From the Associate Director

“Building for the Future” will be the theme for the upcoming Partnership Meetings. I look forward to these events as an annual opportunity to meet with local extension board members. A panel of extension professionals will focus on increasing the value and capacity of our programming by using specialization and innovations to reach target audiences. We will continue conversations on achieving success in the extension district structure.

The meetings will be at these locations:

January 24 – Wichita    January 31 – Cimarron
January 25 – Manhattan    February 1 – Oakley

All board and Program Development Committee members are encouraged to attend. Contact your local extension office to register before January 12.

— Daryl D. Buchholz, dbuchhol@ksu.edu

It’s Not Too Late to Submit Board Leadership Assessment and Modules Year-End Summary

If you have not turned in the Excellence in Board Leadership Assessment and Board Leadership Module Year-End Summary for your local unit, it is not too late! You can submit both documents until January 13, 2017.

The Excellence in Board Leadership Assessment guides boards when developing their leadership skills. At the beginning of the year, boards set goals based on best practices to guide their work. Throughout the year, boards review their goals, complete the self-assessment, and submit the document. Boards achieving a standard for 2016 will be recognized for their accomplishments at the 2017 Partnership Meetings.

The Board Leadership Modules Year-End Summary is another training tool to determine which modules to complete throughout the year. Modules may be used during regular meetings or as independent study reinforced with a brief discussion at a board meeting. At the end of the year, the checklist is completed and submitted.

Completed assessments should be sent by January 13 to Laurie Chandler, 104 Umberger, 1612 Claflin, Manhattan, KS 66506, lchandle@ksu.edu.

The Sedgwick County office was recognized as the Outstanding Local Unit at the 2016 Annual Extension Conference. The award recognizes excellence in educational programming, personnel, and budget management. In addition to a recognition plaque, the office received $1,000 for program expansion.

Agents, staff, and volunteers made 3,200 presentations during the past year. The agents all have areas of specialization, which leads to community recognition of their expertise. They have regular programming on several Wichita television and radio stations and provide bimonthly columns in the Wichita Eagle. The staff partners with 80 organizations in the Sedgwick County area.

Agents serve in key leadership roles including Program Focus Team chairs, agent professional association officers, and as presenters at professional meetings.

During the past year, $148,000 of external funding was secured for educational programming through grants, sponsorship of events, fund development, and cost-recovery.
Extension Professionals Recognized

Recognition of outstanding programming and contributions by faculty and staff is one of the objectives of K-State Research and Extension’s Annual Conference. Extension agents and local unit staff recognized recently included:

Marlin Bates, Douglas County – Outstanding Local Unit Professional

Community Development Program Focus Team – Outstanding PFT

Northwest Area Family and Consumer Sciences Agents – Outstanding Team

Glenda Prieba, Harvey County – Outstanding Office Professional

David Kehler, Butler County – 4-H Clover Award

Carla Nemecek, Southwind District – Kansas Pride Partner Award

Land Values and Rental Rates – Monitoring and Providing Solutions to Landlords, Tenants, and Investors

Lower grain prices have led to the need for landlords and tenants to consider appropriate rental values and develop equitable lease terms for cropland, while lower cattle prices have created a similar situation for pasture. In addition, the lower commodity prices have affected the value of land, with land values declining from all-time highs.

Mykel Taylor, in the K-State Department of Agricultural Economics used actual sales data from the Kansas Property Value Department to obtain up-to-date and realistic farmland values. The information was released in April 2016 via the AgManager.info website and a national webinar was conducted to disseminate this information broadly. She also conducted a series of 20 lease workshops across the state, directly educating more than 300 people. These workshops included several Women in Agriculture meetings, helping landlords and operators learn how to determine an appropriate lease. Information was shared via interviews in print media and on radio, and through papers and tools posted on the AgManager.info website, which garnered more than 20,000 visits.

Skills developed by participants in the workshops included an understanding of types of leases (cash, share, and flex) and pasture leases, developing equitable leases, ethics for landlords and tenants, and learning to use K-State tools. Old leases were renegotiated with appropriate rates, and new leases were established with more flexibility to account for volatile crop prices. The application of these principles ensures mutually beneficial relationships, helps sustain long-term profitability and promotes efficient use of land and other resources.

Working with Elected Officials

Educational programming from K-State Research and Extension is supported by public funds. Board members and agents must ensure that elected officials, particularly county commissioners and legislators, know about local programming needs, the programming that K-State Research and Extension provides to address those needs, and the outcomes of that programming.

Some proactive steps that can be taken are:

- Attend local legislative briefings – especially during the legislative session.
- Share local programming outcomes with commissioners and legislators.
- Invite elected officials to participate in educational programming.
- Introduce officials when they are in attendance at public meetings.
- Place the names of officials on appropriate mailing lists.

For additional information see Working with Elected Officials: A Guide for Agents and Board Members.