

SARE Sustainable Agriculture Curriculum and Continuing Education Program for Cooperative Extension Faculty and other Ag Professionals

4th Conference Call: June 7, 2004

Next conference call: July 2nd, 8:30 Pacific-Arizona, 10:30 a.m. Central, 11:30 a.m. Eastern

To do:

Dave rework sub-topics into Competency 3 framework. Write some initial learning outcomes.

Design team work on Competency 4 and 5 essential topics feedback. **DUE TO DAVE BY JUNE 25th.**

Review Competency 2 sub-topics and learning outcomes draft at <http://www.sare.org/pdpcurriculum/corecomp2.htm> [my email on this task will also include Word doc.]

In-person meeting scheduled for September 13-14. Dave will research possible venues in St. Louis, Kansas City, Chicago, Minneapolis for in-person meeting

Participants: David Chaney, Kim Kroll, Vern Grubinger, Deborah Cavanaugh-Grant, Deborah Young, Andy McGuire, Julie Sexton

Agenda

1. Timeline Review / Set date for in-person meeting
2. Competency 4 and 5 schedule / set next conf. call
3. Competency 1 learning outcomes next steps
4. Competency 2 learning outcomes draft ready to send to design team for review
5. Competency 3 discussion.

Project Timeline

Team approved a more detailed project timeline. Agreed that early September would be a good time for our in-person design team meeting. The main tasks at that meeting would be to finalize the draft curriculum framework and outcomes before it goes out for formal review an evaluation, and begin working on specifics of the pilot course, i.e., the learning objectives, scope, content, and design elements.

Competency 4 and 5 schedule

Group agreed we would try to complete feedback and discussion of Competencies 4 and 5 in June. Feedback on essential topics/sub-topics are due to Dave by June 25th. As with the previous competencies, you can make direct edits/comments on the competency tables I sent out at the start of the project, or as a list of thoughts or ideas or outline in a separate doc or email. Conference call to discuss Comps 4 and 5 is set for July 2, 8:30 a.m. Pacific-Arizona.

Competency 1 and 2 Learning Outcomes Draft

Dave will be incorporating all design team feedback and creating a second draft of Competency 1 learning outcomes. We'll go for another round of feedback from design team members taking particular note of the need for additional Level III outcomes. What are the ultimate outcomes we

hope to see happening with our target audience? Dave noted that both Level II and III are focused in that direction and that the distinction is more one of-- growth in the position of an extension professional and experience in the field to the point where the individual is taking on a leadership and mentoring role (Level III) vs. consistent, strong application of knowledge in the field and in work with clientele (Level II).

We will follow a similar process with learning outcomes for Competency 2. That draft is ready to send out for review. After getting design team feedback, I'll generate another draft for further comment.

The recommendation was also made that after the second draft is produced, that we expand the circle of reviewers a bit beyond the design team to also include selected state PDP coordinators, one or two from each region. [Dave suggests that this communication happen via each of the regional reps on our design team, plus Geoff in southern region.]

Competency 3: The main objective for this meeting was to develop / refine the list of sub-topics that should be addressed under the third core competency: STRATEGIC FARM/RANCH BUSINESS PLANNING AND MARKETING.

Dave will take feedback, input, decisions from this meeting and re-work Competency 3 topics into the framework format previously discussed, and as outlined on the project Web site, in order to facilitate the next step—writing the learning outcomes for this competency (skills, behaviors, attitudes).

Competency 3 Outline Overview

1. Planning and Business Development Tools
2. Marketing Strategies and Opportunities for a Sustainable Farm/Ranch Business
3. Managing the Farm/Ranch Business for Long-Term Sustainability

Discussion

Three sub-topics above cover the key points in this core competency area. Overall, Kim strongly recommends relying on *Tilling the Soil of Opportunity* (TSO) curriculum (funded by national SARE) to develop this aspect of the course. All the sub-topics addressed and suggested in meetings and discussion on the national curriculum are addressed in that course. The focus should be on marketing alternatives in the context of good planning for the farm business as a whole. Deb C-G noted that TSO is pretty overwhelming in the quantity and depth of content; suggests a kind of TSO-light for the national course. Kim says the introductory pieces for the 10 or so sections of TSO would fill that niche. Vern: key piece is the interpretive summary to help participants understand when particular pieces are needed and where to go for more information.

1. Planning Tools and Strategies

In addition to key concepts already submitted from design team (included in Comp 3 feedback summary)--

- Planning should be through filter of environment and social aspect.
- Planning should also help producers test decisions against personal and business goals.
- Holistic management components are important but the term should not be used and key concepts should be made palatable and applicable to a wide audience
- Course can point to more specific elaborate processes such as whole farm planning, HRM, others...
- TSO incorporates a lot HM components (Wyatt Frass contribution); resource monitoring is challenging component. In national course, that topic is covered more in Competency 2.
- Distinguish between goal of strengthening existing business vs. developing a completely new enterprise
- Note resources such as Farming Alternatives Handbook, and Debbie Kelly Web site with planning tools links.

2. Marketing Strategies and Opportunities for a Sustainable Farm/Ranch Business

In addition to key concepts already submitted from design team (included in Comp 3 feedback summary)--

- Don't use word 'entrepreneurship'—it applies to this whole competency area. Focus here on marketing, and alternative marketing in particular.
- Yes, but also note distinction between entrepreneurship vs. management.
- General marketing: cover VERY generally in planning (Level I outcome); growers need to understand conventional markets, but it's not focus of this course.

3. Managing the Farm/Ranch Business for Long-Term Sustainability

In addition to key concepts already submitted from design team (included in Comp 3 feedback summary)--

- All topics raised in previous discussion and design team feedback are covered in TSO curriculum.

At the close of the conference call we had some discussion about the issue of ***small farms and entry level farmers and ranchers*** and how those issues should be addressed in this competency area. The key question raised was "Is there something the agent has to do differently in working with that particular clientele?" The answer is often YES, but the design team agreed that small farms should not be a separate topic under this competency. Rather incorporate relevant small farm business and marketing issues into the above three topics. Also, we should be thinking 'limited resource farmers' (limited resources connotes broader and more various aspects than just small farms) as that may actually be the operative term when discussing business planning and marketing.

Dave will contact Desmond Jolly and Diane Mayerfeld to get some feedback from them about appropriate outcomes for this aspect of the curriculum framework.

Agreed that we would NOT be addressing entry level farmers or beginning farmers in this course. It's an important issue in the broader discussions about the future of ag, but goes beyond the scope of this course.

Summarized by David Chaney