8.33	4	25.00	1	9.09	6	15.39
Educational Meetings	2	16.67	6	37.50	5	45.45	13	33.33
Personal Contacts	4	33.33	3	18.75	3	27.27	10	25.64
Demonstra- tions	3	25.00	1	6.25	1	9.09	5	12.82
News Letters	2	16.67	2	12.50	1	9.09	5	12.82
Total	12	100	16	100	11	100	39	100

TABLE XVIII

ADMINISTRATORS' RESPONSES CONCERNING NEW IDEAS
FOR FUTURE EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Responses	Frequency	Rank	Percent
Computer Technology	17	1	14.53
Lo-Till	13	2	11.11
Landscaping & Garden Care	12	3	10.26
Management Practices	11	4	9.40
Conservation	9	5	7.69
Record Keeping	8	6	6.84
Government Programs	6	7	5.13
Improved Grasses	5	8	4.27
Marketing	5	8	4.27
More Test & Demonstration Plots	5	8	4.27
Oil & Gas Rules and Regulations	5	8	4.27
Brush Control	4	12	3.42
Decision Making	4	12	3.42
Estate Planning	3	14	2.56
Communication	2	15	1.70
Different Meetings	2	15	1.70
Low Income Families	1	17	0.86
Herd Health	1	17	0.86
Training in Industrial Arts	1	17	0.86
Hobbies for Retired People	1	17	0.86
Evaluate Rat Problem	1	17	0.86
Evaluate Rabbit Problem	1	17	0.86
Total	117		100

TABLE XIX
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PRESENT GOALS
OF COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Responses	Frequency	Rank	Percent
Education	11	1	28.21
Improvement of the Overall Standard of Living	9	2	23.07
Relate Information on Research and High Technology	7	3	17.95
Develop Leadership in Youth	4	4	10.26
Provide Leadership for the Future in Agriculture & Rural Development	3	5	7.69
Help With Clientele Problems	3	5	7.69
Help People Survive in Today's Technical World	2	6	5.13
Total	39		100

TABLE XX
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS AS TO WHAT THE GOALS OF
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE OUGHT TO BE

Responses	Total	Rank	Percent
Education	11	1	28.21
Relate Information on Research and High Technology	8	2	20.51
Improvement of the Overall Standard of Living	7	3	17.95
Provide Quality Service to All	5	4	12.82
Develop 4-H Membership Among the Youth	4	5	10.26
Service People's Interests on New and Better Ideals for Life	3	6	7.69
Do Not Care to Comment	1	7	2.56
Total	39		100

indicated that education should be Extension's primary goal for future programming, while eight (20.51%) perceived that research and new technology should be Extension's number one goal. While analyzing perceptions of respondents shown in Table XX concerning present and future goals of Extension, no notable differences were revealed by the three selected USDA agencies.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter was to present a summary of the study problem, methodology, and major findings. Conclusions and recommendations were presented based upon summarization and analysis of data collected and interpretation resulting from the design and procedures utilized to conduct the study.

Summary of the Study

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the perception of related USDA agency administrators in 20 southwestern Oklahoma counties concerning current Cooperative Extension program areas and implications for future programs.

The population of this study consisted of all agency administrators who currently head county offices of the three selected USDA agencies.

Specific Objectives of the Study

In order to accomplish the purpose of this study, the following objectives were established:

1. To determine the effectiveness of current Extension programs as perceived by administrators of selected USDA agencies.

2. To identify priority areas essential to the success of future Extension programs as perceived by selected USDA agency administrators.
3. To determine present and future goals of the Cooperative Extension Service as perceived by selected USDA agency administrators.
4. To determine differences between respondents' perceptions of Extension program areas and priorities for future programs.

Rationale for the Study

Since its early beginning, Cooperative Extension has been a source of information and education, an agency whose purpose has been to provide educational assistance to the general public. As a result, both youth and adults have benefited from Extension programs. Extension programs were originally directed toward rural clientele; however, the migration of rural residents to urban settings resulted in a new and non-traditional clientele with unique needs and challenges.

