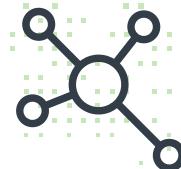


TENNESSEE EXTENSION COUNTY CONNECTIONS E-FOLIO



FOR NEW COUNTY EXTENSION STAFF

As a new County Extension Staff member, you are part of a network of professionals dedicated to improving the quality of life in Tennessee. This e-folio is designed to help you connect with your colleagues and access the resources you need to succeed in your new role.

Throughout this e-folio, you will find valuable information and resources to support your professional development and help you make a positive impact in your community.

We hope you find this e-folio helpful and informative. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out to your county Extension Agent or the Tennessee Extension Office.

Name:

County:

Start Date:

Rev. 2/02/2026

Real Life Solutions™

UTEXTENSION
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

TSU COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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WELCOME TO TENNESSEE EXTENSION!

Helpful Links



Extension New
Employee
Toolkit



UT Human
Resources



TSU Human
Resources



Extension HR
Policy and
Guidance



UT Employee
Hub



Professional
Dress Guidelines



Promotion
Guidelines



Benefits



Flexible Work
Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Tennessee Extension! Tennessee Extension has a rich history and a story that began over 100 years ago. Our story is made up of impacts and milestones that improve the lives of Tennesseans and make our communities better places to live, work, and play. As in all stories, our story is driven by the most important part of our organization: the people. Every role in Extension has a part to play in pursuing our mission.

As your story and Extension's story intertwine, we encourage you to embrace your new role and to bring your strengths and passions to your Extension work. You are now part of the story, and your work will continue writing the future of Tennessee Extension.

This electronic portfolio and workbook is a tool meant to help you learn about Tennessee Extension and your county. Through exploration and reflection, you'll gain a deeper understanding of your community's unique needs and the valuable resources Extension provides to address them.

The e-folio is designed to be an interactive learning experience, guiding you through key aspects of your county and Extension's role within it. As you complete sections of this e-folio, consider the profound impact of connecting with your community. By building relationships, sharing knowledge, and collaborating on real life solutions, Tennessee Extension improves the quality of life of Tennesseans. Extension is a catalyst for positive change, empowering individuals and communities to thrive.

The e-folio is to be reviewed at 3 months with the county director and completed by 6-months from date of employment.

If you have any questions along the way, don't hesitate to reach out to your regional office for guidance.

GETTING ORIENTED

YOUR FIRST MONTH



Extension Virtual Orientation



2nd Tuesday of every month at 9:00 am CT/10:00 am ET.

The Extension Evaluation & Staff Development Office hosts a monthly virtual orientation for all new Extension employees.



UTK New Vol Welcome (UT Employees)

This self-paced online module is available at tiny.utk.edu/newvolwelcome.

Insurance and retirement documents are due within 30 days of your start date.

Learn more in the New Vol Welcome module and in the Extension Virtual Orientation benefits session.



Online Learning: A Historical Overview of the U.S.

Cooperative Extension System

Assigned after Virtual Orientation

The Extension Service is proud to have such a rich history. Take your time and learn about the great events, legislation and people that have made our Extension organization so great today.



Meet with your Regional Program Leader (RPL).

Your RPL will reach out to you to schedule this meeting.



Schedule a meeting with your mentor.

Your mentor will reach out to you to schedule your first mentor meeting.



ABOUT TENNESSEE EXTENSION

This section will introduce you to Tennessee Extension's mission, vision, values, organizational structure, and history. Reviewing this information will help you learn more about the organization.

ABOUT TENNESSEE EXTENSION

Follow any road in Tennessee and you'll find people whose lives have been influenced by Extension's educational programs.

Tennessee Extension provides Real. Life. Solutions. throughout Tennessee. With an office in each of the state's ninety-five counties, Extension helps Tennesseans to improve their quality of life and solve problems through the application of research and evidenced-based knowledge about agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, 4-H youth development, and community development.

Extension provides a gateway to the land grant universities, The University of Tennessee and Tennessee State University, as the outreach arm of the land grant university system. It is a statewide educational organization, funded by federal, state and local governments, that brings research-based information about agriculture, family and consumer sciences, and resource development to the people of Tennessee where they live and work.



MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES



UT EXTENSION MISSION

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

UT Extension's mission is to help Tennesseans improve their quality of life and solve problems through the application of research and evidence based knowledge about agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, 4-H youth development, and community development.

UT EXTENSION VISION

WHAT WE'RE KNOWN FOR

UT Extension is the premier educational organization for all Tennesseans. Extension increases economic prosperity, improves environmental sustainability, and enhances well-being in rural and urban communities.

[LEARN MORE](#)



MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

UT EXTENSION CORE VALUES & ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES

WHAT WE STAND FOR

UT Extension serves society using high quality educational programs that improve Tennessee's quality of life, economy and environment. UT Extension employees, volunteers and partners are people of integrity. In all of our efforts, we value communication and responsiveness.

As UT Extension we ...

- Are the gateway to the University of Tennessee as the outreach unit of the Institute of Agriculture.
- Are a statewide educational organization with an office in every county.
- Are members of a team that includes employees, volunteers and partners.
- Are responsible for advancing Tennessee and committed to team decisions.
- Are public servants who make wise decisions regarding time and resources.
- Encourage listening and mutual respect.
- Support diversity and inclusivity in people and programs.
- Use technology and promote lifelong learning to improve the lives, environment and economy for all Tennesseans.
- Strive for excellence in all things.

MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES



TSU EXTENSION MISSION

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

Tennessee State University Cooperative Extension Program exists to help educate and provide information to limited-resource urban and rural families, small farmers, individuals, other groups and organizations. We use research-based information and technology to focus on priorities and needs which help to improve quality of life.

TSU EXTENSION VISION

WHAT WE'RE KNOWN FOR

Our vision is to be a leader in outreach educational programs. Using a variety of program delivery strategies, we offer practical and useful research-based programs, resources, and publications in agriculture and natural resources, family & consumer sciences, 4-H youth development and community resource and economic development.

