

# Ensuring Quality Extension Programs for the 21st Century Ohio State University Extension's Cost Recovery Plan

## Current Funding

In today's economy, federal, state, and local government support can no longer provide adequate funding to maintain the high quality of programming OSU Extension strives to provide. We appreciate and depend upon governmental funding as base support for Extension personnel. Given the current economic environment, OSU Extension was fortunate to receive a modest increase of state funding. However, with budget cuts in fiscal years 2001, 2002, and 2003 from both state and federal funding, the fiscal year 2004 budget is still \$2 million less than we depended upon in fiscal year 2001. Considering inflation, this leaves fewer dollars to support the direct costs of delivering Extension programs. These direct costs include curriculum development, printed materials, meeting space, and technology enhanced delivery of programs, to name a few.

## A Quality Extension Program

Extension programs and services benefit individuals, families, communities, governments, business, and industries. OSU Extension is committed to and recognized nationally for providing high quality programs to Ohioans. Quality Extension programs result when

- current technical information is readily accessible,
- curriculum and materials are relevant to the audience,
- technology is available to enhance consumer access to education,
- highly trained educators facilitate applied learning.

## Our Cost Recovery Strategy

Recovering costs associated with Extension programs and services is not a new idea for OSU Extension. The strategies we will use include enhanced efforts to obtain grants and contracts; charging user fees for selected programs; and seeking donors, partners, and sponsors appropriate to the program content and audiences. We currently employ all of these strategies to support Extension programs. Our new approaches will be more coordinated and strategic, with a goal to generate \$2 million in fiscal year 2004.

## Impact of Cost Recovery on Ohioans

OSU Extension will be charging fees for *some programs* to cover costs such as resource materials, curriculum development, program marketing, refreshments, and in some instances, personnel time. We have initiated guidelines for our staff to determine when it is appropriate to charge user fees and how to calculate fees in a fair and consistent manner. Programs that result in public good and result in benefits to society as a whole will be offered at minimal or no cost. Programs that are customized for an individual and/or exclusive audience will have user fees that cover a greater portion of the real costs. No one will be denied participation in an Extension program because of the inability to pay a user fee.



## Use of Cost Recovery Funds

Funds obtained from grants, contracts, and user fees will be directed within OSU Extension to support quality programming. County, district, and state offices will all benefit. Funds will support strategic investments, such as:

- providing innovative seed grants and
- professional development funds to support new programs,
- enhancing program accessibility to the public using technology to support teaching and learning,
- supporting team-based program initiatives focused on priority statewide issues.

## What Happens If All Funding Continues to Decline?

If funding from all sources continues to decline, Extension will be forced to limit the variety of programming provided for Ohioans. What does that mean? Some programs may be eliminated. Others may be offered less frequently, in fewer locations, or only in self-study formats. Fewer educational materials will be available and in lower quality formats. Extension personnel may be less accessible for consultation and face-to-face teaching.

## How Can You Help?

OSU Extension needs and wants the support of our program participants, volunteers, committee members, and community leaders to continue to provide high quality programs. We will make every effort to ensure that programming you have come to depend upon will continue in your community. You can assist us by

- providing feedback about program and material pricing;
- suggesting potential grant sources, foundations, corporations, or community partners to assist in funding programs;
- responding to program evaluations to ensure that we are meeting your needs and expectations with our programs and services.

## Contact Person

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For more information, visit OSU Extension's web site at <http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu>

*All educational programs conducted by Ohio State University Extension are available to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, gender, age, disability or Vietnam-era veteran status.*

**Dr. Keith L. Smith, Associate Vice President  
for Ag. Adm. and Director, OSU Extension**

