The Cooperative Extension Service enjoys a rich and proud history in this country. It grew out of a demand by the people of America to provide educational experiences and new technologies to all citizens.

It is truly a unique organization in that all segments of government play a part in its focus and operation. Our system is enviable all over the world as many countries try to imitate it.

With this presentation we hope to share with you some of the background and rich heritage that makes up the Cooperative Extension Service.
What Is the Cooperative Extension Service?

- Premiere non-formal education
- Part of a national educational effort
- Administered by the Land-Grant University system
- Uniquely funded from federal, state, and local governments

The Cooperative Extension Service is a premier, non-formal educational program addressing the needs of the citizens and communities of this country.

Our Purdue system is part of a national effort. There are Cooperative Extension Service programs in every state, and county offices in nearly every county in this country. The program is administered through the Land-Grant College or University system.

We are quite unique in that we receive operating funds from all levels of government – county, state, and federal. The U.S. Department of Agriculture administers the Extension System at the national level.
Early universities in the U. S. taught classics / professionals
- Harvard, Yale, William and Mary
- In the mid-1800s science was gaining importance
- Efforts to provide a liberal, practical education to all citizens

Higher education in the early years of this country was reserved for the wealthy. There were universities such as Harvard, Yale, and the College of William and Mary that taught the country's elite. The course work dealt with the classics and the education of professionals.

In the mid-1800s people became more and more interested in the field of science, but educational opportunities were not widely available. Americans wanted more technical and agricultural information, and since these were not available at the educational institutions, they turned to what was known as agricultural societies.

Congressmen listened to their constituents and in 1850 the first discussions of a state university that would provide practical and liberal education to the industrial classes began. Jonathan Turner of Illinois wrote an essay, "A Plan for a State University for the Industrial Classes", that embodied most of the ideas that would later become law.
Efforts continued throughout the 1850s to develop a public system of education for all citizens. The first land-grant bill was introduced in Congress in 1857 by Justin Smith Morrill of Vermont. It did not pass due to opposition to the federal government getting involved in education.
On July 2, 1862 the Morrill Act was signed into law by President Lincoln

Known as the Land-Grant Act
- Each state was given public land to be sold
- Proceeds used to maintain a college

Attempts continued and the bill was reworked to accommodate many different interests. At the beginning of the Civil War the bill was again rewritten, this time including the provision that these new state schools would teach military tactics.

On July 2, 1862 President Lincoln signed the Morrill Act putting in place the land-grant educational system.

The act provided for a system that gave public land to each state. The proceeds of the sale of that land were to be invested and the interest used to endow, support, and maintain at least one college.
The Land-Grant Mission

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

This legislation signaled a revolt by the people of this country against the elitist educational system available to them.

There were at least three purposes embodied in the Morrill Act of 1862:

1) A protest against the dominance of the classics in higher education.

2) A desire to develop at the college level instruction relating to the practical realities of an agricultural and industrial society.

3) An attempt to offer to those belonging to the industrial classes preparation of the “professions of life”.

These purposes were stated in the following words: “....the endowment, support, and maintenance of at least one college where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, in such manner as the legislatures of the states may respectively prescribe, in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life.”
John Purdue and other Tippecanoe County citizens made a proposal in 1869 which the Indiana legislature accepted. Purdue would contribute $100,000 and 100 acres of land, while the other citizens collectively would contribute $50,000. The new institution was to be called Purdue University.
Purdue University opened its doors in 1874 to 39 students taught by 5 faculty.
Experimental farms focused science on the problems of agriculture.

Hatch Act passed in 1887.

Resulted in growth of experiment stations and related research to agriculture.

The early land-grant systems relied heavily on the laboratory method and experimental farms were the focus of this endeavor.

Experimental farms marked the beginning of the direct application of science to the problems of agriculture, so it was only natural that the school officials would seek a union between these experimental stations and the colleges teaching agriculture.

In 1887 the Hatch Act was passed. It provided for a department known as the agricultural experimentation station in each of the land-grant colleges.

This act stimulated the growth of the experiment stations and the number of staff in them doubled within the next ten years.
In 1890, a second Morrill Act was passed. This bill provided more resources for the schools and is said to have contributed to the development of universities rather than colleges of agriculture and mechanical arts.

The bill also addressed the issue of race by establishing separate institutions for blacks in the south.

Subsequent changes to the law made in 1971 provided the services of the land-grant system to the nation’s territories, and just recently in 1994, it was again extended to the tribal colleges.
A way was needed to spread new ideas and practices

Early efforts included Farmers’ Institutes and Movable Schools

In 1898, USDA hired Seaman Knapp to “demonstrate” research results to local farmers in Louisiana

Although the Hatch Act of 1887 added agricultural research to the Land-Grant system, a way was still needed to get these new ideas and problem solutions to the farmers and people needing them.

