OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION SERVICE

STRATEGIC PLAN

A FRAMEWORK FOR ENGAGING OREGONIANS
September 2004 (updated December 2005)

Born from days of careful deliberation, this plan is designed to help the faculty and staff of the Oregon State University Extension Service carry out their mission more effectively. It will help Extension faculty and staff do an even better job of engaging the people of Oregon with research-based knowledge and education that strengthens communities and economies, sustains natural resources, and promotes healthy families and individuals.

The plan also will help the entire University do a better job of serving the people and communities of Oregon through its outreach arm, which includes the Extension Service's work and activities in many other units.

Here are a few specific examples of what the plan will deliver to Oregonians:

• Greater access to OSU knowledge and programs.
• Higher quality Extension educational services delivered around the state through traditional and emerging channels.
• More documentation of the economic, social, and environmental return on public investment in Extension.
• More stability in the delivery of Extension's outside-the-traditional-classroom educational services (the result of a stronger and more diverse Extension funding base).
• Coordinated and integrated outreach efforts across OSU that help the University do a better job of addressing the critical issues facing Oregon.

As its title suggests, this document is a framework for more specific planning and implementation that will unfold over the next 5-7 years. Keep in touch with us to watch this dynamic plan evolve as our world changes.

The plan recognizes the need for Extension to keep pace with a changing Oregon landscape, diverse demands for education, unprecedented advances in technology, and OSU's strong commitment to its Land-Grant mission of extending education to people and communities. It is an important investment in the Extension Service, Oregon State University, and the State of Oregon.

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Dean and Director
Oregon State University Extension Service

December 2005

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Executive Summary

This report recommends strategies and actions that will further the ability of Oregon State University, through Extension, to engage the people and communities of Oregon through the year 2010 and beyond. Overall aims of that engagement are to help Oregonians resolve critical economic, environmental, and community issues and create a positive future for the state.

At the heart of the plan is a new way of investing in Extension programs and educational services that will result in sustainable community futures. The focus is on three thematic areas:

- Strengthening Communities and Economies

- Sustaining Natural Resources

- Promoting Healthy Families and Individuals

Where appropriate in each thematic area, Extension faculty and staff, administrators from Extension and OSU colleges, and partners and volunteers from outside the University will collaborate on educational program planning, delivery, evaluation, and accountability reporting. All these efforts will focus on outcomes that address high-priority needs of Oregonians.

This plan analyzes Extension's strengths, assets, driving forces, and strategic opportunities. The analysis is rooted in previous Extension planning efforts, reviews of literature that identify trends and needs in the state, new research, and consultation with OSU faculty, staff, and leadership, and with citizens outside the University.

To address the 10 strategic opportunities identified, the plan presents three goals along with strategies and actions to achieve them. The goals are:

- Improve Access to High-quality Learner Services. Extension will provide access to the knowledge resources of OSU by being focused and nimble in engaging Oregon's people and communities in high-quality learner services that help build sustainable community futures.

- Increase Funding and Invest for Excellence and Impact. Extension will increase and diversify its funding base and encourage program excellence through strategic investments within three thematic areas. This will create measurable outcomes and impacts that will be reported widely to stakeholders.

- Increase Effectiveness with Appropriate Technology. Extension will use established and new technologies strategically to increase efficiencies, expand outreach, and enhance and report the outcomes of its educational services.

The OSU Extension Service Mission

The Oregon State University Extension Service engages the people of Oregon with research-based knowledge and education that strengthens communities and economies, sustains natural resources, and promotes healthy families and individuals.

The OSU Extension Service Vision

Extension leads Oregon State University's outreach mission by engaging with Oregon's people and communities to have positive impacts on community livability, economic vitality, natural resources sustainability, and the health and well-being of people. Based on these positive impacts, the OSU Extension Service is recognized as one of America's top-five Land-Grant University Extension systems.

The OSU Extension Service's Core Values and Operating Principles

Oregon State University's core values of respect, integrity, and social responsibility are standards for our entire academic community. The faculty and staff of the OSU Extension Service strive to support an additional set of values and operating principles that serve as guideposts in their work.

