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# Individual Annual Plan Protocol

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**U|EXTENSION**  
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

 **TENNESSEE**  
STATE UNIVERSITY  
Cooperative Extension

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## Introduction

This document contains nine protocols to improve the Individual Annual Plan (IAP) and are based on these guiding principles:

- The IAP should make positive contributions to both employee and organizational development.
- The IAP is the keystone of effective program development and implementation.
- The IAP successfully guides local program delivery.
- The IAP is aligned with the appraisal's program development criteria.

## 1. IAP Process

**Protocol 1A.** Multi-year planning is discontinued.

Rationale. Annual plans are consistent with the current annual appraisal criteria for program development, and very few agents and area specialists employed multi-year plans. However, given that issues may take multiple years to address, a function will be added to SUPER to allow a plan to be copied from a previous year. The employee would then make any applicable changes and submit the plan. This annual review is important to ensure that (1) programs remain flexible and responsive to emerging needs, and (2) successful past programs are built upon so that the results advance from short-term to long-term outcomes.

**Protocol 1B.** With all status changes to the IAP, email notifications will follow to Agents and County Directors. Currently, Regional Program Leaders receive notifications of status changes, which will continue.

Rationale. County Directors have an integral role in employee coaching and development. Notifications will alert them to provide assistance to employees regarding program development.

**Protocol 1C.** The role of the County Director in the IAP approval process is clarified.

Rationale. The description, shown below, adds efficiency and consistency to the IAP approval process.

### ***Role of County Director in IAP Approval Process***

The County Director has an important role in the development, approval, and implementation of high-quality programs reflected in the Extension Agents' IAP. The

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County Director should coach Extension Agents on matters of program development to ensure that educational programs address the needs identified in the county. This includes coaching Extension Agents on the following varied activities: assessing needs, working with Advisory Groups, identifying issues, setting priorities, targeting an audience, and selecting outcomes. The IAP should reflect the ongoing communication between County Director and Extension Agent throughout the year. The County Director should provide appropriate and timely feedback, including any suggested revisions, about the IAP to the Extension Agent. The County Director submits the IAP to the Regional Program Leaders for approval.

**Protocol 1D.** An IAP will only be returned to an employee from the Regional Program Leader no more than two times.

Rationale. This protocol will contribute to efficiency.

**Protocol 1E.** Rated, locked IAPs will not be altered during the year.

Rationale. The new appraisal criteria allows for situations where the planned programs and outcomes may change during the year. Also, program changes may often be represented in base programming efforts.

**Protocol 1F.** The IAP overall rating (program development rating) and overall comments made by the Regional Program Leader will transfer from the employee's IAP to the appraisal form.

Rationale. Transferring the IAP program development ratings from the IAP to the appraisal form has worked very well for many years for the organization. It should be noted that with the new appraisal form, only the IAP overall rating (program development rating) transfers to the appraisal form. This automatic transfer in SUPER will be advantageous to the annual appraisal implementation.

### 2. IAP Instruction

**Protocol 2A.** An Annual IAP In-service, beginning in 2017, will review effective planning and address questions and concerns among Regional Programs Leaders, County Directors, Extension Agents, Area Specialists, and State Specialists. The training will be delivered in a 90-minute, annual webinar, and attendance should be encouraged.

Rationale. An Annual IAP In-service enhances consistency in implementing this important process across all counties and regions.

**Protocol 2B.** The following definitions have been added to each corresponding IAA screen in SUPER. These definitions provide clarity and contribute to consistency in preparing and rating Individual Annual Plans.

#### 1. Issue Statement

The issue statement describes the issue(s) or problem(s) to be addressed and the individual, family, farm, community, and/or business/industry needs. This statement focuses on the relevance of the issue(s) or problem(s) to be addressed. It is recommended that the issue statement briefly summarize both archival (such as Extension Office records, Census data, etc.) and data collected expressly from stakeholders for needs assessment/situational analysis purposes (such as interviews or Advisory Committees). It is suggested that a comprehensive program needs assessment be conducted at least every three years with annual updates of applicable archival data.

#### 2. Plans for the Coming Year

The Plans for the Coming Year describes the audiences to be served and the programs to be delivered. Specifically, this section includes the activities, processes, methodologies, products and/or curricula to be used in delivering the program. Specific plans to promote equity, access, and/or diversity should be included. This section may be outlined in any practice that the employee finds useful such as by month, by quarter, by program, by audience, etc.