Extension must conduct on-going evaluation of its programs to remain abreast of social and economic changes in order to efficiently serve its clientele. Recent economic conditions have dictated that Cooperative Extension maintain present programs and budget outlays. Budget restraints, however, have provided an opportunity for Cooperative Extension to demonstrate accountability and evidence of flexibility in meeting clientele needs.

Results of the study should provide assistance in determining direction, balance, and future program needs to serve both traditional and non-traditional clientele.

Design and Procedures

Following a review of literature related to the problem and determination of need, the major tasks in the design of the study were: (1) the determination of a study population, (2) development of a survey instrument, (3) collection of the data, and (4) analysis of the data.

The population of the study consisted of 59 USDA agency administrators located in the 20 counties comprising the southwest Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Administrative District. "Mail questionnaires" were utilized during the early spring of 1983 to secure data for the study. Approximately 66 percent of the administrators who received questionnaires returned usable surveys.

Survey items and areas of concern were determined through a review of related literature and needs expressed by area Extension specialists and county agricultural agents.

Upon collection of the data, descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze and describe the information. Chapter IV presents the findings and discussion of the data shown in the tables.

Major Findings of the Study

The focus of this study was to ascertain perceptions of selected USDA agency administrators regarding the level of current program effectiveness with implications and priorities for future Extension programs. Objectives of the study were utilized as a basis for organization of the major findings. These findings were presented as follows (see Tables XXI and XXII).

TABLE XXI

SUMMARY OF MEAN RESPONSES CONCERNING THE LEVEL OF EFFECTIVENESS
OF CURRENT EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Program Areas and Categories	Mean Response by Agency			Overall Mean	Effective- ness	Rank
	SCS	FmHA	ASCS			
<u>Agriculture</u>						
Ag. Economics	3.00	2.75	3.18	2.95	Good	2
Ag. Engineering	2.42	2.25	2.36	2.33	Fair	6
Agronomy	3.50	2.75	3.27	3.13	Good	1
Animal Science	3.42	2.69	3.09	2.77	Good	5
Entomology	3.08	2.50	2.91	2.82	Good	4
Horticulture	2.42	2.50	2.91	2.90	Good	3
<u>Home Economics</u>						
Clothing Textiles & Merchandising	2.83	2.81	2.91	2.85	Good	2
FRCD	2.83	2.63	2.73	2.72	Good	3
Food & Nutrition	3.33	2.75	2.73	2.67	Good	4
Education & Commu- nity Service	3.17	3.00	3.18	3.10	Good	1
House Design & Con- sumer Resources	2.67	2.50	2.91	2.67	Good	4
<u>Rural Development</u>						
Human Health	2.50	2.56	2.73	2.59	Good	2
Comprehensive Com- munity Service	2.33	2.25	2.73	2.41	Fair	4
Community Service & Facilities	2.58	2.56	3.00	2.69	Good	1
Economic Manpower & Career Development	2.58	2.31	2.55	2.44	Fair	3
<u>4-H</u>						
Youth Leadership Development	2.92	3.06	3.27	3.08	Good	2
Organization Devel- opment	2.92	3.00	3.09	3.00	Good	3
Project Clubs	3.08	3.19	3.27	3.18	Good	1
Voluntary Leader Development	2.92	2.75	3.09	2.90	Good	4

