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ONE OF CONCEPTS OF STRUCTURING EXTENSION EDUCATION

New Concepts of Structuring Vocational Education in Europe

Abstract

Global trends including rapidly advancing technology, opening to international markets, economic reform, sustainable development, environmental impacts and new approaches to marketing and trade have led to changing for agricultural Extension Services. Extension Services have played a critical role in agricultural development to bringing problems and opportunities to the attention of researchers, and then participation in effectively transferring research results and recommendations to their clients.

The focus of extension education programs is now broader in terms of content. Partnerships with organizations, educational institutions, business, and government need to use a modern delivery methods.

Keywords

Extension, changes, education, virtual approach

Agricultural Extension Systems in the world are continually adapting to improve their importance and relevance to modern principals for agricultural and rural development. During the past 100 years, most countries in the world established some type of Extension System. These Agricultural Extension Systems have organizations that include a variety of public or private institutions, associations, and non-governmental groups that transfer, mobilize, and educate farmers and rural residents. More than 200 countries now have Extension Systems worldwide.

The mission of Extension is continually changing to adjust to the new conditions for agriculture and the rural economy. The global, national, and local economies, the natural resources environment, demographics, and community and family structures, values, and available resources are all factors in these changes. Extension Services also differ more locally than in the past, depending upon the level of infrastructure and the availability of competitive sources of knowledge, the economy, priorities for development, and developments of within complex of knowledge generation and delivery systems.

The changing priorities for agriculture and rural development have in turn changed the “center of gravity” for Extension, which is coming to be more focused on people and institutions and where partnerships and engagement are more important characteristics of its operations.

The Extension Services as well tend to have a wider range of programs, such as: agricultural and natural resources; business and industry; rural communities; families and household orientated services; 4-H youth development; continuing education and communication services.

The Extension Service needs qualified specialists-advisers who are professionals in consulting activity, seen as the role of the universities. Extension specialists should have competencies in agricultural disciplines, to have communication skill and leadership to design programs, and can use process management that is a tool for planning of entrepreneurship activities.

Presently extension education system plays an important role to help to prepare effective specialists with new kinds of thinking and new methods.

Distance and continuing education are becoming important components for Extension programs supporting groups involved in urban, rural, and community development. The objective of distance and continuing education has been to offer expanded access to individuals who wish to take college-level courses, and to provide short courses to help farmers, small businesses, and manufacturers permitting them to more rapidly adapt to new technologies. Often offered in cooperation with public and private sector partners and the university system, related Extension programs (families, 4-H, and nutrition programs) provide leadership for initiatives and address critical issues for children, youth, families, and nutrition.

One of the concepts of structuring extension education is to organize an International Master program for Extension. This program would be to serve as education system for the assembly and distribution of new knowledge and models for extension. The main method for handling the education delivery will be through the web with provision for access by both individuals and groups. It expects to establish:

- A main team of teachers, specialists who will teach and consult;
- Educational programs, curricula, syllabi, and methods for training and retraining experts, advisers, farmers, and other individuals;
- Development communication services and continuing education
- An information system and database (e-extension);
- Distance education, and
- Constant and efficient cooperation with programs, projects, organizations, and universities from different countries.

We worked out such courses as: “The Bases of Agricultural Extension”, “Consulting Management”, “The Organization of Extension Service” for teaching methods of SWOT-analysis, gross-margin, partial budgets, analysis of financial reports and investment analysis. And other special courses such as: “The Organization of Education in Extension”, “The Ethics of Business”, “Public Relations”, “Clerical Work in Extension”, “The Planning of Extension Practices Programs in Rural Area”, “Modern Methods of Research” and “Extension Evaluation”, “4-H Program”, “Agricultural Green Tourism”, and others. This shows the demand for Extension Services that are more broad than agriculture.

Extension has and will continue to play an important role in societies.. It can develop internationally in the electronic world of the 21st Century, leveraging programs and knowledge and building expanded international partnerships and cooperative relations.