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Extension Accountability--A User Perspective Summary Of Remarks

Dan Dooley
Dooley and Herr

As a producer, the institutional distinctions that are so important to land grant universities are not nearly as important to me. I do not believe that the production community cares whether the answer comes from an extension agent, a researcher or some professor on campus. Producers just want the answers to the questions we have. It is time to give some serious thought in the land grant system to developing a seamless agricultural research and extension system that does not draw such distinct lines between the components.

Evaluation and accountability is not just saying "Did you do what you said you were going to do?" It really is, "Is the result of your effort meaningful? Has your effort delivered something that is really addressing an important problem and had a meaningful result?" Accountability is about clearly defining relevant priorities and designing programs to meet them.

I do not believe producers need a whole lot of help with how to grow crops effectively. What we need to know today is which crops to grow and how to market them effectively. Situations such as the crisis in Asia change our markets and we need to know how to respond by changing our cropping patterns appropriately.

Gaming