

## Optimizing Your Potential as a 4-H Volunteer



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# The History of the Cooperative Extension Service

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### What Is the Cooperative Extension Service?

- A premiere non-formal educational program addressing the needs of citizens and communities
- Part of a national non-formal educational effort administered through the Land Grant University system
- Uniquely funded from federal, state, and local governments

### The Land Grant University System Is Created

- In 1862 the Morrill Act was passed. It is known as the Land-Grant Act
- Signed into law by President Lincoln on July 2, 1862

### The Land-Grant Mission

- Original mission was to teach agriculture, military tactics and mechanical arts; to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes

### Purdue University is Created

- In 1869 an offer by John Purdue and others was accepted by the legislature
- Purdue contributed \$150,000 and 100 acres. Others put in \$50,000
  - New institution to be called Purdue University
  - Opened its doors in 1874 with 39 students and 5 faculty

### Extending the University to the People

A way was still needed to spread these new ideas and practices

- Early efforts included Farmers' Institutes and Movable Schools

### The Father Of Extension: Seaman A. Knapp

- Studied application of science to agriculture
- Iowa State University professor and President
- Managed a million acre company in Louisiana

### An Early History

- Boys' Corn Clubs Developed around turn of century
- First County Agents appointed in 1906
- First Home Demonstration Agents appointed in 1910
- 42 States had extension work in some form in 1914
  - ◆ 929 counties already employed 1,350 extension workers

### The Official Beginning

- May 8, 1914 President Woodrow Wilson signed the Smith-Lever Act
  - ◆ Extension Service became the educational arm of the U.S. Department of Agriculture
  - ◆ Established activities within a unique nationwide system, funded and guided by a national, state, and local government partnership

### The System Grows

- Mid-June 1918 nationally
  - ◆ 2,435 counties had Ag Agents

- ◆ 1,715 Counties had Home Demonstration Agents
- 4-H Membership soared to 1/2 million members

#### Extension Changing, But Unchanging

- Laws affecting extension have helped direct programs

#### Extension Through the Years

- During WW I, Extension spearheaded the nation's food production effort
- During the 1920s, emphasis changed from production to economic concerns
- Helped to organize farm cooperatives

#### Extension During the Depression

- Help understand emergency government action programs
- Home Demonstration Agents taught home and money management
- Rural Youth organized in 1934

#### Extension During the War Years

#### “Food and Feed for Family Living” of the National Defense Program

- “Victory Gardens”
- Scrap metal drives
- Stressed food conservation

#### Extension After the War

- Program planning was re-emphasized
- New Areas of outreach
  - ◆ Community and rural development
  - ◆ Family living

#### Extension in the 60s and 70's

- Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)
- Expansion of community development efforts
- Changed from Agricultural Extension Service to Cooperative Extension Service

- Changed agent titles to County Extension Agent
- Purdue system moved to an area approach in 1966

#### Extension in the 80s and 90s

- “Farm Crisis” redirected extension
- Focused on issue programming
- Indiana combined 10 areas into 5 districts
- Downsizing of positions in 1987
- Strong emphasis on accountability
- Collaborate with organizations with similar goals

#### Extension Continues to “Take the University to the People”

- Image changed
- Philosophy has not changed
- Demonstration method is still relevant
- Use of new technology has changed information dissemination
- Organizational stress and resource redirection is common

#### The Cooperative Extension Service.....

- Is a proactive, responsive and collaborative organization
- Committed to the growth and development of people through life-long learning

#### Our Vision

- Empower customers
- Develop volunteers
- Build collaborative partnerships
- Increase our capacity to secure resources
- Utilize appropriate technologies and communication networks
- Create a climate for our staff to realize their potential