

TO: Mr. Bart Hewitt

FROM: _____, Extension Administrator
Dalton McAfee

RE: Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Accomplishment Report

The Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program is hereby submitting to the USDA CSREES its Annual Report of Accomplishments for the year ending September 31, 2002. We hope that this report satisfies both the law and the spirit of the law.

Please note that this report is under review for language and clerical errors. If changes are required, a revision will follow.

If you have any questions, please call me at (601) 877-6569, or E-mail dmcafee@lorman.alcorn.edu or Ms. Lynette Jones at (601) 877-6555 or E-mail ljones@lorman.alcorn.edu.

Cooperative Extension Program

Annual Accomplishment Report 2002

**Alcorn State University
Alcorn State, MS**

March 1, 2003

Foreward

The Cooperative Extension Program at Alcorn State University believes that results are achieved through constant striving for excellence coupled with a prevailing discipline. Success of any organization depends on the structural effectiveness of implementing procedures designed to achieve its goals. To effect change, all the necessary tools (financing, human capital, proven research, leadership and effective application of technology) must be precisely utilized for maximum results.

The Cooperative Extension Program acknowledges and values taxpayers' investment in its efforts and targets resources to avoid waste and redundancy. By recognizing the need for internal improvement the following goals are being implemented: (1) achieve program excellence through increased funding for basic staff and program expertise; (2) Develop effective public relation and marketing plan; (3) Develop collaborative relationships between teaching, research and extension; (4) Fully integrated telecommunication system that link the external centers and targeted counties development and implementation.

This progress report outlines some of the major educational activities conducted during FY 2002 and the impact that they have had on the income and quality of life of the participants. During FY 2002, the Cooperative Extension Program was faced with additional budget cuts. These cuts had a dramatic impact on the size of the extension staff and its ability to deliver planned programs. To meet the challenge of reduced resources, the Cooperative Extension Program will increase its collaboration with other state, federal agencies, and make use of paraprofessional and volunteers to augment the effort of its depleted staff and resources.

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS FY 2002

As the Cooperative Extension Program enters into the third (3rd) year of implementing its strategic plan, it continues to move forward with its mission of connecting limited resource individuals, small farmers and their families, youth, and communities with a better quality of life. This quality of life must not be measured by an abundance of wealth, but by effective management of that which a client/community has. With the application of sound decision and a workable plan-of-action, prosperity can be achieved.

Alcorn State University has renewed its commitment to having a positive impact upon the various counties and communities in the service area. This new commitment marshals all of the university's resources under a concept called "Community Versity" (an institution that is academically strong and community focused). This concept embraces the thesis that children are our future, empowerment is the first step to self help and education is the key to economic prosperity. The Alcorn Cooperative Extension Program (ACEP) is making a concerted effort to enhance the quality of life of the citizens of Mississippi while protecting the environment for future generations.

During FY' 2002, the major thrust of ACEP was directed toward small farms and alternative enterprises, families and youth-at-risk, nutrition, fitness and health and economic and community development. These programs were delivered by twenty-six (26) agents, for (4) area coordinators, and eleven (11) specialists. The extension program staff received significant technical support from internal departments of the university (agricultural research; small farm development center) and other state and federal agencies such as Farm Service Agency, NCRS, and Mississippi Forestry Commission, Mississippi Department of Human Services, Mississippi Coalition of Mother and Babies, State Department of Education Local School Systems in Five Counties, Natchez Regional Medical Center, Bogue Chitto Community Interest Group, Alpha Phi Alpha, Fraternity, Inc. Mu Pi Lambda Chapter, Links, Inc., Natchez Chapter, State Employment Commission, and local businesses in the service area.

Extension agents and specialists conducted twelve hundred forty-seven (1247) educational workshops, seminars, field days and demonstrations. More than forty thousand (40,000) small farmers, rural and urban families, youth and community leaders participated in these activities. Agents and specialists also made an estimated five thousand (5,000) farm and home visits conducting one-on-one training for clientele.

Educational programs conducted in 2002 included the Production of Fruit and Vegetables, Agronomy and Forage Crops, Beef Cattle, Swine, Farm Business Management, Marketing of Farm Products, Teen Pregnancy, Family Life and Child Development, Youth-at-Risk, Clothing and Textiles, Nutrition, Fitness and Health, and Community and Economic Development. As a result of educational programs conducted, the accomplishments were made on the five (5) national goals by addressing the following key themes.

GOAL 1: To enhance the global participation, competitiveness, and profitability of agriculture producers, especially small farmers and families, non-traditional producers, and those who lack adequate economic and social resources.

Goal Narrative

The viability of small farms is dependent upon the farmers' ability to produce a combination of enterprises that generate profits and the farmers ability to keep the land in production as close to twelve months per year as possible. The resources of the Alcorn State University's Cooperative Extension Program over the past twelve months have been devoted to implementing activities designed to make small farmers move sustainable and competitive. Yet, these farmers are vital to the overall economy of the state and nation. While small farms and ranchers have difficulty competing with large farms that supply most of the national and international food markets, they can compete at supplying local and regional markets. In order for small farmers to sustain themselves in the fast changing farming industry, strategies must be developed to identify a combination of high value alternative and traditional agriculture enterprises that will provide significant net return. Over the past ten years, the demands for fresh fruit and vegetables has continue to increase. The production of organically grown product is not significant at this time. However, it is one of the fastest growing small farm programs in the area. The production of livestock enterprises, including beef cattle, meat goats, and swine, by small farmers make-up a large percentage of meat produced in the state. The quality of livestock produced is closely related to foraged production. Forage crops produced by many small farmers represent native species of grasses that are of low quality and yields. The quality of livestock and net returns can be improved by purchasing improved breeding stock, management and an improved forage programs.