[LEARN MORE](#)



EXTENSION PROGRAM AREAS

Tennessee Extension works in four main program areas.

AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES (ANR)

The Agriculture and Natural Resources Team helps Tennesseans run more profitable farms and agricultural holdings, grow and process abundant and safe food, and create a cleaner environment.

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES (FCS)

UT Extension Family and Consumer Sciences professionals use research-based education to help Tennesseans improve their well-being, resulting in economic benefits for individuals, families, and communities.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Tennessee 4-H encourages youth to “Learn by Doing.” Members develop their skills and talents to the fullest potential through 4-H clubs, special interest groups, afterschool programs, camps, and many other activities.

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CED)

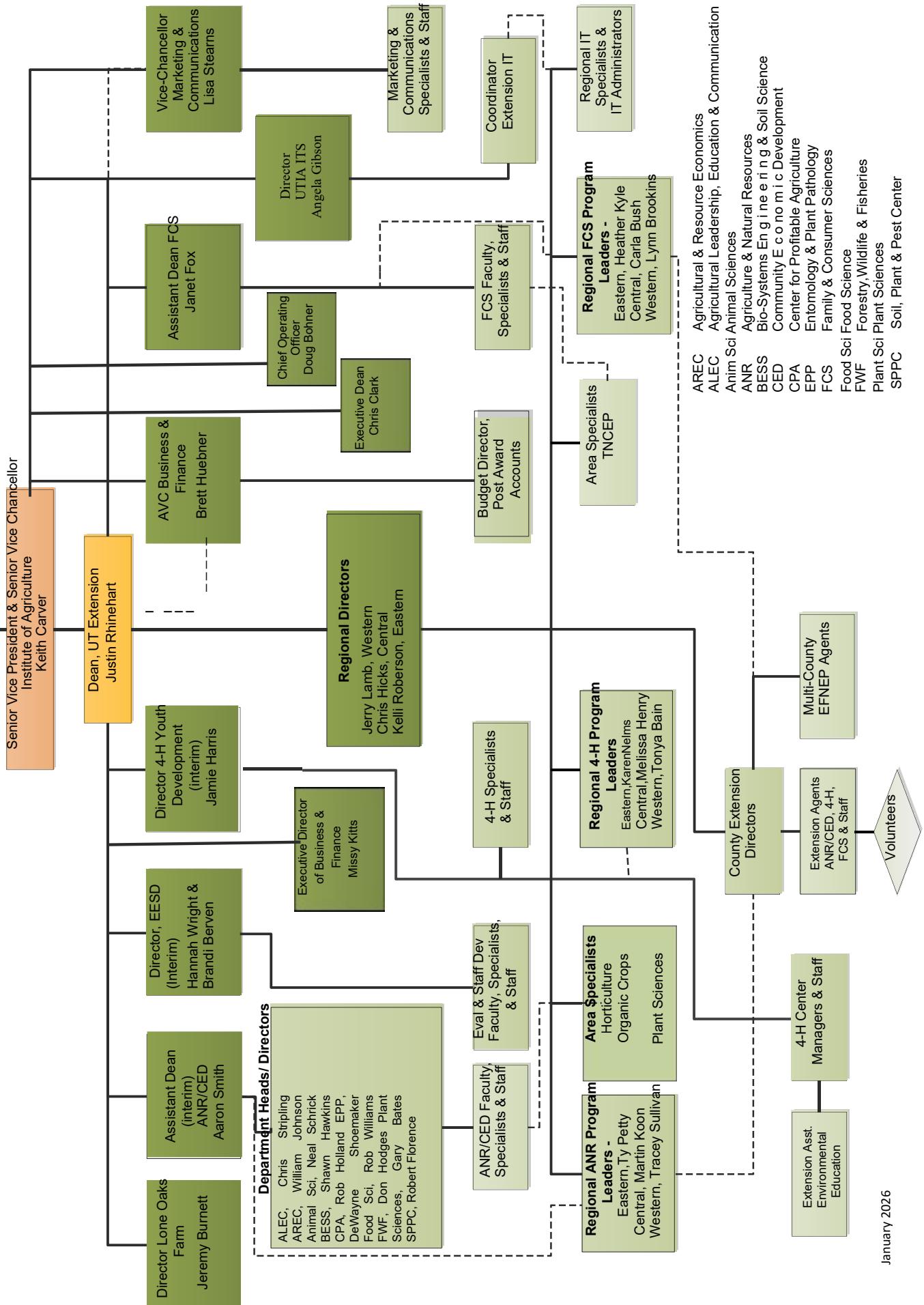
UT Extension’s Community Economic Development Team assists Tennesseans and their communities in areas such as small business transition and growth, entrepreneurial training, workforce development, and technology transfer.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



AN EXTENSION OFFICE IN ALL 95 COUNTIES

WESTERN REGION	CENTRAL REGION	EASTERN REGION
1. Benton 2. Carroll 3. Chester 4. Crockett 5. Decatur 6. Dickson 7. Dyer 8. Fayette 9. Gibson 10. Hardeman 11. Hardin 12. Haywood 13. Henderson 14. Henry 15. Hickman 16. Houston 17. Humphreys 18. Lake 19. Lauderdale 20. Lawrence 21. Lewis 22. Madison 23. McNairy 24. Montgomery 25. Obion 26. Perry 27. Shelby 28. Stewart 29. Tipton 30. Wayne 31. Weakley	1. Bedford 2. Cannon 3. Cheatham 4. Clay 5. Coffee 6. Davidson 7. Dekalb 8. Franklin 9. Giles 10. Grundy 11. Jackson 12. Lincoln 13. Macon 14. Marion 15. Marshall 16. Maury 17. Moore 18. Overton 19. Pickett 20. Putnam 21. Robertson 22. Rutherford 23. Sequatchie 24. Smith 25. Sumner 26. Trousdale 27. Van Buren 28. Warren 29. White 30. Williamson 31. Wilson	1. Anderson 2. Bledsoe 3. Blount 4. Bradley 5. Campbell 6. Carter 7. Claiborne 8. Cocke 9. Cumberland 10. Fentress 11. Grainger 12. Greene 13. Hamblen 14. Hamilton 15. Hancock 16. Hawkins 17. Jefferson 18. Johnson 19. Knox 20. Loudon 21. McMinn 22. Meigs 23. Monroe 24. Morgan 25. Polk 26. Rhea 27. Roane 28. Scott 29. Sevier 30. Sullivan 31. Unicoi 32. Union 33. Washington



