

17 December 2015

## ***nEXT Generation: Cooperative Extension reorganization***

*The following talking points, frequently asked questions, and timeline provide basic information about nEXT Generation, the developing plan to reorganize Cooperative Extension, a division of the University of Wisconsin-Extension.*

### **Key points**

*Summarizing the goals behind nEXT Generation*

- The *nEXT Generation* restructuring of Cooperative Extension responds to a \$3.6 million budget reduction.
- It also capitalizes on an opportunity to reinvent the organization for current and future generations.
- Cooperative Extension is creating an organization that is relevant, flexible, and digital; dedicated to collaboration that addresses local needs; and more sustainable at both the state and county levels.
- The model aims to maximize current and future resources at the local level, enhance collaboration with other UW institutions, and streamline administration.
- Cooperative Extension has become a model for extension services nationwide. This project is creating a new model for a new era.

### **Frequently asked questions**

*Providing additional background*

#### ***Why is Cooperative Extension looking at a new model for the future?***

The State of Wisconsin's 2015-2017 biennial budget reduced University of Wisconsin System funding by \$125 million in the budget's first year. Cooperative Extension's portion of the cut

was \$2.2 million. Combined with the prior year's structural deficit of \$1.4 million, Cooperative Extension faces a \$3.6 million budget reduction, or 7.7 percent of base funding supported by state and federal partners.

The budget cut provides incentive to develop a more efficient and sustainable organization, and an opportunity to design modern, flexible models for Cooperative Extension education and research that remain focused on meeting local needs.

***What are the changes occurring within Cooperative Extension?***

The *nEXT Generation* draft framework will make changes in how Cooperative Extension delivers programs at the local level, collaborates with other UW institutions, and administers Cooperative Extension from offices in Madison.

***Will each county/tribal nation still have a local Extension office?***

Cooperative Extension intends to maintain a local presence in each county and tribal nation office. Cooperative Extension expects to provide some functions across county/tribal nation lines by establishing multi-county/nation service areas. The *nEXT Generation* steering committee will refine criteria for connecting counties and tribal nations and will determine the composition of each area.

***When will we get to see recommendations of the draft model?***

UW-Extension Chancellor Cathy Sandeen will receive the draft model around Dec. 18. She will share the draft and seek feedback from county/tribal nation partners following her review. The chancellor will announce changes to Cooperative Extension in January after fully evaluating the draft model and all input she has received.

***How will counties and tribal nations be engaged in planning?***

County/tribal partners will be involved in every step of the planning, implementation, and staging and sequencing phases. The project steering committee will engage face-to-face with partners about staffing models and educational programming.

***When will counties and tribal nations be engaged in planning?***

The project steering committee will engage counties and tribal nations beginning in January 2016 as implementation planning begins.

***What is the timeline for staffing changes in the counties and tribal nations?***

Staffing changes will begin in fiscal year 2017 (late 2016-early 2017).

## ***How will changes to Cooperative Extension's model affect 2016 county budgets?***

Changes should not affect 2016 county budgets.

## **Timeline**

### *Outlining anticipated project milestones*

- Cooperative Extension reorganization sponsors will send the draft reorganization plan to UW-Extension Chancellor Cathy Sandeen around **Dec. 18**.
- Once Chancellor Sandeen has reviewed the plan, she will share it with county/tribal nation partners and other internal and external stakeholders for feedback.
- The chancellor will announce her decisions on reorganization in **January 2016**.
- In **January or February 2016**, Chancellor Sandeen will appoint a steering committee, project manager and project lead to prepare for and design implementation.
- Implementation planning will take approximately six months. Cooperative Extension will fully engage colleagues, county/tribal nation partners, clients and volunteers throughout the process.
- Cooperative Extension expects to begin implementing changes in **July 2016**. Not all changes will occur right away.
- Most personnel changes will likely occur in **late 2016 and early 2017**.