Community-based
We value community relationships and connect OSU to local people and issues to enhance the present and the future of the people and communities of Oregon.

Accountability
We focus on achieving measurable outcomes, and document and communicate the impact and value of our work.

Credibility
We deliver relevant, research-based knowledge through our educational programs.

Diversity
We exhibit respect, value differing perceptions and world views, and encourage diversity.

Partnerships
We collaborate with academic, public, and private partners to achieve greater results and build community capacity. We value the public good that comes from collaborating with volunteers.

Responsiveness
We engage with community partners and learners to identify priority issues and needs, to design timely responses, and to build future capability.

The OSU Extension Service's Strengths, Assets, Driving Forces, and Strategic Opportunities

Over more than 90 years in Oregon, the OSU Extension Service has generated many strengths and assets. The strengths arise from how our constituents view us, and they provide a foundation and leverage for future success. Think of our assets as capital, both tangible and intangible, that we must continue to build on and draw upon to deliver effective programs. These strengths and assets include the reputation that Extension has as a high-quality, credible resource in every county: the place people go with any problem or question; the place that provides access for the people of the state to Oregon State University, their Land-Grant University.

Looking ahead to the next 5 to 7 years, several driving forces will impact Extension's success. These forces present challenges and opportunities. Our success hinges on how well we anticipate and respond to the driving forces. Oregon is changing very rapidly.

The demographic make-up continues to become much more ethnically diverse. The fastest growing segment of Oregon's population, both through immigration and through in-state births, is Hispanic/Latino. Outside of the English language, the most requested languages for our publications are Spanish, Russian, and Vietnamese.

In the Western states, including Oregon, population is concentrated in big cities. Outside big cities, the population is relatively low and widely scattered. Extension's traditional program focus and base of support lies in rural parts of the state, not in areas that are rapidly urbanizing. The political landscape shows shifting balances of power from rural to urban, and the resulting conflicts due to limited public resources are having a significant impact on Oregon. A recent OSU Extension Service study pointed out that by 2010, the ten most urban counties in Oregon will be home to more than 77 percent of the population. Urban people still depend on the natural resources produced in more rural settings for their daily lives and well-being. These same ten counties currently control approximately 90 percent of the combined Oregon Senate and House seats. The impact of redistricting and a more polarized electorate make public policy issues more contentious. Land use and natural resource management are more and more complex as Oregonians struggle to balance conflicting views and values about the economic, environmental, and recreational uses of natural resources, as well as historic use agreements.

Oregon's economic base has diversified to include a significant high-tech industry, tourism and service industries in addition to natural resources and manufacturing. The rural parts of the state, however, are not benefiting equally from the economic advances available in the urban parts of the state. In addition, globalization and information technologies change the playing field for Oregon business and for education.

Finally, strategic opportunities describe where we must focus our attention, and they identify key outcomes we must deliver to achieve our vision. It is imperative that we be flexible in order to anticipate and respond to the changing issues of Oregon. To do this we must provide easy access to educational services and clearly demonstrate our value through the outcomes and impact of those educational services. We must capitalize on the excellence of Oregon State University's research and multiple formal and nonformal learning environments, and create meaningful partnerships with other organizations that can help address critical issues which are

often complex and multidisciplinary. We must integrate new technologies and expand the application and use of technologies to create economic opportunity, to increase efficiencies, and to provide broader access to needed educational services.

Identifying the following important lists of strengths, assets, driving forces, and strategic opportunities lies at the core of the OSU Extension Service Strategic Plan.

Strengths
The OSU Extension Service has:

- Credibility statewide.

- Recognition as a nonregulatory, objective educational organization that is engaged in helping Oregonians solve their problems and create their preferred future.

- Recognition as one of the nation's top Extension organizations.

Assets
The OSU Extension Service has:

- A presence in every county, providing OSU access to all areas of the state and giving the people of the state access to OSU.

- Strong local and state political and financial support.

- A direct link between constituents' needs and OSU's expertise and resources.

- The ability to deliver high-quality educational programs.

- A wide range of partnerships.

- Integration with teaching and research colleagues in OSU's academic units.