#### 3. Resources

This section outlines the planned collaborators, partners, and resources that provide inputs for the planned programs. The Resources section should list specific individuals and organizations who will contribute to the planned program. Enter a dollar amount for "Resources to be expended for this agenda." This amount should include an estimate of donations, endowments, in-kind contributions, etc. It should not include volunteer time or county, state or federal funds.

#### 4. Outcomes

The outcomes are end-results of the programs being conducted. The outcomes ought to be aligned with the issue and plans for the coming year to the extent possible. All standard

statewide priority program plans, known as State Action Agendas, should have appropriate standard, statewide outcomes. Emphasis must be placed on standard, statewide outcomes to demonstrate the effects our programs have on a statewide basis. However, for new programs and programs in development, the employee may add program-specific outcomes. A field to record the estimated number of participants being targeted for the outcomes is provided. This estimate is the number of people the Extension Agent will specifically target to achieve the stated outcomes in the coming year.

### 5. **Planned Evaluation Methods**

Planned evaluation methods list ways the stated outcomes will be measured. Ideally, all standard statewide outcomes should have an established, standard evaluation protocol. Consult specialists or program leaders.

### 6. **Scope**

Scope describes where the plan will be implemented. Typically an employee only implements a planned program in the county or counties to which they are assigned. Scope is particularly helpful for Extension Area Specialists to describe the location of planned programs.

Scope is described in three parts. The first is the geographic location within Tennessee to be served. Second, scope is the integrated research and Extension status. If research is being conducted as part of the program, it is integrated research and Extension. Finally, scope describes the multistate status of the plan. If out-of-state Extension or research personnel are involved in planning, conducting or evaluating the plan, it is a multistate effort.

**Protocol 2C.** Extension has established a formal, state-level definition of base programming and its relation to the IAP.

Rationale. The definition adds efficiency to the planning and reporting process, and it is shown below.

#### ***Proposed Explanation/Definition of Extension Base Programs***

Cooperative Extension Programs in Tennessee are characterized by four base programs: (1) 4-H Youth Development, (2) Agriculture and Natural Resources, (3) Family and Consumer Sciences, and (4) Community Resource and Economic Development (TSU) and Community Economic Development (UT). The term base program references programs *based* on: local needs, research/evidence, and Federal legislation. These four base programs correspond to the USDA-NIFA mission mandates for Cooperative Extension. Selected examples are shown in Table 1 to illustrate alignment between Extension base programs and enabling Federal legislation.

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Table 1. Extension Base Program Aligned with Federal Legislation

Extension Base Program	Program or Charge	Enabling Federal Legislation
4-H Youth Development	Diffusing knowledge and practices of positive youth development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smith-Lever Act of 1914</li> <li>• National Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977</li> </ul>
Agriculture and Natural Resources	Diffusing knowledge and practices of production agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smith-Lever Act of 1914</li> <li>• National Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977</li> </ul>
	Forestry Education Programs including forest stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clark-McNary Act of 1924</li> <li>• Renewable Resources Extension Act of 1978</li> </ul>
	Pollinator protection education programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural Act of 2014</li> </ul>
Family and Consumer Sciences	Diffusing knowledge and practices of Family and Consumer Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smith-Lever Act of 1914</li> <li>• National Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977</li> </ul>
	Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smith-Lever 3d EFNEP Funds Authorization of 1969</li> </ul>
Community Resource and Economic Development/ Community Economic Development	Diffusing knowledge and practices of community development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act of 1972</li> </ul>

The state priority programs are represented by the State Action Agendas and emanate from the base programs. Practically speaking, individual employees are best positioned to determine whether any given program is part of the Individual Annual Plan or their base programming effort. This practice works well for Cooperative Extension because it focuses energies on the end results of societal, economic, and environmental improvements rather than categorization of named programs. It is recommended that for Extension Agents, County Directors, and Extension Area Specialists, approximately 60% effort be placed in priority programs, that is, those programs in their IAP, and approximately 40% effort be placed on base programs which may be unplanned.

### Summary

These protocols were informed by the work and recommendations of the Appraisal Revision Committee from October, 2014 through February, 2016, and represents a cross-section of the experience and expertise of UT and TSU Extension. Following these protocols will build on the successful planning process while aligning it with the new appraisal process, criteria, and forms. The Appraisal Revision Committee included: Joseph Donaldson, Tom Broyles, Beth Duncan, Troy Dugger, Tracy Hagan, Connie Heiskell, Mary Beth Henley, Hunter Isbell, Martin Koon, Latif Lighari, Dallas Manning, Tyrone Miller, Gary Rodgers, Izetta Slade, John Toman, Anthony Tuggle, and Glenn Turner.

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