

County Extension Council Member

Thousands of Arkansans utilize their talents, knowledge, resources, and influence to help others improve themselves. Volunteer leaders are an essential part of the Extension system of education. As a participant in your County Extension Council, you are helping others to bring improvements into their daily lives.

Because effective leadership is vital to the program development process, this position description was prepared to help you understand and be able to carry out your duties on the County Extension Council.

Your role is to work with officers and other members of the council in providing coordination and leadership to the overall Extension program.

- Maintain contact with the officers, members, and Extension agents throughout the year to stay current on business and programs under way and to express program ideas and needs.
- Get acquainted with all other members on an informal basis, to be a productive member and enjoy meetings.
- Study the purpose and functions of the council so you can contribute to discussions and decision making.
- Familiarize yourself with the group's operational procedures – frequency of meetings, how you will be notified about meetings, how you can suggest items for the agenda, etc.
- Attend council meetings; participate in discussion and decision making.
- Know who you represent on the council – a program area committee, an issue committee, a community, a special interest area or an organization. Communicate concerns of those you represent.
- If you are the chairman of a program area or issue committee, report committee plans and accomplishments to the council and the council's decisions to your program area committee.
- Help the council annually review the County Extension Council's structure – number and kinds of committees, membership, and standing rules. Suggest needed changes that will improve organization operations and effectiveness.
- Suggest and assist in recruiting replacement members when vacancies occur or membership terms expire.
- Complete pre-meeting assignments given by the chairman, and be prepared for assignments to be done during council meetings.
- Be involved in developing county plans of work, reviewing and setting program priorities, and in explaining and marketing these to other groups and individuals in the county.
- Identify emerging issues, problems, and other concerns the council should study; propose actions to take. Suggest resource persons who could give additional data and facts to the board so that sound decisions can be made.

- Review plans of the various program area or issue committees, and identify opportunities for coordinating events to make them more successful.
- Assist in obtaining financial or material resources needed for educational programs and projects.
- Help plan ways to explain, promote, and market the Extension program to other groups and the public. Encourage citizens to attend events that would benefit them.
- Take part in conducting events and activities planned by the council – information days, special educational programs, annual meetings, etc.
- Evaluate accomplishments of the County Extension Council and help determine ways the program can be improved each year.

Your county Extension agents can advise you on other resource material available to help you understand and use the program development process. They will be glad to provide you with other helpful material and publications.

Information in this publication has been adapted for Arkansas. Original materials were prepared by Burl Richardson and Mary Marshall, Program Development Specialists, Texas Agricultural Extension Service.

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