



KACAA Concerns – 2020 Annual Meeting

September 22, 2020 | Zoom

Thank you:

- We thank agents and specialists for the Hort Wednesdays and weekly Forestry programs and the Beef, Ag Economics and Grain Specialist Teams for offering many agent and clientele offerings during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The new extension specialist hires recently have been a great asset to county programs. They are working hard to find that extension relationship when they get started. Agents appreciate the effort.
- Appreciate all of the UK CAFE social media and digital marketing efforts during COVID-19

Retirement:

- Due to the financial strain COVID-19 pandemic caused, the university made the decision to lower their contribution to employee's retirement plans for one year. Do you foresee this only being a temporary change?
 - *We ask your support in returning to the original contribution plan of Employee 5% and UK 10%.*

Area Director:

- Please address the perceived workload and flexibility for the development of the system of communication and responsibility, through the new program.
 - Agents understand the need to pivot with new changes, but it is now not as clear what the roles and responsibilities of agent will be and the roles/tasks of AED.
 - Specifically: fiscal responsibilities (DLG)

Agent Evaluation:

- 2020-21 is scheduled as an evaluation year for agents.
 - With COVID-19 causing such a disarray with anything normal, agents are concerned about being evaluated with so many outside uncontrollable factors preventing "normal" programming. Being limited to face to face programming is a huge hurdle for many extension educational programs not to mention that other

entities (Schools, local organizations, locational settings, etc) have restrictions preventing or limiting interaction from outside.

- *Please consider making this program year a non evaluated year due to the current state of operations.*
- Extension personnel have done a tremendous job staying connected and providing educational information during these unprecedented times, however, to be evaluated on an impactful basis for 2020-21 would be unfair to agents across all program areas.
- Rural BroadBand is still a challenge for many rural counties. This has made it difficult to develop online programming for many rural areas.

Faculty Position:

- Dr. John Strang's position will become vacant once he retires. John has been a huge asset to agents across the state and near impossible to replace him as an individual.
 - *However, that position has been highly utilized by agents and we feel it should be a priority to continue to fill the needs served by the position with 100% Extension appointment.*
- Specialists Positions: we are currently in the process of losing several experienced specialists. What is the status of hiring back those positions from UK's perspective?

Financial and EBO:

- Financial Oversight team sending out changes to reporting forms near, at, or after reporting deadlines causes unnecessary burden. Especially for those that try and work ahead of deadlines.
- *We would like to see the Extension Financial Team develop a 1 page paper that explains Senate bill 5 that can be shared with county judges and district boards.*

Staffing and Hiring:

- What is the future of UK Extension funding 3 agents at the county level? We hear rumors that soon any agent staff above 2 per county will be paid entirely by county.
- Our district boards are concerned that we are able to hire administrators, but counties are not able to hire staff assistant and agent positions.
- What is the status of the hiring of 2 and 3 agents counties? The idea is that with the current financial situation, UK is not hiring currently but what is the thought going forward with 3 agent counties?
- There are some inconsistencies across counties and who pays who's salary.
- How do we continue to recruit "qualified applicants" while compensation/benefits continue to fall behind? Is there a plan or thoughts on how we KEEP these individuals? Would this be something to consider with the career ladder?

Marketing:

- Is there any opportunity for a UK ANR/HORT logo similar to that of FCS and 4-H National Logos.

Recovering from COVID-19:

- While extension has found a way to be innovative about programming during the pandemic, agents are eager to get back to in person programming and training as soon as protocol allows. In person programming, especially for new agents is very valuable whenever appropriate.
 - Example would be the Ag Econ Subject Matter Update in Jan/Feb and the Grain Specialists Weekly Zoom Updates
 - Program area in person trainings across the state
 - Retreats for grassroots program planning

Administrative Hiring

- What is the current status of hiring the ANR/HORT Director position: In searching for our permanent director, we need to make sure this person is fighting for the agents and the relationships they have with the specialists, address concerns with administration on agent's behalf, work through programming issues with agents, and provide guidance to new and experienced agents. Communication will continue to be a priority in this role.
- Administration still seems to appear top heavy. The agents positions are getting smaller, but the administrative positions are getting larger. How do we still appear as a grassroots organization in this situation?

GOAP:

- KACAA formally requests a meet and greet/update session meeting with Mr. Dorsey Ridley. Agents are eager to maintain the working relationship between GOAP and Ag Extension for the benefit of the farmers.