- A powerful base of volunteers helping develop and deliver programs throughout Oregon.

- Expertise that can help OSU fulfill its outreach/engagement mission in three major thematic areas that fit with the OSU Strategic Plan: (1) strengthening communities and economies, (2) sustaining natural resources, and (3) promoting healthy families and individuals.

- Faculty and staff who are OSU's experts in delivering nonformal education and in bringing people together around public policy issues.

- Experience with a cooperative funding model (federal, state, and local).

Driving Forces
Forces that will influence the OSU Extension Service's success in the next 5 to 7 years include:

- Oregon's changing demographics (ethnic diversity, age structure, etc.), which are leading to changing demands for educational services.

- Urbanization of the state, accompanied by new and existing challenges in rural areas. The West is more urban per capita than the rest of the country.

- Oregon's changing political landscape, with shifting balances of power and increasing partisanship.

- A decline in government funding and public support for government programs. At the same time, there will be increasing demands for impacts, accountability, and efficiency.

- The globalization of markets which changes the playing field for Oregon businesses and producers.

- The globalization of information delivery and educational services. Competition from other providers such as other universities, businesses, agencies, and nongovernmental organizations will grow. Increasingly, Oregonians will expect real-time information delivery.

- Issues, needs, and opportunities that often are in nontraditional subjects and broader than a single discipline or region.

Strategic Opportunities

To achieve its vision, the OSU Extension Service will need to:

- Respond to changing needs and demands for educational services to remain relevant and to have impact in the state.

- Maintain local, state, and federal political and financial support for its programs.

- Sustain an effective statewide presence that allows for joint learning from OSU to communities and from communities to the University.

- Strategically address emerging needs and demands of Oregonians who seek information and education. Extension must use the new information technologies to increase efficiency, meet emerging demands for rapid and complete information, and increase access to its educational services.

- Design programming that will deliver measurable impacts, collect credible data to demonstrate those impacts, and communicate that information effectively to a wide range of local, state, and federal stakeholders.

- Encourage and support multidisciplinary, multicounty, and multistate work when needed for efficient and effective response.

- Assure that internal organizational procedures are aligned to maximize efficiency, flexibility, accountability, and connectedness within the University.

- Diversify its funding base, generating and growing new sources of funds to support priority programs.

- Help the outreach/engagement mission at OSU become as respected and recognized as teaching and research.

- Facilitate the delivery of high-quality, multidisciplinary programs that effectively support the University's thematic areas of emphasis and address the highest priority needs of Oregon.

- Invest resources to maximize programmatic impacts.

The OSU Extension Service's Goals, Strategies, and Actions

This section presents three major goals with associated strategies, actions, expected outcomes, and indicators of progress. Goals One and Two are the core of what Extension will do to assure focus, flexibility, access, and excellence in educational services to help create sustainable community futures in Oregon. Goal Three will strengthen the opportunity for success for Oregon State University, for Extension, and for the people of Oregon. These three goals address the strategic opportunities identified earlier in this document. Central to each goal is the notion of three thematic areas, where Extension faculty, staff, and leaders, plus faculty and administrators from OSU colleges and partners and volunteers from outside the University, will focus Extension programs and learner educational services.

Extension's three thematic areas are Strengthening Communities and Economies, Sustaining Natural Resources, and Promoting Healthy Families and Individuals. These areas align with three of the five themes in OSU's new Strategic Plan and are anchored by significant input from Oregonians through a statewide needs assessment conducted in recent years, and more recent input from faculty, staff, and external stakeholders.

The three thematic areas address the needs of Oregon's people and communities and build on the research and educational strengths of Oregon State University. They encompass our aim of helping Oregonians address critical economic, environmental, and social issues and helping create a positive future for the State of Oregon and its people. While Extension will progress in many areas, it will prioritize its resources and investments to focus on these robust themes. For a more thorough description of the three thematic areas, see Appendix 1.

