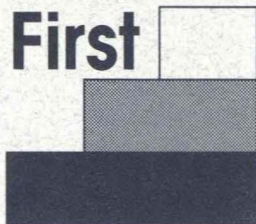


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Putting Iowans First



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*Issues Programming
from*

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

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Issues Programming and You

The following topics came out of a series of panels and committees convened by Iowa State University Extension involving about 1,300 Iowans. During the spring of 1991, ISU Extension refined the topics and decided how to respond. This process, known as issues programming, is designed to help Iowans thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Issue Programs

ISU Extension defines an issue as a matter of wide public concern arising out of complex human problems. Issues will change rapidly with the needs of Iowans.

Health care availability and cost for Iowans

Many Iowans find adequate health care out of reach. Rural communities are finding it difficult to provide services, and many individuals can't afford insurance and often don't thoroughly understand the implications of public policy.

ISU Extension plans to

- Form a coalition with appropriate agencies and organizations, help create a rural health care model, and work with local community clusters to develop that model;
 - Work with the Public Policy Education Project (PPEP) to discuss and present health care alternatives through satellite programs, print and video materials, and local forums;
 - Add to current health care materials in the Money Mechanics and Ready-Set-Retire programs.
-

Facing the F.A.C.T. – The 1990 Farm Bill

The Food Security Act (Farm Bill) of 1985 requires producers to have a conservation plan for highly erodible land in place by 1995.

Though most Iowa producers have submitted plans, many of them need to be revised. The 1990 Farm Bill shifts attention to water quality and wetlands, but many producers do not understand new regulations.

ISU Extension plans to

- Use publications, research reports, demonstrations, news releases, and other tools to disseminate information about conservation practices;
- Cooperate with the Soil Conservation Service to help extension staff and producers understand the wetland classifications, their implications, and appropriate management practices;
- Compile reference materials and create a database for producers about alternative crops, management practices, and markets.

Community Action for Abuse Prevention

Iowa families, businesses, and communities struggle to cope with the emotional, economic, and societal costs of abuse. Yet the public has many misconceptions about the extent and consequences of abuse. And the need remains to assess the costs and repercussions of abuse in many Iowa communities.

ISU Extension plans to

- Form or seek out local coalitions, and provide training and information to help the coalitions select and solve a local problem;

- Provide support to coalitions consisting of surveys, expertise, materials, and news releases;
- Work with community groups, employers, and the media to increase the public's knowledge of abuse costs.

Base Programs

Base programs are major educational efforts central to the mission of ISU Extension. These programs are ongoing but can be adapted to meet changing needs.

Agricultural Profitability

Iowa's economy remains heavily dependent on agriculture, and with Iowa's cultural heritage and rich soil, agriculture will continue to be important to the state's economy. But there are wide variances in profitability and management expertise from one farm to another.

ISU Extension plans to

- Encourage producers to adopt profitable and sustainable production methods by providing information about farm management, marketing programs, resource management, and alternative farming systems;
 - Help producers choose appropriate capital arrangements through one-on-one counseling, mass media, and applied research and educational tools;
 - Improve the livestock producers' competitive edge by encouraging the use of enterprise records programs, developing
-

information-sharing networks among producers, and guiding the development of production/marketing cooperatives.

Revitalizing Rural Iowa – Communities Creating Their Futures

To remain viable, rural communities need access to educational opportunities, people with leadership skills, a pool of high quality jobs, and new patterns of cooperation.

ISU Extension plans to

- Work with local groups and state agencies to develop a plan for quality education, and provide public education and information;
- Provide leadership programming and teach leadership skills in conjunction with other programs and initiatives;
- Partner with economic and community development organizations, and provide development assistance to communities;
- Encourage the use of paraprofessionals to work on community sustainability, and support the formation of a council to guide this effort.

Environmental Management of Natural Resources for Sustainable Agriculture and Communities

Limited natural resources and a fragile environment increasingly concern Iowans. About one third of Iowa's farmland (13 million acres) has been classified as highly erodible. Eighteen percent of Iowa's well water exceeded federal drinking water standards for nitrate-nitrogen. More than half of Iowa's landfills will be full by 2000.

ISU Extension plans to

- Use demonstrations and meetings to encourage land owners and operators to use better land management practices;
- Use workshops, media, demonstrations, meetings and other methods to help farmers reduce the use of chemical inputs, and adopt integrated nutrient and pest management procedures;
- Use workshops, demonstrations, and media to help teach consumers how to better manage waste, and to teach businesses and communities waste recycling and reduction strategies.

Youth and Family Development and Resource Management

Iowa families face many stresses: poverty, a lack of financial management skills, unavailable child care, a lack of parenting skills, an aging population in need of support and education about aging issues, and youth with poor self-esteem and decision-making abilities.

ISU Extension plans to

- Teach parents and agency personnel who work with families to resolve conflicts, make decisions, discipline, communicate, and to parent and manage resources in varied family structures;
 - Disseminate information and support materials to childcare providers;
 - Train volunteers who will teach life skills and career development to youth, and work with other agencies to help high-risk youth;
 - Provide information and workshops about
-

developmental and social issues for caregivers of elderly;

- Teach financial management skills by working with staff, volunteers, and agencies.

Nutrition, Diet, and Health

Misinformation and misperceptions about food quality can lead to hazardous food handling practices. Inappropriate food choices also create problems: about 80 percent of Iowans' health problems are related to nutrition. For Iowa consumers to make informed decisions, they need to be able to question information sources and analyze the implied risks and benefits.

Extension will use a satellite conference, meetings, news releases, newsletters, interagency cooperation, consultations, and other tools to achieve the following objectives.

ISU Extension plans to

- Help producers, processors, and consumers improve practices that promote a safe food supply;
- Foster community environments that encourage exercise and the adoption of dietary guidelines;
- Help consumers improve their understanding of risks and responsible practices that are related to food and health.

For more information...

If you have questions or would like more information about issues programming, contact your ISU county extension office, or call ISU Extension at (515) 294-4576.

... and justice for all

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