



AgEcon SEARCH
RESEARCH IN AGRICULTURAL & APPLIED ECONOMICS

The World's Largest Open Access Agricultural & Applied Economics Digital Library

This document is discoverable and free to researchers across the globe due to the work of AgEcon Search.

Help ensure our sustainability.

Give to AgEcon Search

AgEcon Search

<http://ageconsearch.umn.edu>

aesearch@umn.edu

*Papers downloaded from **AgEcon Search** may be used for non-commercial purposes and personal study only. No other use, including posting to another Internet site, is permitted without permission from the copyright owner (not AgEcon Search), or as allowed under the provisions of Fair Use, U.S. Copyright Act, Title 17 U.S.C.*

Surviving The First Year In Extension Agribusiness

**What Agricultural Economics
Ph.D.'s Don't Prepare Us For**

Darrell R. Mark

Ext. Agribusiness Mgmt Specialist

University of Nebraska

Presented at the 2003 WCC-72 Meetings



Agribusiness Is Growing

● House & Sterns Report:

- 12 Ph.D. Ag Econ Programs With An Agribusiness Field
 - 41% Of Tenure-Track Faculty Positions Advertised In 2001 *Exchange* Had An Agribusiness Component
 - 60% Of Current & Recent Graduates Have An Agribusiness Specialization
-



Ag Econ Graduate Programs vs. Agribusiness Extension

Ag Econ

- **Heavy On Theory, Research Methods,
& Quantitative Methods**

Agribusiness

- **Need Strategic, Financial, & Human
Resource Management**
- 




Agribusiness Management Topics Learned By Agribusiness Students

- **Strategic Management**
 - 70% → Classes, Research, Seminars
 - 45% → Ag Econ Classes
- **Financial Management**
 - 50-60% → Classes, Research, Seminars
 - 20-40% → Ag Econ Classes
- **Human Resource Management**
 - 25% → Classes, Research, Seminars
 - 7% → Ag Econ Classes



When Are We Taught How To Build An Extension Program?

- Graduate School Focuses On Creating A Research Program
 - Some Teaching Opportunities In Graduate School
 - Only 4% Of Ag Econ Grad Students Have An Extension Assistantship
(Mark, Daniel, & Lusk)
- 



Ag Econ Graduate School

- **Students “Sign Onto” Faculty’s Research Projects**
 - **Does This Prepare Them To Identify Needs For Applied Work?**
 - **Ag Econ Grad Students Averaged Less Than 1 Hour/Week Doing Extension Work** (Mark, Daniel, & Lusk)
-



Could We Teach Extension?

● Extension Methods Class

- Teach Program Design, Delivery, Outcome Assessment, etc.
- Students Could Create A Program

● Apprenticeship

- Needs To Be An Incentive For Students
-



Why New Agribusiness Ext. Programs Are Difficult To Start


1. Not Sure How Agribusinesses & Trade Associations Work In State

- Learn The Culture & History**
 - Figure Out Who Gets Along With Who**
 - Avoid Becoming Their Employee**
- 



Why New Agribusiness Ext. Programs Are Difficult To Start

2. Previous Extension Programs

- What Was Done In The Past?**
 - Change Is Difficult**
 - Change Is Necessary**
 - Clientele Will Judge The New Program Against The Old**
- 



Why New Agribusiness Ext. Programs Are Difficult To Start

3. Unsure Of Clientele's Needs

- **They May Not Know Themselves**






Why New Agribusiness Ext. Programs Are Difficult To Start

4. Delivery Methods Differ Across Audiences

- **Seminar vs. Active Learning**
 - **Distance vs. In-Person**
- 




How Do We Overcome These?

- **Listen, Ask Questions, & Listen More**
 - **Don't Focus Exclusively On The Leaders, Focus On Who Will Be There In The Future**
 - **Make Changes Slowly But Deliberately**
 - **Develop Relationships With Clientele**
- 



Fostering New Relationships

- **No “Ivory Tower” Economists**
 - **Be One Of Them**
 - **Care About The Areas In Which
You Work**
 - **Be “Media Friendly”**
- 



The Great Balancing Act

Extension, Research, & Teaching

● Research Is Part Of The Extension Program


- Schedule Time For It
- If You Don't, You Run Out Of Things To Say

● Teaching Is Part Of The Extension Program

- Classes Become More Practical
 - It Can Be An Advantage – Good Reason To Stay On Campus
- 




Managing The Balancing Act Saying “No” Without Guilt

- **Establish Your Priorities Based On Your Understanding Of Clientele’s Need For Ext. Programming**
 - **These Can Differ From Clientele’s, Senior Faculty’s, & Administrator’s Priorities For You**
 - **Do Not Compromise Your Priorities**
- 



Managing The Balancing Act Saying “No” Without Guilt

● What To Say “No” To:

- Things Low On The Priority List**
 - Requests That Require A Lot Of Time**
 - Projects Not In The Scope Of Your Program**
 - Projects With Low Return**
- 



Managing The Balancing Act

- **Do The Things You Do Well**
 - **Let Promotion & Tenure Take Care Of Themselves**
- 