Multi-state Teams: An Option for Your Extension Toolkit

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What are Multi-State Programs

- Projects or programs that involve faculty or Extension staff from more than one state
- Address stakeholder or client needs
- Plans with goals, timelines, outputs, and outcomes
The Power of Multi-State Teams

- Enhance relationships
- Address today’s issues
- Broadens expertise to address stakeholders needs and potentially provides faster service
Power of Multi-State Programs (cont.)

- Supported and recognized by federal agencies, nonprofits, industry, and professional societies
- Leverages strengths from various institutions to be competitive in multi-university, multi-disciplinary, integrated externally funded projects
Power of Multi-State Programs (cont.)

- Can show more impact, with a broader clientele group served
- Fosters new energy
- Potential to create strategic hires
Potential Challenges and Barriers

- Stakeholders and clientele may perceive less attention and resources for “local” issues
- Turf issues
- Less academic credit for team vs individual accomplishments
- More resources required to service a broader area
- We are a tropical, island state surrounded by the Pacific ocean
Conceptual process

Define need or common program interest

Who is in your network of potential collaborators

- Strengths and gaps in research and outreach
- Other collaborators

Implement multi-state concept

Develop integrated multi-state concept

“Meeting to Plan”
- Identify short and long-term research and outreach initiatives
- Create action plans to start and timelines
Examples of multi-state projects

- Iris Yellow Spot Virus (UHM and Washington State University)
  - Specific, immediate need
  - Few partners
  - Use existing networks and resources

Plant Disease Management Book, photo by L. Jensen, 2001
Diabetes Detection and Prevention Project

- Specific focus, topic beyond traditional Extension focus
- Public, private partnership
- Large funding support through USDA-NIFA
Cornell Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)

- Initial conversations began at a national food safety meeting
- National team included a point of contact in each state
- Several states involved other local collaborators
- States with various level of expertise contributed to development and review curriculum materials
- All state conducted at least one in-state training
- Project evolved to continue developing resources and training programs
The Germ City: Clean Hands, Healthy People

• Initial discussions started at Western Extension Leadership Development (WELD)
• Collaborators: Washington State-lead, West Virginia, Idaho, Alabama A & M, Hawaii
• Unique institutional contributions – overall coordination program, evaluation expertise, education technology support, regional audience base
• Evolved within each state.
Key points:

- Multi-team projects can be an opportunity for developing solutions to complex community issues
- Getting involved can through various paths
- Resource support can be include internal or external funding
- Teams can be small or broad

What is a potential multi-state project for YOU?