EXTENSION HISTORY

DEFINING MOMENTS

1794	University of Tennessee is founded.
1862	President Lincoln signs bill creating a Department of Agriculture.
1862	Morrill Act establishes one land-grant university in every state.
1867	Congress passes special act to allow Tennessee to benefit from 1862 Morrill Act.
1890	Second Morrill Act establishes land-grant universities for African-Americans in 17 states.
1887	Hatch Act establishes Agricultural Experiment Stations at land-grant institutions.
Late 1800s	Margaret Washington, Tuskegee University, involves 600 women in the Mothers' Meetings to share research-based information in family and consumer sciences.
1906	First Extension Agents: W.C. Stallings (Smith County, TX) and T.M. Campbell (Macon County, AL.)
1910	First agents appointed in Tennessee.
1912	Tennessee State University is founded.
1914	Smith-Lever Act establishes the Cooperative Extension System.
1917-1919	World War I <ul style="list-style-type: none">Extension works to increase food and supplies for the war effort.
1924	Clark-McNairy Act expands all previous agriculture legislation to include forestry.
1941-1945	World War II <ul style="list-style-type: none">Extension works to increase food and supplies for the war effort.Tennessee 4-H members invest \$300,000 (their personal savings) for war bonds.In 1944, U.S. Maritime Commission grants Tennessee 4-H members the honor of naming a ship, <i>Liberty Ship S.S. Charles A Keffer</i>, a salute to Tennessee's first director of Extension.
1955	Tennessee Agricultural Extension Act <ul style="list-style-type: none">Requires all counties to elect a seven-member committee for Extension.Completes formal ties among federal, state and county governments for Extension funding.
1960-1961	UT changes course on civil rights. <ul style="list-style-type: none">In 1960, Theotis Robinson was denied entry to UT.In 1961, the UT Board of Trustees changed its admissions policy to admit Robinson.
1964	Civil Rights Act becomes law.
1968	Rita Sanders Geier files suit against state of Tennessee due to racial discrimination and disparities in <i>Geier v. University of Tennessee</i> .
1969	Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program begins in 10 Tennessee counties.
1977	National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act provides funding for 1890 universities, including federal funds directly to Tennessee State University for Extension.

EXTENSION HISTORY

DEFINING MOMENTS

1979	University of Tennessee Nashville merged into Tennessee State University due to court mandate.
1986	UT receives state funding for financial and family counseling to create the MANAGE program to combat the state's farm crisis.
1988	USDA hosts conference in Nashville with all 1890 deans and presidents to strengthen the federal relationship with 1890 institutions.
2001-2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In 2001, the Geier Consent Decree settles 1968 lawsuit with \$77 million for recruiting, retention, scholarships, new facilities and endowments for all state colleges and universities.In 2006, after five years of monitoring, federal judge ruled the case was closed as the state had met all requirements.In 2006, Theotis Robinson (now UT's vice president) escorts Rita Sanders Geier on UT's campus as she delivers UT's commencement address.
2004	UT Agricultural Extension Service formally became UT Extension, reflecting the broad mission across all program areas.
2009	Extension provides education for a biofuels initiative.
2010	UT Extension commemorates its 100 th year with statewide proclamations, events and celebrations.

LEARN MORE

DEFINING MOMENTS: REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF EXTENSION AND THE LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITY SYSTEM W469



"PROUD PAST...PROMISING FUTURE" A NARRATIVE HISTORY OF THE TENNESSEE AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE 1914-1989



E-FOLIO

The e-folio is designed to be an interactive learning experience, guiding you through key aspects of your county and Extension's role within it. Consult online resources, Extension coworkers, and your mentor to obtain information for the e-folio. Completing this document accurately will not only help you get to know your county Extension program, but it will also help you with future annual plans and needs assessments.

Download a Word Document of the e-folio [here](#).

SECTION ONE

GENERAL PROGRAM

Conduct a Study of the County

Geographic location and size

Population (number of people, their ages, education, and other observations or statistics)

Historically Underserved Audiences (limited resource, minority, limited English proficiency, etc.)

General economic situation (places of employment, major sources of income, occupations, income, etc.)

Communication outlets (newspaper, broadband providers and access, social media groups, radio and television stations)

Educational facilities (public schools, private schools, homeschool groups, community colleges, technical schools, public universities, etc.)

Child Care Facilities

Senior Centers

Recreation, Wellness, or Workout Facilities

Health facilities (including medical clinics, hospitals and public health services)

Tourism and Natural Resources (lakes, trails, parks, and other)

Other pertinent facts influencing the Extension program

Conduct a Study of the County Personnel and Organizations

Extension staff - List name, title and major responsibilities of each county staff member.

Elected Officials

County Mayor - Name and relationship to the Extension program

Elected officials who work directly with Extension personnel and programs - name and relationship to the Extension program

Other elected officials (city mayors, state representatives, etc.) - Name and title

County Organizations - Extension

Review Tennessee Code 49-50-104 (Agriculture Extension Committee).

What is the purpose of the Agriculture Extension Committee (Ag Committee)?

What is the makeup of the Ag Committee, according to TCA 49-50-104?

County Agricultural Extension Committee - List name of each member, committee responsibilities, and number of meetings held annually. Describe any attended meetings of the committee.

Family and Community Education (FCE) Council (if applicable) - List names of officers; number of members and how selected; and responsibilities of the Council.

