

Flip Chart Notes -- Strategic Planning Forum #1 @ Louisville
Hilton Garden Inn @ Fairgrounds
Task Force of the Future of Kentucky Agriculture and Rural Communities
Kentucky Agricultural Council
8/22/12

Emphasize opportunities for on-line educational programs
Focus on ways to make ag education accessible to part-time farmers.

Need greater inclusion of non-profits in delivering Ag educational programs, especially in Louisville

Strategy needs more explicit emphasis on Higher Education program . . . some 10,000 students are enrolled state-wide – don't ignore them

Need focus on local school boards – encourage their leaders to value Ag education

Need focus on school counselors to make sure they are well informed about Ag career opportunities (they discourage some students from pursuing Ag careers)

Encourage diverse populations to get involved in Agriculture, especially women and minorities

Don't limit Ag Education topic to "formal" – need better language to describe range of ag educational programs and capabilities available.

Difference between "Ag Education" versus "Consumer Education" → latter is focused on "marketing"

Build on Locust Trace School as a model for delivery of Ag education to High School aged students (part of the Lexington public school system)

We need to recognize that establishing new and more effective Ag educational programs will require additional resources: not only funding, but also leadership (including volunteer leadership) that is committed

Need to involve young people and new farmers in the next generation of policy-makers.

Need to recognize the challenge to presenting a "common theme" or message, or "being on the same page": Many ag groups seem to be going in different directions, leaving policy makers confused. (Example of milk industry divisions cited)

When communicating about "farming" we need to find ways to go beyond just big "Ag statistics" (like commodity production / output numbers) – paint a broader picture of agriculture and farming. For example, focus on concept of the LAND, WATER, Air Quality -- farms / farmers as stewards of the land and pointing up the benefits of farming to the environment, beyond just "providing food". Need to communicate: "What else do farms provide?"

How can the Strategic Plan embrace an “urban perspective”?

- It is a struggle to get urban officials to pay attention to Ag, Ag opportunities or needs. How can we get good, relevant data to support the message that farms / farming are important to the State’s urban areas?

Need to deliver a message: “Without land we won’t be able to eat” – need for more protection of farm land

Fayette County PDR (Purchase of Development Rights) could be a model program

Observation: The first 3 topics all deal with “education” – Ag Education, Consumer Education, and Policy-maker Education . . . but the thrust appears to be on “telling” people about Ag. Maybe the thrust should be reversed with more emphasis on LISTENING. . . e.g. to consumers . . . farmers need to grow what consumers want to buy, not just what they want to produce.

Language about need for RESEARCH about new markets should be modified to include “research and DEVELOPMENT” of new markets.

Opportunity for more cattle finishing, processing in Kentucky – building the value chain needs to be supported

There is a need for commercial kitchens in every county – make this a goal.

Food Systems Innovation Center at University of Ky College of Agriculture provides some of these services, needs to be promoted / supported

“We ship logs . . . why not ship FURNITURE”?

Observation that discussion so far has focused heavily on “local” and small scale aspects of agriculture, e.g. farmers markets . . . don’t lose sight of bigger scale opportunities, e.g. food processors already in the state support the economies of rural communities but need significant levels of inputs

Topic 6 [Regional Agricultural & Rural Community Development], Goal B . . . suggests adding “Opportunities” so it reads “challenges & opportunities”

Value-added large scale employers in rural communities should be supported. Some are growing and helping their local economies.

The emphasis / visibility of goal for preserving the Ag Development Fund needs to be raised. This should be addressed as part of how the final plan goals and objectives will be prioritized.

Questions inclusion of goal or project related to increasing Biotechnology research in Kentucky

Viewpoint – “How will we feed 9 billion people by 2050”?

Kentucky Proud – it does not seem to be mentioned thus far. Consider re-inserting support for it into the plan . . . maybe as part of outreach to mass consumer audience and as positive branding for Kentucky agriculture.

Question: Consumer outreach seems a worthy goal but “what is the bottom line”? What is the action? Is there an ROI?

Definition of “Education” needs to be broadened

The broad and inclusive definition of “policy-maker” is important

New Markets: consider linking this to Rural Communities Development goal

Ag Development Fund . . . the Fund is not running out of money but its dollars are being tapped for other non-agricultural purposes to tune of \$25 m / year.

Possibly missing from the Plan is any type of “self-promotion” for KAC – how will the organization be sustained? Or for various other support groups and leadership groups that promote the collective interests of Agriculture.