TABLE XXII
SUMMARY OF MEAN RESPONSES CONCERNING PRIORITY
FOR FUTURE EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Program Areas and Categories	Mean Response by Agency			Overall Mean	Priority	Rank
	SCS	FmHA	ASCS			
<u>Agriculture</u>						
Ag. Economics	3.75	3.88	3.91	3.85	High	1
Ag. Engineering	3.08	3.00	2.91	3.08	Medium	5
Agronomy	3.75	3.56	3.73	3.67	High	3
Animal Science	3.83	3.50	3.82	3.69	High	2
Entomology	3.50	3.38	3.64	3.18	Medium	4
Horticulture	3.33	2.94	3.00	3.08	Medium	5
<u>Home Economics</u>						
Clothing Textiles & Merchandising	3.25	2.81	2.73	2.87	Medium	5
FRCD	3.50	3.19	3.27	3.31	Medium	3
Food & Nutrition	3.75	3.75	3.36	3.64	High	1
Education & Commu- nity Service	3.50	3.31	3.45	3.41	Medium	2
House Design & Con- sumer Resources	3.17	3.13	3.27	3.15	Medium	4
<u>Rural Development</u>						
Human Health	3.25	3.06	3.27	3.18	Medium	2
Comprehensive Com- munity Service	3.00	3.25	3.27	3.18	Medium	2
Community Service & Facilities	3.00	3.25	3.45	3.23	Medium	1
Economic Manpower & Career Development	2.83	2.88	3.00	2.90	Medium	4
<u>4-H</u>						
Youth Leadership Development	3.75	3.88	3.73	3.79	High	1
Organization Devel- opment	3.25	3.44	3.45	3.38	Medium	4
Project Clubs	3.33	3.56	3.45	3.46	Medium	3
Voluntary Leader Development	3.33	3.56	3.55	3.49	Medium	2

Background of the Respondents

The Farmers Home Administration had the highest percentage of respondents by USDA agency with over 41 percent; in addition, 37.5 percent of its administrators had from 11 to 15 years of service and it also had the most administrators with 26 years of service or more. Furthermore, 87.5 percent of Farmers Home Administrators had B.S. degrees, while ASCS had the greatest number of M.S. degrees.

The distribution of respondents by county setting indicated that 30 of the 39 respondents had county offices located in counties that were determined to be "almost completely rural" or "mostly rural with some urban" influence.

Study participants indicated that of the 78 contacts with Cooperative Extension, 67 of these contacts were revealed to be in the three program areas of 4-H, Agriculture, and Rural Development.

Over 55 percent of the USDA administrators indicated that educational meetings and personal contacts were the most effective methods of transferring information to Extension clientele.

Agriculture

The USDA agency heads ranked Agronomy and Agricultural Economics as "Good" regarding the present program effectiveness with respective mean scores of 3.13 and 2.95. Agricultural Engineering was the only agricultural area presently perceived as being a "Fair" program with a mean score of 2.33.

Priority for future Extension programs as perceived by USDA administrators revealed that Agricultural Economics, Animal Science, and Agronomy were ranked "High" with respective mean scores of 3.85, 3.69, and

3.67. ASCS administrators ranked Agricultural Economics considerably higher than other agricultural program areas with a mean score of 3.91. Entomology, Horticulture, and Agricultural Engineering were perceived as lowest in priority with a "Medium" ranking for future programming among the 39 agency heads.

Home Economics

Education and Community Services were perceived as being "Good" in current effectiveness with mean scores of 3.19, 3.00, and 3.18 indicated by the SCS, FmHA, and ASCS, respectively. The average mean score for the 39 respondents was 3.10. SCS administrators perceived that the Food and Nutrition program area was considered as the most effective with a mean score of 3.33. Regarding total effectiveness, all program areas were perceived as being "Good."

The Food and Nutrition program within the Home Economics area was the only program perceived as being a "High" priority for future programming. SCS and FmHA administrators revealed that their perceptions of future needs were consistently higher for Food and Nutrition programs with respective mean scores of 3.75. Clothing, Textiles, and Merchandising was perceived as being lowest in priority by combined rankings of the three USDA agencies and a cumulative mean score of 2.87.

Rural Development

Human Health and Community Service and Facilities were areas perceived as being "Good" in overall terms of effectiveness within the program area of Rural Development. ASCS administrators ranked Community

Service and Facilities considerably higher than the other agency heads with a mean score of 3.00.