County 4-H Committees (if applicable)- volunteer leader's organization, citizen's committee, and 4-H alumni groups; how members are selected and organized; and responsibilities of each organization.

County Organizations - Other

Farm Bureau - Discuss how officers and directors are selected, services provided by the organization, and the relationship with Extension.

List the service clubs, civic groups, professional and other pertinent groups and organizations

List other associations and their relationship to Extension.

Extension Volunteers

Number of Volunteers - How many volunteers are enrolled in the county Extension program?

What are the roles of volunteers in the county?

Other relevant information pertaining to volunteers in the county

Conduct a Review of County Program Planning and Reporting

Use SUPER to review 4 annual plans of agents in your program area. Ask your Regional Program Leader for recommended plans to review. List their name, role, county, and your takeaways from their plans and impact statements.

Name	Role	County	Key Takeaways
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

Study the Impact Statements for last year

Use SUPER to review 4 impact statements of agents in your program area. Ask your Regional Program Leader for recommended plans to review. List their name, role, county, and your takeaways from their plans and impact statements.

- (a) What was (were) the program objective(s)?
- (b) What educational activities were conducted?
- (c) What accomplishments were reported?
- (d) How was the evidence obtained to substantiate the success of the program?
- (e) What benefits are to be gained by Extension through these kinds of reports?

The Role of Extension Specialists

What is the role of subject matter specialists in the Extension program?

Write down the names of Extension Specialists in areas that are relevant to your position and with whom you expect to interact in your role.

Which Extension Specialists have you interacted with?

From what other professional person or persons did the county Extension staff receive assistance? What type of assistance was provided?

SECTION TWO

ADULT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR)

Overview

County Agriculture Profile

Number of farms, average size of farms, and income from sales of major crops, livestock, and livestock products

Major Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Programs in the County

Agricultural Organizations and Agencies in the County

Agricultural production and marketing organizations (only those not listed in Section One)

- (1) Name of organization and number of members
- (2) Major functions of each organization
- (3) How Extension works with each organization

Agricultural agencies in the county (only those not listed in Section One)

- (1) Name of each agency
- (2) Major function of each agency
- (3) How Extension works with each agency

Family and Consumer Sciences Programs in County

Describe the Family and Consumer Sciences Program in the County.

Major FCS programs in the county

Describe the audiences reached by the Family and Consumer Science Agents.

Describe an FCE meeting attended or participated in, if applicable.

Describe the activities of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) or the Tennessee Nutrition and Consumer Education Program (TNCEP) if the county participates in either.

Health Department Location

When and where does the County Health Council meet?

Who is the county's Health Educator(s)?

Coordinated School Health Director

SECTION THREE

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Describe the 4-H Youth Development Program in the County

Statistical Information

Number of 4-H clubs

Number of members

Ten activities or events with largest participation

Number of 4-H Clubs having adult organizational leaders

Total number of adult leaders

Honor Club: Number of members; All-Stars: Number of members

Other important facts about work in 4-H Youth Development

Describe the 4-H Youth Development Program in the County

Describe One Farm Visit to a 4-H Member. Show the purpose of the visit, the advance notice given, preparation, how the visit was conducted, and suggestions on how to evaluate the results.

Write a Brief Report on Participation in 4-H Camp (if attended camp). List the chief values of camp for 4-H members from observation and work at camp.

SUBMITTING YOUR E-FOLIO

1. The County Director will review progress on the e-folio with the new employee during the three-month review.
2. The final e-folio will be submitted to the County Director and Regional Program Leader before the six-month probationary period review.



PEER MENTORING PROGRAM

This section can be used to take notes and write down questions for your mentor to prepare for mentor meetings.

ABOUT THE MENTORING PROGRAM

The Tennessee Extension Peer Mentoring Program is the official statewide mentoring program for UT-TSU Extension. Successful Extension programs depend on confident Extension personnel. The program pairs new employees with a certified Mentor for a one year period to help you learn about your role, make connections, and increase your confidence.

Responsibilities and Expectations of Mentees:

- Devote time to meet with your mentor.
- Prepare for meeting by identifying needs.
- Keep mentor informed of issues and needs.
- Openly exchange ideas; be engaged, honest, and open.
- Make use of opportunities and suggestions from mentor.
- Always feel comfortable calling or emailing your mentor anytime.

Avoid these Pitfalls:

- Don't rely on your mentor as your only source of information.
- Don't expect your mentor to give you all of the answers - think of your mentor as suggesting alternatives.
- Don't ask your mentor to do your work for you.
- Don't cancel meetings with your mentor at the last minute.



MENTOR MEETINGS

Your mentor will schedule 2-3 meetings with you during your first year. Use these pages to jot down questions, take notes, and draft goals to share with your mentor. These pages do not need to be turned in with your e-folio. They are for your reference only.

My Mentor (Name, role, county)

Mentor Meeting Dates

Questions for My Mentor



MENTOR MEETING NOTES

1. The first step is to identify the specific goals and objectives of the mentor meeting. This will help to ensure that the meeting is focused and productive.

2. It is important to establish a clear agenda for the meeting. This should include a list of topics to be discussed, as well as a timeline for the meeting.

3. It is important to have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the mentor and mentee.

4. It is important to establish a clear communication plan for the meeting.

5. It is important to have a clear understanding of the expectations of the mentor and mentee.

6. It is important to have a clear understanding of the timeline for the meeting.

7. It is important to have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of the meeting.

8. It is important to have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the mentor and mentee.

9. It is important to have a clear understanding of the communication plan for the meeting.

10. It is important to have a clear understanding of the expectations of the mentor and mentee.

11. It is important to have a clear understanding of the timeline for the meeting.

12. It is important to have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of the meeting.

13. It is important to have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the mentor and mentee.

14. It is important to have a clear understanding of the communication plan for the meeting.

15. It is important to have a clear understanding of the expectations of the mentor and mentee.

MENTOR MEETING NOTES



APPENDIX

This section contains helpful information that you can reference at your convenience, such as Extension acronyms, our strategic plan, and relevant guidelines.