Some schools offered on-campus noncredit classes while others provided courses off-campus, but the most popular way of getting this new research out was through Farmers’ Institutes and “Movable Schools”.

The first Farmers’ Institute was held in 1863, and by 1899 all but three states held them.

In 1898, USDA hired Seaman Knapp to “demonstrate” research results to farmers in Louisiana.
Seaman Knapp is often considered the father of Cooperative Extension. He was a minister and school educator in his early years, but illness caused him to leave these pursuits.

He studied science and agriculture, and took advantage of every opportunity to promote better ag production. In 1879 he became a professor of Agriculture at Iowa State University, and later became it's president.

Knapp left that post in 1896 to manage a million acre company in Louisiana where he incorporated demonstrations to convince settlers to grow rice on the land.

It was through this work that Knapp learned the power of agriculture demonstrations. His philosophy is best described in one of his most often quoted sayings: “What a man hears, he may doubt. What he sees, he may possibly doubt. But what a man does himself, he cannot doubt.”
Knapp’s demonstration process was so well received that he was invited to Texas to help farmers with the boll weevil problem.

Around the turn of the century, Boys’ Corn clubs were developed to teach the latest agricultural practices to youth. One-dollar premiums were offered for the best corn yields and the idea of offering prizes became very popular.

Special agents were hired to help with the demonstrations. Yields on the demonstration farms were twice that of other farms, so leaders in Smith County, Texas petitioned to have a man work exclusively in their county. W.C. Stallings was appointed the first county agent by the USDA on November 12, 1906.

Early organizations for women in the Midwest, called “domestic science associations,” were formed to teach better methods in the home and to promote domestic science in the schools. Other names for these organizations were neighborhood study clubs, homemaker clubs, farm women clubs, and home bureaus. The first home demonstration clubs associated with Extension in the south developed from the girl's canning clubs.
Extension work grew steadily in those early years, and by 1914 (the year the Smith–Lever act was signed) 42 states had some form of extension work. Nine hundred twenty-nine counties across the country employed 1,350 extension workers.
On May 8, 1914 President Woodrow Wilson signed the Smith-Lever Act. Its purpose was to:

…inaugurate, in connection with these colleges, Agriculture Extension work which shall be carried on in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture….in order 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 application of the same.

The Smith-Lever Act was designed to eliminate much of the duplication of Extension efforts among the colleges, the USDA, the farmers cooperatives, and other movement agencies by creating one organization for this work.

It put in place a unique nationwide system establishing joint planning and cooperation of efforts funded by a national, state, and local partnership.
Extension came into being because rural families needed the education and research generated at the Land-Grant Universities. Our populations have changed with fewer Americans living on farms and in rural communities, but the Cooperative Extension Service has constantly changed to meet the shifting needs of people.
When World War I started, Extension mobilized and spearheaded the nation's food production effort.

The farm depression of the 1920s helped change Extension’s direction from production to economic concerns, efficiency in farm operations, and improving the quality of rural life.

Also during the 1920s, Extension actively helped to organize farm cooperatives to facilitate group purchases of fertilizers, feed and other supplies, as well as the sale of crops and livestock.
Extension During the Depression

- USDA used Extension to acquaint farmers and rural people to new agencies
- Helped people understand emergency government action programs
- Home demonstration agents taught home / money management
- Indiana Rural Youth - 1934

During the depression, Cooperative Extension was called on to operate many federal programs such as soil conservation and rural electrification.

Group discussions emerged as a new approach to help farm families become active participants in county, state and national public affairs.

Home economics programs were geared toward family self-sufficiency. There was a nationwide effort to establish community canning kitchens as an intensive food production and conservation effort.

In Indiana, the Extension Service offered statewide assistance to older-out-of-school youth (18-28 years) by organizing “older rural youth” clubs.
During the WWII years, Cooperative Extension became the single federal agency having a direct educational link with rural America. This relationship prompted Extension to be involved in many efforts related to the war.

Extension took on a dynamic role with “Food and Feed for Family Living.” “Victory Gardens” were grown on farms and in backyards, 4-H’ers conducted scrap metal drives, and the home demonstration agents worked with families stressing food conservation.

Extension was also asked to investigate requests for agricultural deferment from the draft, to help with price control and rationing programs, and in managing the emergency farm labor program.
After the War a new law, the Bankhead-Flannegan Act of 1945, provided for intensified county-level development of the Extension system. Major advances in agriculture after the war allowed Extension to expand its efforts into community development and family living.