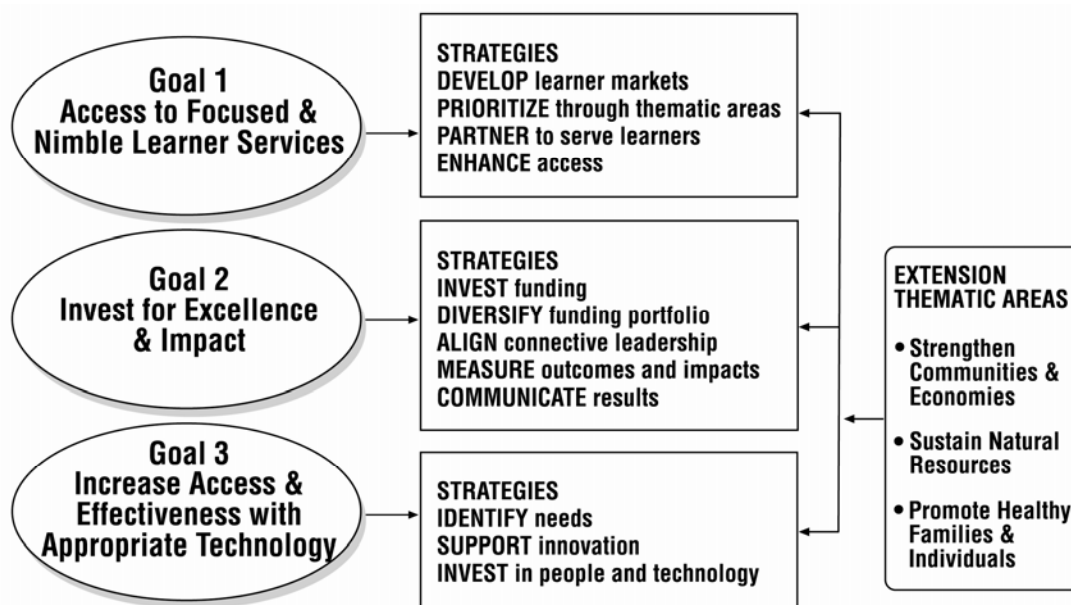## An Overview of Extension's Strategic Goals, Strategies, and Thematic Areas of Emphasis

Figure 1

Goal 1: Improve Access to High-quality Learner Services

Goal
Extension will provide access to the knowledge resources of OSU by being focused and nimble in engaging Oregon's diverse people and communities in high-quality learner services that help build sustainable community futures (see Figure 2).

Expected outcomes
This goal advances Extension's mission across urban and rural landscapes.
Extension will:

- Focus its educational resources on the highest priority issues that have a significant impact on strengthening communities and economies, sustaining natural resources, and promoting healthy families and individuals, helping Oregonians build sustainable communities (see Figure 2).

- Quickly identify and address important emerging issues, improving quality of life and brightening Oregon's future.

- Attract and engage a wide array of diverse learners by creating dynamic, vibrant learner environments that effectively utilize principles of adult and youth education.

Indicators of progress

- Expanded and higher quality engagement with residents on major community issues.

- Strengthened skills, expertise, and level of volunteer service among community members.

- Increased numbers and diversity of Oregonians involved in programs and learner services offered by Extension.

- Reduced time between identification of an issue and delivery of Extension programs that address the issue.

- Increased financial investment in initiatives that address emerging issues.

- More people served by multiple Extension programs that engage them in lifelong learning.

- Changes in knowledge, behaviors, and other outcomes consistent with the goals of planned programs.

Strategy 1.1
Identify, understand, develop, and respond to current, changing, and emerging learner markets and issues in a systematic and timely manner.

Actions

1.1.1 Identify current and changing learner needs and anticipate new markets by developing and maintaining a capacity to effectively and efficiently obtain, analyze, share, and utilize market data. This data is used in developing Plans of Work.

1.1.2 Invest resources to determine current and changing learner needs.

1.1.3 Outsource work for which resident expertise is not available.

1.1.4 Develop and deliver an array of learner services and formats to meet the needs of a broad and diverse spectrum of learners.