Furthermore, it was interesting to note that administrators from all three selected agencies indicated that the priority for all areas within the broad area of Rural Development was determined to be no higher than "Medium." However, three of the four sub-areas within Rural Development revealed overall mean scores of 3.18 or higher. The area of Economic Manpower and Career Development seems to be perceived as the area of least priority as indicated by the respective mean scores of 2.83, 2.88, and 3.00 for the SCS, FmHA, and ASCS administrators.

4-H

All four areas investigated within the current 4-H program were perceived as being "Good" concerning program effectiveness. This was revealed in Table XXI. With regard to effectiveness, Project Clubs were perceived by the administrators to be somewhat more effective with an overall mean score of 3.18 compared to respective mean scores of 3.08, 3.00, and 2.90 for Youth Leadership Development, Organization Development, and Voluntary Leader Development. Agency administrators perceived that Voluntary Leader Development seems to be the least effective with an overall mean score 2.90.

With regard to future 4-H programs, the selected USDA administrators indicated that Youth Leadership Development was a "High" priority area as revealed by an overall mean score of 3.79. The other three 4-H programs areas--Voluntary Leader Development, Project Clubs, and Organization Development--were ranked as being of "Medium" priority with respective overall mean scores of 3.49, 3.46, and 3.38. Farmers Home

Administrators seem to perceive all 4-H programs to be a higher priority for future emphasis than did their peers.

Conclusions

The interpretations and major findings presented in the study provide a basis for the following conclusions:

1. Most of the USDA administrators had from 6 to 15 years of total service.
2. All of the agency administrators were college graduates with the vast majority concluding their education with the Bachelor's degree.
3. Most of the selected USDA agency offices are located in communities that had "mostly a rural atmosphere."
4. Most of the contact or family participation in Extension program activities was a result of the administrators' families involvement in 4-H activities and their personal involvement in agricultural meetings.
5. Cooperative Extension's effectiveness with current programming seems well documented in the areas of Agriculture and 4-H.
6. The Agriculture and 4-H programs are apparently meeting the needs of Cooperative Extension's constituency in the specific areas of Agronomy, Agricultural Economics, 4-H Project Clubs, and Youth Leadership Development as perceived by USDA administrators.
7. Priority for future program emphasis seems to be in the program area of Agriculture. Furthermore, specific priority for future programming in Agriculture seems to be directed toward a perceived need for special emphasis in Agricultural Economics.

8. Specific priorities for future program emphasis in addition to the program areas of Agriculture were Youth Leadership Development in the 4-H program and Food and Nutrition within the program area of Home Economics.

9. The program area of Agricultural Engineering is either not understood or the apparent needs in this area are perceived as being met by the agribusiness industry.

10. Educational meetings and personal contact were the most effective methods of transferring information to Extension clientele.

11. The agency in which the administrator was employed determines to an extent the perceived awareness of current programs and priorities for future programming.

Recommendations

As a result of the major findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made.

General

1. Develop a positive public relations program designed to communicate program emphasis and awareness of clientele needs to related USDA agencies.

2. Develop "interdisciplinary" programs among other USDA agencies to meet the needs of a common clientele.

3. Encourage the utilization of other USDA administrators as resource personnel in specific need areas of Cooperative Extension.

Agriculture

1. Future programs for the 20 counties of the Southwest District should be to emphasize and strengthen the areas of Agricultural Economics, Agronomy, and Animal Science.

2. Cooperative Extension should develop interdisciplinary programs with other USDA agencies and their "common" clientele to develop innovative programs within the existing areas of Agricultural Engineering, Entomology, and Horticulture.

Home Economics

1. Future programming should stress the importance of Food and Nutrition to all clientele groups of Home Economics.

2. A public relations program emphasizing an interest to assist the clientele in the other areas of Home Economics should be developed.

Rural Development

1. Cooperative Extension should develop a program or an approach toward involving the Farmers Home Administration in the aspects of the Rural Development program.