Extension began work with consumers in urban areas and focused on farm management, public affairs, and marketing efforts.
New problems associated with the “modern” living of the 60s and 70s again challenged the way Extension served people.

Extension responded with many new or expanded programs. Target audiences included low-income and minority groups, migrant workers, and vastly expanded urban efforts.

Special funds were appropriated for programs such as Expanded Food and Nutrition (EFNEP), integrated pest management, and rural development.

These new programs created changes in staffing patterns. In Indiana the name was changed from Agricultural Extension Service to Cooperative Extension Service and staff titles were changed to County Extension Agents. The Purdue system moved to an Area approach in the 60s.
The "Farm Crisis" of the early 80's promoted a major shift in programming. Stress management and farm business were emphasized as well as increased programs in 4-H, resource development, and family living.

The system redirected its efforts to focus on broad initiatives and issues with educators serving as facilitators of local problem solving groups. Purdue Cooperative Extension met the challenge of the new efforts with a new redirection of resources. Ten area programs were combined into five districts, and downsizing of state and county positions began in 1987. The result provided a system better able to meet the interdisciplinary approaches to the environmental, social and economic changes in communities and families of the 90s.

Throughout the system, there is a strong emphasis on accountability, making sure that scarce resources are providing results. Extension has sought out collaborations with other organizations with similar goals to deliver programs.

Just as in 1914 when the Smith-Lever Act sought to eliminate duplication of efforts of organizations serving rural America, today Extension again emphasizes this need to efficiently deliver programs and information.
In the years since 1914, Extension has changed more in it’s methodology than it’s philosophy.

Many people’s image of Extension is captured in the famous Norman Rockwell painting, *The County Agent*. They imagine an Ag Agent making farm visits, home demonstration agents demonstrating the latest canning methods, and a whole family approach to education of family and economic well-being.
The establishment of the Land-Grant system did not happen immediately. It took nearly 50 years to develop.

140 years later, the Land-Grant universities continue to be true to the Land-Grant definition.

Purdue University and all other Land-Grants are:

“Dedicated not only to teaching young people and the discovery of information, but also to applying that knowledge to the solutions of problems to help people live better lives and to have better livelihoods.”

(V. Lechtenberg)
Extension Educators today may be more urban and suburban, rather than rural. Agricultural production is still a major focus, but ag agents may also give advice on roses and lawns. Consumer and Family Science educators address consumer issues and family life, and youth educators may help teens with computer skills as well as help with raising and showing livestock.

The demonstration method is still relevant, but today new information dissemination methods include television, the Internet and satellite broadcasts.

Organizational stress and downsizing resulting from redirection of funds is commonplace in the system today as it mobilizes and adapts to the ever changing environment. Regardless of the challenges, Extension has stayed focused on it’s mission of “taking the university to the people.”
The Cooperative Extension Service is a proactive, responsive and collaborative organization.

It is committed to the growth and development of people through life-long learning.
Our Vision

- Empower clientele to access information, sort through and process it
- Develop volunteers who share time and expertise

The Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service is a premier, non-formal educational program which addresses the critical needs of citizens and communities.

We do this by empowering clientele to access information, sort through its complexities and process the information for its application in decision making and by developing volunteers who share their time and expertise for the benefit of themselves and others.
Our vision is to build collaborative partnerships with other institutions, organizations, and university departments to provide educational programs focused on critical issues defined and prioritized by citizens and communities and to increase our capacity to secure resources to sustain targeted programs and create new models and strategies for addressing emerging issues.
Our Vision Is Accomplished
By...

- Utilizing appropriate technologies and communication networks
- Creating a climate for our staff to realize their potential while being team players
- Focusing on excellence

Our vision is accomplished by utilizing appropriate technologies and communication networks to access information, plan, design, implement, evaluate, and market educational programs and impacts; and by creating a climate for staff to realize their potential. They are competent, diverse, sensitive, visionary risk takers and team players who are focused on excellence.
The End

Questions?

Optimizing Your Potential as a 4-H Volunteer
January, 2001

4-H Youth Department,
Purdue University West Lafayette, IN
Catherine E. Burwell, Ph.D., Extension Specialist
cathy.burwell@ces.purdue.edu
References:


History of Indiana Extension. EDCI 555. Introduction to Extension Education. Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN.

Lechtenberg, V. (Nov, 2000.) The Land-Grant System. Presentation at the annual meeting of the Indiana P-CARET, West Lafayette, IN.


Some Historical Background. EDCI 555. Introduction to Extension Education. Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN.