1.1.5 Document impacts among targeted learner groups.

Strategy 1.2

Focus Extension programs and learner services within three multidisciplinary thematic areas: strengthening communities and economies; promoting healthy families and individuals, and sustaining natural resources (see Appendix 1 for description). These thematic areas are interrelated, working together to build sustainable communities (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

Actions

1.2.1 The Extension Dean and Director will seek internal and external advice to identify major issues, and areas of need and focus, within Extension's three thematic areas (see Figure 3).

1.2.2 Develop Plans of Work with expected outcomes that support the three thematic areas. As needed, establish work teams within the three thematic areas to deliver programs and learner services, evaluate outcomes and impacts, and report outcomes and impacts to the Dean and Director of Extension.

1.2.3 Identify, prioritize, and develop programs that respond to changing and emerging learner markets and issues in a systematic and timely manner. This will include developing a capacity to systematically obtain and analyze market data, and when needed, invest resources to determine learner needs.

1.2.4 Strengthen a work culture of flexibility, timeliness, integration, focus, responsiveness, and accountability.

1.2.5 Routinely share learning and discovery achievements among OSU and national research, academic, Extension, and extended education communities.
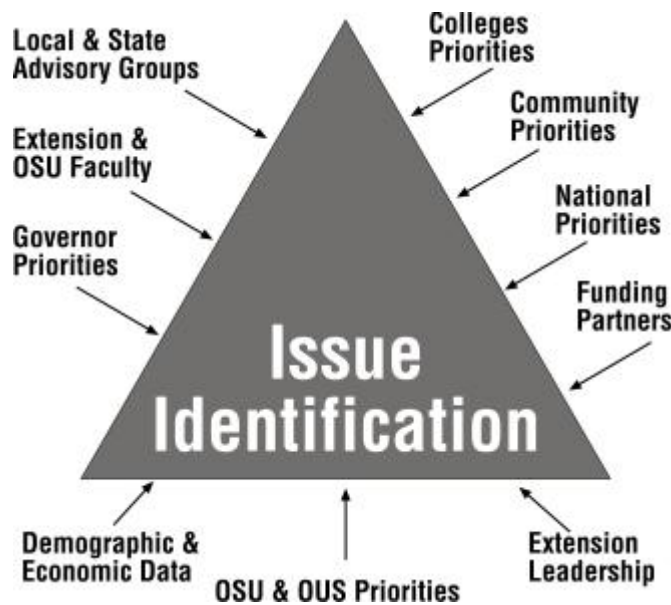
Issues Identification Model

Figure 3

Strategy 1.3

Identify agencies, organizations, and higher education institutions that have a role in addressing issues within Extension's mission. Actively develop partnerships and volunteer systems that leverage existing resources and build new resources for Extension.

Actions

1.3.1 Partner with OSU colleges and with other higher education institutions in the state, the nation, and the world.

1.3.2 Partner and/or subcontract with organizations including state and federal agencies, community organizations, and nongovernmental organizations to extend Extension's capacity and avoid duplication of effort.

1.3.3 Develop and expand volunteer systems and develop volunteer skills to increase the capacity of Extension to address the priority issues facing Oregonians.

Strategy 1.4

Continue to enhance access to Extension and other OSU programs and learner services.

Actions

1.4.1 Lead OSU in statewide citizen engagement, delivering programs and learner services that address highest priority needs in Extension's three thematic areas.

1.4.2 Collaborate with "E-Campus," OSU academic colleges, and other OSU outreach programs to develop learner services.

1.4.3 Partner with OSU Libraries to enhance online access to Extension educational materials.

1.4.4 Create dynamic, vibrant learner environments that utilize principles of adult and youth education to attract and engage Oregon's diverse people and their communities.

GOAL 2: Invest for Excellence and Impact

Goal

Extension will increase and diversify its funding base and encourage program excellence through strategic investments within three thematic areas. This will create measurable outcomes and impacts that will be reported widely to stakeholders.

Expected outcomes

This goal supports Extension's position as a top-performing organization among national peers. Extension will:

- Implement an outcomes-based investment model described below (Strategies 2.1 and 2.2) in concert with OSU college delivery units.

- Invest strategically for measured accomplishments and impacts.

- Build the critical mass of funding and intellectual capacity to accomplish measurable impacts within Extension's three thematic areas.