2. Extension clientele should be made aware of Rural Development programs and the availability of assistance to both rural and urban residents.

4-H

1. Youth Leadership Development should be a priority area for all county 4-H club organizations.

2. County 4-H clubs should sponsor an annual leadership workshop for all local 4-H club officers.
3. Development of strong local project club concepts will provide a source of strength and continuity for the overall county 4-H program.

Recommendations for Additional Research

The following recommendations are made by the author based on the findings of this study and his personal judgments:

1. Further research regarding Cooperative Extension's relationships with and/or perceptions by clientele representing agricultural education, producers, agribusiness, and farm organizations should be a priority.
2. A study with a more in-depth approach to agriculture regarding the perceptions of USDA administrators and excluding the other three program areas of Cooperative Extension should be conducted.

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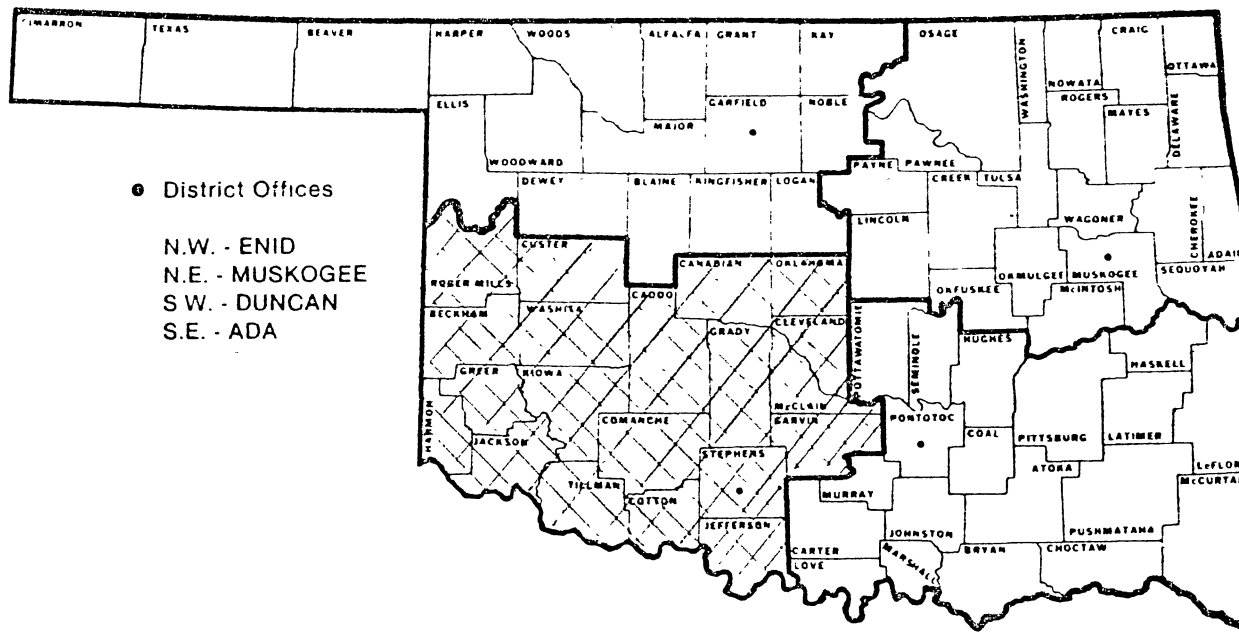
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APPENDIX A

MAP OF SURVEY AREA

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICTS



Map of Survey Area

APPENDIX B

ADMINISTRATOR QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire was designed to determine measures needed to improve present programs and to give direction in creating new programs for Cooperative Extension. Your opinions will be used in an evaluation study. Your replies will be strictly confidential. Please answer the following statements as they apply to your situation.