UT EXTENSION STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2027

2022-2027 TENNESSEE EXTENSION STRATEGIC PLAN

*Embracing the Past.
Innovating the Future.*

UT EXTENSION
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

Embracing the Past. Innovating the Future.



OVERVIEW

Over the last 100 years, UT Extension has helped Tennesseans solve problems and implement changing technologies to improve the quality of life in all ninety-five counties. As we celebrated this rich heritage and looked back on our accomplishments, it seemed an appropriate time to take an active role in planning our future.

The Strategic Planning Committee conducted listening sessions, surveys, and targeted interviews across the state with employees and stakeholders. Using this input, a comprehensive working plan has been developed to strategically position Tennessee Extension for the next five years. To see the working plan and follow its progress, visit extensionstrategicplan.tennessee.edu

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

- Demonstrate the value of Tennessee Extension to enhance resources.
- Cultivate a workplace where employees thrive.
- Expand and strengthen Tennessee Extension volunteerism.
- Foster greater engagement of diverse communities across Tennessee.
- Embrace the use of technology and innovation to meet the evolving needs of Tennessee Extension

LEARN MORE





GOAL: DEMONSTRATE THE VALUE OF TENNESSEE EXTENSION TO ENHANCE RESOURCES.

Strategic Goal 1: Demonstrate the value of Tennessee Extension to enhance resources. This goal is achieved by increasing visibility and participation through marketing, advocating, and demonstrating the value of Tennessee Extension programs to stakeholders; delivering quality educational programs that serve needs of clientele; capturing data and impacts through reporting; and expanding new and innovative funding sources and partnerships to better serve current and new audiences.

Strategy: Increase visibility and participation through marketing, advocating, and demonstrating the value of Tennessee Extension programs to stakeholders.

Action Step:

- Build capacity for employees to produce content to market Tennessee Extension at the state, regional, and county level.

Strategy: Deliver quality educational programs that serve needs of clientele.

Action Steps:

- Develop a process for annual needs assessment at the county and state level to prioritize local and state needs.

Strategy: Capture data and impacts through reporting.

Action Steps:

- Evaluate and streamline outcome and economic impacts to measure the effectiveness of Extension programs.
- Integrate Extension and UTIA databases to increase reporting efficiency.

Strategy: Expand new and innovative funding sources and partnerships to better serve current and new audiences.

Action Steps:

- Explore new sponsorship and fundraising opportunities.
- Enhance and strengthen Tennessee Extension's partnership with the UTIA Advancement Office and the 4-H Foundation.



GOAL: FOSTER GREATER ENGAGEMENT OF DIVERSE COMMUNITIES ACROSS TENNESSEE.

Strategy: Foster an equitable workplace that promotes and supports an inclusive and diverse workforce.

Action steps:

- Identify and develop unique partnerships with other organizations and within UT System to strengthen recruitment efforts to find diverse and underrepresented candidates.
- Expand and enhance internship and recruitment programs to attract and provide opportunities for diverse and underrepresented candidates.
- Establish a statewide recruitment committee, in partnership with UTIA and Tennessee State University, focused on reaching diverse and underrepresented candidates.

Strategy: Develop and enhance programs to meet the needs of diverse and underrepresented audiences.

Action steps:

- Develop and provide training to employees to increase cultural competency and empower them to identify needs and reach diverse and underrepresented audiences.
- Set expectations for employees regarding involvement of diverse and underrepresented audiences in programs, and celebrate successes.

Strategy: Establish an intentional process for recruiting volunteers from diverse and underrepresented audiences.

Action steps:

- Provide resources for employees, including training and marketing materials, to recruit volunteers from diverse and underrepresented audiences.

Embracing the Past. Innovating the Future.



GOAL: EXPAND AND STRENGTHEN TENNESSEE EXTENSION VOLUNTEERISM.

Strategy: Foster an environment that embraces volunteerism across all program areas.

Action steps:

- Establish clear employee expectations for utilizing volunteers.
- Develop a statewide structure for volunteerism.

Strategy: Recruit and engage volunteers.

Action steps:

- Develop a recruitment plan, including marketing materials and employee training, for all program areas.
- Create a sustainable process for volunteer recognition and retention.

Strategy: Provide training and resources for volunteers to perform their roles.

Action steps:

- Develop a cohesive volunteer management system to include registration, training, and reporting for employees and volunteers.
- Develop and expand well-defined volunteer job descriptions.



GOAL: CULTIVATE A WORKPLACE WHERE EMPLOYEES THRIVE.

Strategy: Cultivate an adaptive workplace environment.

Action steps:

- Investigate and implement procedures and best practices for adaptability and accountability.
- Provide training for supervisors and employees to ensure consistency.

Strategy: Provide a consistent and effective onboarding experience.

Action steps:

- Establish expectations for successful job performance by position and area of responsibility.
- Enhance the current mentoring process to ensure a consistent experience.
- Implement an onboarding process to ensure coordinated statewide training efforts for all positions.
- Assess organizational structure to ensure support of Tennessee Extension employees.

Strategy: Provide and support meaningful professional development.

Action steps:

- Create professional development opportunities to foster a culture of lifelong learning.
- Explore financial opportunities to support professional development.
- Establish procedures for assessing in-service training needs of employees.
- Develop assessment tools to evaluate employee learning.

Strategy: Recognize valued employees with meaningful and appropriate rewards.

Action steps:

- Simplify formal and endowed award programs.
- Explore new ways to offer recognition and incentives to employees.
- Build opportunities for employees to further advance their career within Tennessee Extension.

Strategy: Promote healthy lifestyles for employees to enhance commitment and engagement.

Action steps:

- Explore ways to support work/life balance.



GOAL: EMBRACE THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION TO MEET THE EVOLVING NEEDS OF TENNESSEE EXTENSION.

Strategy: Capture, assess, and prioritize Extension-wide software and hardware needs.