- Create an entrepreneurial mindset for developing new resources and new markets.

- Align policies, procedures, and work culture to efficiently achieve targeted results

- Design, develop, and manage an accountability system for documenting evidence of impacts and generating Reports of Accomplishment.

Indicators of progress

- Increased number and quality of outcomes-based partnerships across OSU.

- Improved budgetary flexibility and agility for responding effectively to emerging issues and opportunities.

- Increased state and local Extension budget amount per capita.

- Improved processes and support services for faculty and staff to seek and acquire nontraditional revenue.

- Increased amount of grant and contract funds that focus on the thematic areas.

- Increased number of faculty receiving grants and contracts.

- Refined fee-based guidelines and operational procedures for appropriate programs and learner services which result in increased fee-based programs.

- Growth in total amount of private funds received.

- Increased number of endowed positions and/or amount of endowment funds.

- Increased public awareness and understanding of Extension's educational impacts.

Strategy 2.1
Invest Extension general funds (continuing and new) for greatest need and impact.

Actions
2.1.1 With OSU units, identify targeted outcomes and performance measures (progress toward achieving results) through an Extension Plan of Work (POW) process. Initiate a process that addresses both the federal and state legislative planning and reporting requirements for Extension and its partners.

2.1.2 Base the allocation of resources on identified priority issues, desired outcomes, and productivity within Extension's three thematic areas. An Extension Policy Advisory Council made up of the deans of OSU colleges with Extension programs will work with the Dean and Director of Extension on policy development and investment strategies. The Extension Dean and Director will make final decisions about policies and investments. The role of colleges and units providing leadership for Extension's programs will be to plan, develop, implement, evaluate, and report the outcomes and impacts of programs and learner services, and to manage the resources allocated to them to accomplish agreed-upon outcomes.

2.1.3 Reinvest in programs and learner services to the extent that they continue to be a priority and achieve targeted outcomes. Engage learners and stakeholders in reinvestment strategies.

2.1.4 The target is to allocate no more than 70 percent of the regular, recurring state and federal general funds in tenured and tenure-track faculty salary, OPE, and support. The remaining 30 percent of state and federal general funds will be used to fund fixed-term faculty, program assistants, and new initiatives, to provide flexibility to respond to changing needs, and to enable Extension to respond to budget uncertainties.

2.1.5 Identify base funds needed to adequately administer Extension as an organization and to support programs, learner services, and initiatives, providing for staff development, publications and other educational materials, marketing, fund development, accountability, county/local office administration, fiscal management, computing technology support, and other services, as needed.

Strategy 2.2
Acquire and invest Extension flexible funds in new initiatives and emerging markets and opportunities.

Actions
2.2.1 Identify, along with stakeholders, initiative priorities for additional revenue generation.

2.2.2 Initiate a request for proposal (RFP) process that includes identifying outcomes and performance measures. Clearly articulate the expected funding horizon.

2.2.3 Provide for growth by establishing a pool of dollars for investment in new initiatives. This funding will come from private fund development efforts that yield new unrestricted monies, from new state and federal general funds, and publication and product sales. The goal for new investments is a cumulative $5 million by 2010.

2.2.4 Invest in new initiatives that respond to emerging markets and opportunities through an internal request for proposals (RFP) process that includes evaluation by a proposal review team.

Strategy 2.3
Diversify funding to support existing programs and learner services and to build the capacity to address emerging opportunities.

Actions
2.3.1 Identify new funding partners and aggressively seek grants and contracts to expand and enhance programs and learner services. Goal for 2010: increase grants and contracts by 50 percent from the 2004 level.

2.3.2 Identify programs that have the potential, and are appropriate, for self-funding. Create and implement a cost-recovery system that collects fees for appropriate programs and learner services.

2.3.3 Partner with the OSU Foundation to implement a development campaign that increases Extension's capacity to serve Oregon. Be an active participant in the OSU capital campaign. Goal for 2010 is to increase private funds by 300 percent from the 2004 level.

2.3.4 Assess the feasibility of forming additional service districts or other county-based revenue generation alternatives.

