

Strategic Plan Kick-off Meeting -- 2/21/12

Afternoon Session / Three Questions Written Responses [Yellow Sheets]

[Consolidated Summary]

What are the opportunities or challenges for Kentucky Agriculture and rural communities in the next 5 years?

[ONE RESPONSE]

- Viability of rural communities (role of small farms – economic impact)
- Problems with sustainability / profit
- State has 3 divergent regions – how to impact / assist each
- Problems with access for production, e.g., slaughter facilities access
- Education – how to help consumers improve understanding of ag production and distribution, and impact of regulations
- Social Media & classrooms – people need to value Ag

Biomass opportunities in the Green market

[ALL ONE RESPONSE]

Education

- Schools
- Where food comes from
- Ag departments being dissolved
- Affording quality educators
- Adults, not just kids
- Understanding limitations of your farm

Pressure of combining services

Labor issues

Marketing products

- Infrastructure
- Getting groceries to buy local
- Timing (when supplies are available)

[ALL ONE RESPONSE]

- Educating the non-farm community – examples: classrooms, legislators, business community
- Breaks in agriculture and typical community members
- Misinformation being given to consumers
- Healthcare for full-time farmers
- Labor ex. H2A program
- Regulations facing farmers (ex: changing mid-stream)
- Infrastructure
- Market opportunities
- Slaughter facility

Expanding export Markets

[ALL ONE RESPONSE]

- Find a common ground in Ag to expand upon
- Ag needs public relations—Who are we?
- Use a negative such as Yahoo on Ag careers to pull the Ag community together
- Social media is a plus in today's Ag community
- Challenges – broadband for rural communities
- How people view us – such as Turtle Man and Larry the Cable Guy
- Expanding your role as farmers / Ag in other roles such as Chamber members, etc.

[ALL ONE RESPONSE]

- Export
- Social media use in spreading the word of Ag
- Overcome stereotypes of rural America and Ag
- Come together on being one community
- Points to agree on – different, but one

[ALL ONE RESPONSE]

- Education at all levels – educating the consumers, urban groups, help them become a fan
- Labor
- Changes going back to farming
- Infrastructure – need a place to sell
- Understanding what you can grow and when
- Timing – when suppliers need supply
- Development and what's best for community

What are the obstacles to capturing these opportunities or overcoming these challenges?

Change from traditional ways.

[ALL ONE RESPONSE]

- Money
- Misinformation
- Resisting change
- Different groups don't have same message (muddled, confusing to consumers)
- Increased competition for funds
- Ego
- Farmers don't toot their own horns

[ALL ONE RESPONSE]

- Governmental – state , federal, local
- Full commitment of changing from old mindset
- Lack of funding to combat the misinformation being presented
- Access to capital: inability for young farmer to come into farming

- Willingness of parents to learn about agriculture >> go back a generation to teach their children

Leadership and funding

[ALL ONE RESPONSE]

- Education for Ag-based learning, including club-based learning (ie. 4H, Horse clubs)
- Keeping the transfer of wealth in rural counties
- Salaries for laborers – work experience and work ethic of laborers
- Getting products to consumers

[ALL ONE RESPONSE]

- Regulations
- Public perception
- Cooperation between groups
- Access to capital
- Ag leadership – are they Ag at heart? / farmers?
- Burnout – same ones on all committees
- Understanding of definitions of Biofuel, Green, Organic

[ALL ONE RESPONSE]

- Overcoming regulations
- Public relations
- Overcome diversity
- Access to capital
- Leadership
- Opportunities – diversify our product; survive in diversity

[ALL ONE RESPONSE]

- Money – funding for education
- Uneducated
- Misinformed
- Resistance to change
- Groups working together – clear message from all groups
- Someone needs to be a voice for farmers
- Scared to voice their opinion because scared someone will come after them
- Working together to increase funds from outside the Ag arena

Realistically, what can the Kentucky Agricultural Council and its member organization do to address these obstacles?

Kentucky Ambassador Program

- Commodity organizations training volunteers within their groups on important talking points and go into schools, farmers markets, and host farm tours to their farms

- (agrotourism connected) – these volunteers coming together and networking about similar issues across commodities to keep them on the same page.
- Have one commodity voice to go to legislative folks to speak on Kentucky agriculture.
 - Share positive talking points across groups so they begin to have one large voice – maybe issues updates by email
 - KAC trying to pull together or consolidate programs and issues across membership groups
 - Revive old “Kentucky Promotion Programs” [grant from KADB that Ky Cattlemen’s Association receives] to promote Ky agriculture with one voice
 - Pull consumer focus group together to see what their perception of Kentucky agriculture is – survey or meeting group from Louisville, Lexington, Etown, Bowling Green then compare to rural communities thoughts of same questions >>> (This might show us if we are missing the point on an important issue to this process.)

Educate groups

Work together to address legislative / PR issues

[ALL ONE RESPONSE]

- Marketing campaign (one voice for Ag)
- Seat on state education board
- Lessons from commodity groups for FFA kids to take to younger kids (PALS)
- Show successes – leading by example
- Ag Council web page becomes clearinghouse for info

[ALL ONE RESPONSE]

Work as a unit representing agriculture

- One voice to go to legislature
- Coalition through TV, social media, radio, etc.
 - Pull all resources together (funding)
- Maybe we need to change our mindset from “feeding the world” to “how are we feeding you” (our mindset is how do you as the farmer help me)

[ALL ONE RESPONSE]

- Ad campaign to put a face to Kentucky Ag / farm families
- Long range plan more than 5 years
- Use the feel good image people “remember” such as politicians use in elections
- Use one message to promote Ag, such as Kentucky Proud
- Use social media

[ALL ONE RESPONSE]

- Ad campaign – one message
- One brand of Kentucky Ag
- 5, 10, 20, 50 year plan
- Put info social Ag

[ALL ONE RESPONSE]

- Start locally
- Marketing campaign / PR
- Show success stories
- Lead by example
- “Farm” is not personal – “food” is
- Seat on state education board
- FFA / PALS – Different commodity groups can get into to kids
- Ag Council – host information – clearing house for information on how to find groups