Action steps:

- Gather input from employees and external stakeholders to identify needs, technology preferences, and program delivery methods.
- Create a mechanism to monitor employee needs to ensure they are properly equipped to deliver programs.

Strategy: Provide oversight, maintenance, support, and evaluation of technology systems.

Action steps:

- Develop a list of supported technology applications and systems.
- Identify and adopt new technology systems based on needs.

Strategy: Provide ongoing organizational training and development of technologies to support Extension program delivery.

Action steps:

- Develop centralized training model for content, delivery, instructional design, and management.
- Identify, create, and market training materials, toolkits, and professional development opportunities for supported applications and systems to employees and clients.
- Identify technology competencies for new employees.

Strategy: Develop a centralized platform for storing documentation and training materials.

Action steps:

- Create a centralized internal platform to store and distribute documentation, training, supplemental materials, and communications.

Strategy: Create an integrated client-focused platform to expand reach and improve engagement.

Action steps:

- Adapt existing web presence to facilitate enhanced client relationship management and dissemination of Tennessee Extension content and publications.
- Develop an integrated interface for event registration with multi-payment options.
- Enhance utilization of the e-learning platform to effectively engage and deliver programming.
- Create external client access to SUPER, including a volunteer self-reporting system.
- Integrate Extension and University's databases with SUPER.

EXTENSION TERMS

GLOSSARY & ACRONYMNS

1862 Institutions: Land Grant Universities created by 1862 Morrill Act. These institutions are located in all 50 states. In Tennessee, this institution is the University of Tennessee.

1890 Institutions: A second land-grant university created by expansion of the Morrill Act in 1890 in 16 southern states. These institutions were historically black colleges and universities. In Tennessee, this institution is Tennessee State University.

1994 Tribal Colleges Endowment: created to enhance educational opportunities at thirty-four (34) Land Grant Institutions by strengthening their teaching programs in the food and agricultural sciences in targeted need areas. Each 1994 Land-Grant institution receives an annual funding allotment based in part on the number of American Indian students attending the institution.

ALEC: Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication (ALEC), a department in the Herbert College of Agriculture.

AAACE: American Association for Adult and Continuing Education

Accounts: (U, E, R, & I):

E - Educational and General (E&G) Fund revenues include state appropriations, tuition and fees, unrestricted facilities and administration recoveries from grants and contracts, and other revenues that may be allocated to fund general university operations.

I - Income for revenue from state appropriations or fees. Expenditures cannot be taken from an I account.

R - Restricted Funds (WBS Element) include revenues from grants and contracts, gifts, and student aid that are restricted by donors and external sponsors. They are typically unavailable to fund general operations. Most gifts, grants and contracts have beginning and ending dates that do not correspond to the university's fiscal year.

U - Fund Center - all accounts flow under the fund center

ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act): 1990 federal legislation which guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in employment, public accommodations, transportation, state and local government services, and communications.

Administrative Professionals: individuals who are responsible for administrative tasks and coordination of information in support of an office related environment.

Advisory Committees: A group of leaders who represent geographic areas, cultural diversity, program areas, and socio-economic diversity of the county and/or district and assist Extension personnel in program development. Advisory committees are used at the county, regional, and state levels to support Extension programming.

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AFBF (American Farm Bureau Federation): An agriculturally based organization which has provided key legislative support and shares some common goals with Extension.

Affirmative Action: A set of proactive measures to counteract the effects of past and present discrimination, intended or unintended, in employment and program delivery. The groups protected by a series of federal legislation include: women, Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans, Vietnam era veterans, special disabled veterans, and individuals with disabilities.

Agent: UT/TSU Extension professionals who provide leadership for county based educational programs. Agents are educators and report to their regional director. (Some states refer to this group of individuals as Educators and may use some other terms for departments)

Agricultural Research and Education Centers: There are 9 centers located throughout Tennessee which are part of AgResearch, a unit within UTIA.

ALEC (Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communication): An academic department within UTIA.

Annual Impact Report: Used by Extension Agents and Specialists to report program accomplishments and impacts. Templates are found in SUPER.

ANR/CED (Agriculture & Natural Resources and Community Economic Development): An Extension program area which focuses on education programs and information about agriculture, natural resources, and the food system. Subject areas include business development, commercial horticulture, crop production systems, environmental stewardship, leadership development, livestock and forage systems, residential and consumer horticulture, and value added agriculture.

ANREP: Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Professional-one of six professional associations under the JCEP.

APLU (Association of Public and Land-Grant Colleges): Provides the mechanisms for land grant institutions and USDA to work together in formulating programs and policies.

AREC (Agricultural and Resource Economics): An academic department within the Institute of Agriculture.

BESS (Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science): An academic department within the Institute of Agriculture.

BEST (Building Exceptionally Skilled Teachers): Online training modules to assist all Extension educators in enhancing professionalism and teaching abilities in areas of preparation and presentation.

CAP (Certified Administrative Professional): Exam that outlines provisions for non-exempt employees who perform clerical-secretarial or clerical-management duties to earn a nine percent salary increase upon passing the CAP exam.

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CARET (Council for Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching): is a national grassroots organization created in 1982 composed of representatives from the 50 states, the U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia. CARET's mission is to advocate for greater national support and understanding of the land-grant university system's food and agricultural research, extension, and teaching programs that enhance the quality of life for all people. CARET is a federal organization which provides important legislative support for Extension.

CDC: The Center for Disease Control and Prevention is the leading national public health institute of the United States located in Atlanta, Georgia.

CES (Cooperative Extension System): A term describing the system of state Extension organizations throughout the U.S. and its territories.

County Commissioner: Locally elected officials and important stakeholders of UT/TSU Extension.

County Extension Director: The person in the county with supervisory responsibilities over personnel in the county office. He/she is responsible for oversight on items relating to administration, programs, personnel and finance. He/she reports to the regional director.

CPA: Center for Profitable Agriculture is a department in UT Extension which provides educational programming and technical assistance to Tennessee farmers interested in a value-added enterprise to improve farm income.