2.3.5 Design support services to help faculty and staff develop and manage new funding sources.

Strategy 2.4
Develop connective leaders who focus on linking the University's capabilities with society's needs.

Actions
2.4.1 Identify the core competencies that faculty and staff need to be effective connective leaders.

2.4.2 Create and implement a professional development plan that enhances faculty and staff effectiveness as connective leaders.

2.4.3 Identify and establish incentives and support for faculty and staff seeking to expand connective leader activities.

Strategy 2.5
Measure Extension's return on investment.

Actions
2.5.1 Establish an Extension-wide system for measuring and documenting impacts that address the reporting and accountability requirements of our federal, state, and other funding partners.

2.5.2 Align Extension policies and reporting so they focus on targeted outcomes.

2.5.3 Provide training for Extension faculty, staff, and partners on how to measure and report outcomes.

Strategy 2.6
Market Extension and communicate the impact of investment in Extension's thematic areas and new initiatives.

Actions
2.6.1 Develop an aggressive marketing strategy for the general public and target audiences to increase public awareness and understanding of Extension's programs.
2.6.2 Develop a communication plan that identifies important Extension audiences and delineates how the organization will communicate with each of them.
2.6.3 Aggressively report the impacts of investment in Extension's work to national and state stakeholders, political leaders, and other Oregonians identified in the Extension communication plan.
2.6.4 Retain and expand Extension's political support in Oregon's changing political environment.

GOAL 3: Increase Effectiveness with Appropriate Technology

Goal
Extension will use established and new technologies strategically to increase efficiencies, expand outreach, and enhance and report the outcomes of its educational services.

Expected Outcomes
A key factor in achieving Extension's vision will be advancing technology to a new level of educational effectiveness, and using technology for more effective accountability reporting. Extension will:

- Implement an effective electronic technology system and related educational services, expanding methodologies and learner choices.

- Ensure that faculty and staff are equipped for and skilled in technology systems and methodologies that enhance Extension programs and learner services.

- Develop, implement, and evaluate alternative means of technology access for urban, rural, disadvantaged, and hard-to-reach learners.

- Advance Extension outreach capacity by developing partnerships with technology innovators in the University, other parts of the public sector, and in the private sector.

- Design, develop, and manage an accountability database for documenting evidence of impacts and generating Reports of Accomplishment.

Indicators of progress

- Increased knowledge of current and potential learners' needs, styles, and preferences for technology-supported educational services.

- Increased access to, and use of, Extension technology-based educational services. This means there will be more technology-based options for, and interactions with, learners.

- Increased number of faculty and staff using technology as an educational delivery option.

- Improved quality of technology-based educational services.

- Increased number of learners served per dollar invested.

- Enhanced and expanded relationships with technology partners.

- Improved consistency and reliability of Extension impact data.

Strategy 3.1
Identify current and potential learners' needs and preferences for technology-supported learner services.

Actions
3.1.1 Survey current and potential learners to assess their needs and preferences for alternative means of technology access and learner methodologies.
3.1.2 Analyze data to determine priority and investment potential of the various technology choices and methodologies.

Strategy 3.2
Encourage faculty and staff to design, develop, deliver, evaluate, and report Extension educational services using state-of-the-art technologies, methodologies, and research.

Actions
3.2.1 Utilize survey findings to assist and support faculty and staff in the design and development of technology-based learner services.
3.2.2 Support pilot projects that allow experimentation with and evaluation of innovative uses of technology-assisted education.
3.2.3 Recognize innovation and impacts of faculty and staff who successfully use technology for education.
3.2.4 Partner with technology innovators in the private and public sector as mentors, co-educators, and potential investors.
3.2.5 Collaborate with technology innovators and peer institutes to design, develop, and manage an Extension-wide system for documenting and reporting outcomes and impacts.

Strategy 3.3
Invest in people and technology to improve and enhance outcomes.