1. In which USDA agency and county do you presently work?
Agency (circle): SCS FmHA ASCS
County (specify): _____
2. Years of experience with the Department of Agriculture agency?
 0-5 6-10 11-15 16-20 21-25 26-plus
3. What is the highest degree that you have completed?
 High School Graduate Master's Degree
 College Graduate (B.S. Degree) Other _____
 (Specify)
4. Describe the type of county you feel you represent in terms of rural or urban.
 Almost completely rural
 Mostly rural, but some urban
 About evenly divided between rural/urban
 Mostly urban, but some rural
 Almost completely urban
5. Estimate the percentage of total income the county received from the sale of farm products.
(Respondents' estimated answer _____%)
6. Have you or has a member of your immediate family participated in an Extension program in your county?
 4-H
 Extension Homemakers
 Agricultural Meeting
 Rural Development
 None

Assuming that the activities of the County Extension Office could be grouped into the following categories, how would you rate the current Extension Service activities and future use of the following areas (see p. 64).

11. How much time and effort should Extension personnel spend on the four main program areas (total to equal 100%)?

Agriculture ____%

Rural Development ____%

Home Economics ____%

4-H ____%

12. During the past year can you recall an event or activity in which Extension was involved that gave you a favorable impression of the organization?

No ____ Yes ____ Example _____

13. Can you recall one that gave you an unfavorable impression of the organization?

No ____ Yes ____ Example _____

14. In your opinion, how well has Cooperative Extension in your county been keeping up-to-date on new and different ideas that affect the people they serve?

Poor ____ Fair ____ Good ____ Excellent ____

15. List three new ideas of programs that you feel Cooperative Extension should develop into its activities for the future.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

16. In your opinion, what is the most effective way Extension gets information to the people it serves?

News Releases ____

Demonstrations ____

Educational Meetings ____

News Letters ____

Personnel Contacts ____

Other (specify) _____

17. In your opinion, what are the goals of the Cooperative Extension Service?

18. What should be the goals of the Extension Service?

APPENDIX C
CORRESPONDENCE

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

P.O. Box A
Cheyenne, OK 73628

Dear County Administrator:

You are serving as a leader in your county. I am asking for your leadership experience to participate in an evaluation study concerning goals and perceptions of present and future programs for Cooperative Extension.

Your opinions and experiences are very important to this study. Your response to the enclosed questionnaire is needed to help make this study more beneficial toward strengthening the Cooperative Extension Service programs in Oklahoma.

Please take a few minutes from your busy schedule and complete the questionnaire, and return it in the self-addressed envelope by March 1, 1983.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

Dirk N. Webb
County Extension Director
Roger Mills County

DNW:jt

Encl.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

P.O. Box A
Cheyenne, OK 73628

March 15, 1983

Dear County Administrator:

You recently received a survey that would benefit the Cooperative Extension Service in planning programs and activities for our clientele.

If you have returned your survey, I thank you. If not, would you please take a minute to fill it out and return it? We need as many returned as possible, because it was sent to a small group of administrators.

I appreciate your help.

Sincerely,

Dirk N. Webb
County Extension Director
Roger Mills County

DNW/jt

VITA²

Dirk Newell Webb

Candidate for the Degree of
Master of Science

Thesis: ROLE OF THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE AS PERCEIVED BY PERSONNEL OF OTHER SELECTED SOUTHWEST OKLAHOMA USDA AGENCIES

Major Field: Agricultural Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Elk City, Oklahoma, December 4, 1955, the son of Newell and Wanda Webb.

Education: Graduated from Elk City High School, Elk City, Oklahoma, in May, 1974; received the Bachelor of Science in Agriculture degree from Oklahoma State University in May, 1978; received the Master of Science degree from Oklahoma State University in July, 1984.

Professional Experience: Farm background; Vocational Agriculture Instructor, July, 1978, to June, 1979; County Extension Director, Roger Mills County, Oklahoma, July, 1979, to present.

Professional Organizations: Oklahoma Association of County Extension Agents; National Association of County Agents.