CSREES (Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service): The former name of the federal agency with administrative responsibility for Extension nationally. See NIFA (National Institute of Food and Agriculture).

DASH (Dynamic Administrative Systems for Higher Ed): DASH is the Oracle Cloud solution for finance, human resources and payroll operations at the University of Tennessee. DASH brings core processes together within a single platform, strengthening operational efficiency and improving security, accessibility and sustainability.

DHS: Department of Human Sciences

Diversity: Characteristics of individuals that make them unique and able to offer different perspectives, skills, and talents.

Dossier: A portfolio compiled by the employee, representing important personal and team contributions to the success of the overall mission of UT and TSU Extension. Dossiers are submitted and evaluated by candidates seeking promotion and/or tenure.

ECOP (Extension Committee on Organization and Policy): A standing committee created to represent state, territory and District of Columbia Extension Systems in policy decisions and to provide nationwide program and organizational leadership.

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EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity): Federal legislation that insures non-discrimination in employment practices.

EERA (Extension Education & Research Area): One of nine multi-county regions in Tennessee established to share UT/TSU Extension educational programming, resources and outreach.

EESD (Extension Evaluation and Staff Development): A department within the Institute of Agriculture that handles Human Resources and Staff Development.

EFNEP (Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program): An educational effort to reach low income homemakers and their families. EFNEP employs paraprofessional nutrition aides to reach the homemaker on a one-to-one basis and through small group activities.

EPA (Environmental Protection Agency): Federal agency that administers environmental policy and laws.

EPP (Entomology and Plant Pathology): A department within the Institute of Agriculture.

ERO: Eastern Region Office

ESP (Epsilon Sigma Phi): National Extension Fraternity for Extension professionals. The organization focuses on professionalism and professional development.

Exempt and Non-Exempt Employees: Exempt employees (agents and specialists) are exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) overtime provisions. Exempt employees are expected to work a minimum of 40 hours but many times to accomplish the responsibilities of the position, more hours are required. Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime compensation or compensatory time off. Non-exempt employees (support staff and program assistants), under FLSA standards, work 40 hours per week, take one hour lunches and two fifteen minute breaks per day, and are compensated overtime pay or compensatory time off for overtime hours worked.

Extension Foundation: an Internet-based collaborative environment where Land Grant University content providers exchange objective, research-based knowledge to solve real challenges in real time.

Extension Program Committees: Committees with the overall function of providing local input in determining priority Extension programs in each county.

Family and Community Education (FCE): is an adult education organization to strengthen individuals and families through education, leadership and action.

FCS (Family and Consumer Sciences): One of the program areas of Extension. FCS is the comprehensive body of skills, research, and knowledge that helps people make informed decisions about their wellbeing, relationships, and resources to achieve optimal quality of life. The field represents many areas, including human development, personal and family finance, housing and interior design, nutrition and wellness, and consumer issues.

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FSA (Farm Service Agency): A federal agricultural agency that locally administers funding for commodity and conservation programs. Formerly known as the Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service.

FTE (Full Time Equivalent): One FTE is equivalent to one employee working full time. For example, three employees working 50%, 40%, and 10%, totaling 100% equals one FTE; or one person working 40 hours or 100% equals one FTE.

FWF (Forestry, Wildlife & Fisheries): An academic department within the Institute of Agriculture.

FY (Fiscal Year): Oct.1 - Sept. 30 (Federal Extension and governmental budget year), July1 - June 30 (University of Tennessee & Tennessee State University budget year), January1 - December 31 (County Extension offices budget year).

Hatch Act of 1887: Federal legislation which established agricultural experiment stations across the nation associated with land-grant universities.

Herbert College of Agriculture: The Herbert College of Agriculture is one of four units in the University Of Tennessee Institute Of Agriculture. The College prepares students in natural and social sciences-based professional academic programs for careers in agriculture, natural resources and other arenas.

IAA (Individual Action Agenda): A timeline established for the development of programs and priorities for the following year. County Directors and Regional Directors approve this plan for the year. All forms and templates are found in the SUPER web site.

In-Service Training: Educational opportunities provided by the University of Tennessee and Tennessee State University Extension to help staff meet new situations encountered in the field and learn about new research and technology.

IPM (Integrated Pest Management): a comprehensive program that is designed to encourage collaboration and innovation among Tennessee Agricultural Research and Development Center scientists and UT/TSU Extension personnel to better address the pest management needs of the citizens of Tennessee.

JCEP (Joint Council of Extension Professionals): A statewide professional association supporting the needs and interests of Tennessee Extension professionals. Membership is open to any UT/TSU Extension personnel with an Administrative and Professional (A&P) or Faculty appointment.

JOE: Journal of Extension

K@TE (Knowledge and Training Excellence): Online learning management system which contains online training courses. Access through Tennessee.csod.com/samldefault.aspx.

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Mentor: A peer who provides career support and guidance on an ongoing basis. Mentor/protégé relationships can be either formal or informal. New educators are assigned mentors for a one year period.

MG (Master Gardener) (Also: TEMG - Tennessee Extension Master Gardeners): The Master Gardener Program provides intensive training in horticulture to interested gardeners who then volunteer their time assisting with educational programs and activities for Tennessee residents.

Morrill Act of 1862: (the Land-Grant College Act) An act of Congress (1862) granting each state 30,000 acres (12,000 hectares) of land for each member it had in Congress, 90 percent of the gross proceeds of which were to be used for the endowment and maintenance of colleges and universities teaching agricultural and mechanical arts and other subjects.

MTREC: Middle Tennessee Research and Education Center

NACAA (National Association of County Agricultural Agents): A national professional association supporting the professional interests of county agricultural agents.

NACDEP (National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals): A national professional association supporting the professional interests of county and state community development professionals.

NAE4-HYDP (National Association of Extension 4-H Youth Development Professionals): A national professional association supporting the professional interests of youth development professionals.

NEAFCS (National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences): A national professional association supporting the needs and interests of FCS agents.