Actions
3.3.1 Allocate resources to assure that faculty and staff receive training and development that enhance competencies related to technology-supported education delivery.
3.3.2 Invest strategically in technological infrastructure that will improve efficiencies and effectiveness of faculty and staff.
3.3.3 Pilot and evaluate new technology applications and invest strategically in those that will advance effectiveness and impact.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Extension's Thematic Areas of Focus

Strengthening Communities and Economies

The nation and Oregon are becoming increasingly urban. The West is more urban per capita than the rest of the country. Most jobs and income in rural areas are no longer derived locally, and increasingly producers in urban and rural areas are competing in a global market. Urban areas depend on rural areas for resources such as water, food and fiber production, and for recreation. Over the past decade, the changing economic structure and the interdependence of urban and rural areas have been recognized. To create more diverse economies that support all of Oregon, communities must develop needed infrastructure, knowledge, and empowered youth and adults. Where many once relied primarily on natural resources, now their economic options demand different technology infrastructures and skills. This thematic area will help communities develop the tools to inventory their existing resources, use beneficial information technologies and e-commerce, and appropriately invest their resources for community economic development.

Sustaining Natural Resources

Oregon's rich base of diverse natural resources supports the industries of farming, ranching, forestry, fisheries, hydropower, recreation, and tourism. Yet rapid and significant changes linked to natural resources challenge not only resource-based industries but also Oregon families and communities. For example, more than 13,000 miles of rivers and streams in Oregon are listed as having limited water quality. Thirty-four fish, animal, and plant species are listed as threatened or endangered. These challenges affect streams, rivers, and species in all parts of the state. To compete globally, there is a need to balance the sustainability of Oregon's natural resources, the viability of natural resource-based industries, and the health of rural communities. Improving our understanding, and application, of best management practices that result in healthy natural resource systems and economies is essential if Oregon's natural resource-based industries and communities are to adapt and thrive. In this thematic area, Extension will focus on watersheds, environmental and economic sustainability, and knowledge of natural resource systems that will benefit youth and adult audiences.

Promoting Healthy Families and Individuals

Life expectancy and quality of life are directly impacted by an individual's physical and mental health. Knowledge, motivation, and a supportive family and community are critically important to achieving healthy behaviors and growth. Our communities and workplaces are becoming more complex and global, increasing the need to build capacity among youth and adults to be contributing citizens, to be prepared for the jobs of the future, and to be productive. Nationally and in Oregon, inactivity and poor diets are leading to increasing levels of obesity, higher levels of preventable diseases, and shorter life expectancy. Seventy percent of deaths in Oregon are caused by chronic diseases, of which a significant percent are preventable. Oregon has one of the highest rates of hunger in the nation, which, ironically, is also a risk factor for obesity. The population is growing older, which is increasing the need for self-care, care-giving for

others, and knowledge about healthy aging. This thematic area will capitalize on OSU's thematic thrust "optimizing the health and well-being of the public." Extension plays an important role in extending knowledge to individuals, families, and communities throughout Oregon to improve the health and lives of individuals and families, and to improve the productivity of Oregon's workforce.

Appendix 2: Definition of Terms

Connective Leadership: Connective leaders focus on linking the University's expertise and experience with society's needs. Responsibilities and duties of a connective leader include: identifying issues of critical importance to the community; creating opportunities for increased engagement between the University and the community; and acquiring resources to develop and deliver relevant programs and learner services that address critical issues.

Engagement: Engagement blends scientific knowledge from the University with experiential knowledge within the community to establish an environment of co-learning. Engagement involves shared decision making. Engagement is a practice that strengthens faculty (enables them to be better teachers and more effective grants makers); enhances the education experience for learners; and multiplies the institution's impact on external constituencies.

Learner Services: Part of a well-designed plan of work, learner services are educational activities, learning experiences, teaching methods, media, and technology that are part of an Extension program planned and conducted to meet stated outcomes and to create desired impacts. Other learner services include nonformal events such as a meeting, field day, workshop, consultation, weekly radio program or news column, presentation, and discussion. The term also may be applied to other educational delivery methods, such as newsletters and Web-based courses.

Program: A nonformal educational effort guided by specific objectives and organizational mission. It includes learner services that are planned, conducted, and evaluated for their impact on participants' learning needs. A program usually is sustained over a period of time.