NIFA (National Institute of Food and Agriculture): The federal agency with administrative responsibility for Extension nationally.

OMB (Office of Management and Budget): The federal agency responsible for federally allocated funds.

Orientation: Educational opportunities provided by Extension to enable new employees to accept their responsibilities with confidence, to understand what is expected of them, and to feel secure in their new positions.

OSP (Office of Sponsored Programs): A campus unit which manages program grants for faculty at UT/TSU.

PA (Program Assistant): Individuals hired to work in a particular program area. They are non-exempt staff members, and the academic qualifications vary with the position.

PDQ (Position Description Questionnaire): This questionnaire describes the responsibilities, scope, and reporting structure surrounding a position. The PDQ is used to evaluate the position by assessing the amount of know-how, problem-solving, and accountability that is required by the position. PDQ's are created for new, reclassified, and vacant positions. These are found in SUPER.

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Performance Appraisal: Yearly annual review, completed by employees and to be reviewed with the county director. Every 3 years the region program leaders review all staff.

Procurement Card (P-Card) (Also called One Card which includes travel): Limited use credit card for purchasing supplies and materials.

Professional Development: Training activities that a person voluntarily takes part in, which aids personal and professional growth in addition to being able to do his or her job more completely.

PSEP (Pesticide Safety Education Program): Tennessee Pesticide Safety Education Program provides training, education, and outreach to pesticide applicators about the safe, proper, and legal use of pesticides. The program works with farmers, businesses, and public agencies to protect human health and the environment and serves as a critical part of job training and business growth in Tennessee.

Regional Director (RD): Responsible for all Extension operations within the assigned counties. UT/TSU currently has three regions with a regional office in each: Eastern (Knoxville), Central (Nashville), and Western (Jackson).

Regional Program Leader (RPL): RPLs provide programmatic leadership and support to staff in their region for identified county, region, state, and federal priority programs in one of the three program areas (4-H, ANR/CED, FCS).

SharePoint: password protected UTIA departmental databases to hold confidential information and forms.

Smith-Lever Act of 1914: Federal legislation which established the Extension System.

SNAP-ED (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Education Program): SNAP-ED is a free nutrition education program serving low-income adults in Tennessee. The goal is to improve, within a limited budget, the likelihood of families and individuals who are receiving food assistance benefits (formerly known as food stamps) to make healthy food choices and to choose active lifestyles.

Specialist: Located around the state, each field specialist has a particular focus and responds to current topics and pressing issues. The field specialists expand existing partnerships, develop new relationships, and foster long-term collaborations across the state to complement what local educators are doing. They develop/enhance new curriculum, provide regional and state-applicable programs, co-sponsor programs with county-based staff, work with grants, and perform/document impact evaluations.

SPPC (Soil, Plant, & Pest Center): A department within the Institute of Agriculture. State Specialists: University of Tennessee and Tennessee State University Faculty with Extension assignments who provide research-based support to Educators for programs.

SUPER (System for University Planning, Evaluation and Reporting): The reporting system for planning, reporting, performance appraisal, enrollment, and Individual Action Agendas.

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Support Staff: The term used to describe personnel in positions supporting Extension programs: secretaries, administrative professionals, clerical staff, and program assistants.

TAAA&S (Tennessee Association of Agricultural Agents & Specialists): The purpose of TAAA&S is to promote the agricultural interests of Tennessee as they relate to Extension and uphold the teachings of the State of Tennessee Land Grant Colleges, including both UT Extension and TSU Extension programs.

TAE4-HW (Tennessee Association of Extension 4-H Workers): The purpose of TAE4-HW is to advance the professional status of UT Extension and TSU Extension personnel involved in 4-H work.

TEAAP (Tennessee Extension Association of Administrative Professionals): TEAAP is a professional association through which Extension support professionals may be united in professional development, advancement opportunities, and stronger working relationships statewide for the benefit of themselves and Tennessee Extension.

TEAFCS (Tennessee Association of Family and Consumer Sciences): TEAFCS serves as the state professional association in Tennessee that supports the needs and interests of Family and Consumer Sciences Agents of both UT Extension and TSU Extension.

Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA): promotes local produce and products and ensures safe and dependable food and fiber for all while conserving our natural resources.

Tennessee Nutrition Program: Combination of EFNEP and TNCEP

The University of Tennessee (UT): The University of Tennessee is the preeminent research-based, 1862 land-grant university that embodies the spirit of excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, creative activity, outreach, and engagement attained by the nation's finest public research institutions.

The University of Tennessee Extension (UT Extension): UT Extension provides a gateway to the University of Tennessee as the outreach unit of the Institute of Agriculture. It is a statewide educational organization, funded by federal, state and local governments, that brings research-based information about agriculture, family and consumer sciences, and resource development to the people of Tennessee where they live and work.

TNCEP (Tennessee Nutrition and Consumer Education Program): TNCEP is a nutrition education program for Tennessee families who receive SNAP or who are eligible for SNAP. The goal of TNCEP is to teach families how to choose and prepare nutritionally adequate diets and help them feel empowered to move toward self-sufficiency. Funding for TNCEP is provided by the USDA and the Tennessee Department of Human Services.

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TSU Extension (Tennessee State University Extension): The department within the College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences which fulfills the land-grant mission of The Tennessee State University by interpreting knowledge and research developed by Extension and other faculty and staff at the Tennessee Agricultural Research and Development Center, Tennessee State main campus, and other land-grant universities – so Tennesseans can use the scientifically based information to better their lives, businesses and communities.

USDA (United States Department of Agriculture): USDA provides leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, nutrition, and related issues based on public policy, the best available science, and effective management.

USDA FNS: Food and Nutrition Service

USDA NIFA: National Institute of Food and Agriculture

USDA: United States Department of Agriculture

UTIA (The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture): UTIA, located in Knoxville, consists of CASNR, UT AgResearch (formerly the Tennessee Agricultural Experiment Station), UT Extension, and the College of Veterinary Medicine.