KEY THEME:

Diversified/Alternative Agriculture (Agronomy)

Small and part time farmers were served well in FY 2002 by Alcorn Cooperative Extension Program. The income of rural residence and the sustainability of agriculture has increased through education. On-farm income has increased by diversification and the utilization of alternative cash crops, especially syrup crops. A combination of traditional and alternative agricultural enterprises and the incorporation of sustainable agricultural practices by clientele continue to increase farm income by participants. Income from traditional and alternative livestock has increased through emphasis on proper management and production of summer pastures and winter grazing.

Alcorn's Cooperative Extension Program Agricultural Agent's performance in program delivery in FY' 2002 was very good. In spite of mid summer drought, heavy early fall rains, and declining full time farm operators, agents delivered services well and reached new part time farmers. Agents have continued to stress alternative crops and value-added processing or products to new and established farmers. Agents have continued to entrench Sustainable Agriculture practices as the new traditional way of farming.

Impact

In FY 2002 The Alcorn Cooperative Extension Program calculated six million two hundred forty nine thousand three hundred forty eight dollars (\$6,249,348) in crop value for program participants. These dollars were made up of thirteen thousand one hundred thirty seven (13,137) acres of agronomy field crops and four hundred sixty seven and one half (467.5) acres of alternative agronomic crops. This acreage of field crops was made up of five thousand (5,000) acres of soybeans, five hundred (500) acres of rice, and four thousand six hundred thirty seven (4,637) acres of field corn. The alternative crops were made up of two hundred thirty six (236) acres of green peanuts, one hundred thirty three (133) acres of sweet corn, eighty and one half (80.5) acres of sugarcane for syrup, and eighteen (18) acres of sweet sorghum for syrup. Syrup crops alone were valued over eight hundred thousand dollars (\$800,000).

These crops values for program participants were accomplished as a result of ACEP Agricultural Agents conducting twenty nine (29) crop production meetings, five hundred ten (510) farm and home visits, seven (7) field days reaching five thousand seven hundred seventy five (5,775) farmers, seventeen (17) syrup processing demonstrations throughout the state reaching three hundred fifty thousand (350,000) people. Also educational programs resulted in fifty six (56) small farmers developing farms plans, forty seven (47) participants began keeping records, and fifty four (54) farmers following soil test results. It is also important to note that agricultural agents involved youth in ten (10) agronomy crop demonstrations with approximately 300 in attendance. Also note that agricultural agents attended four (4) in-service training sessions in Agronomy. Alcorn Cooperative Extension Program's agronomy specialist conducted three state wide conferences on syrup production, processing and marketing held in Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana.

Source of Funds

Funds expended for this goal for this program was from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

Activities conducted and income generated impacted family income and quality of life of the communities in which they live.

Agricultural Profitability

Implementation of horticultural program by the Alcorn Cooperative Extension Program is the key source of information on commercial fruits and vegetables production for small farmers. Information that was disseminated informs small farmers on the basic production practices and application of (fertilizer and pesticides usage, insect and disease control and crop rotation) and marketing principles. Five thousand four hundred and eighty-five (5,485) small farmers attend or received this information through newsletters, farm visits, field days, workshops and seminars.

Impact

During FY'2002, extension specialists and agriculture agents conducted sixty-five (65) educational programs, which resulted in an increase of producers by sixty-one percent (61%) or 698 in comparison to 431 producers reported in 2001. Producers planted a total of eight thousand two hundred and sixty-nine (8,269) acres of fruit and vegetables at an estimated value of \$10,000,000.

Source of Funds

Funds expended for this goal for this program was from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

Activities conducted and income generated impacted family income and quality of life of the communities in which they live.

Animal Production Efficiency

The major thrust of the Animal Science Program placed emphasis on the production of livestock (swine, beef cattle, meat goats and pastured poultry). While small farmers in Mississippi produce a small percentage of livestock consumed in the State, the number of producers outnumber larger commercial producers. Small livestock producers must improve breeding stock, improved herd health and management practices in order to sustain their operations. The major objective was to conduct educational programs that would increase production and overall quality of livestock being produced. Educational programs emphasized selecting and implementing recommended breeding practices, herd health, sound management practices, value-added processing, and the organization of small farm cooperatives to be more competitive in the marketplace.

Impact

Extension agents and specialists conducted forty two (42) workshops, seminars, field days, demonstrations, and tours. More than four thousand eight hundred fourteen (4,814) producers and potential producers participated. As a result of educational programs conducted by extension personnel, small farmers sold livestock valued at one million seven hundred forty five dollars (\$1,745,000).

Source of Funds

Funds expended for this goal for this program was from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

Educational activities conducted impacted small farmers in twenty-one (21) Mississippi counties, fourteen (14) of which are in southwest Mississippi. Through these efforts producers have increased the quality of life as well as improve on farm income. Environment issues and program efforts have voluntarily made producers more environmentally friendly.

Farm Management (2501)

Farmers will continue to face significant challenges in maintaining operation and sustaining growth of their business. Research has shown that farms of small size, has restricted income generating capability, receives low processing, incurs higher input, has limited managerial capability and have limited access to credit. Small farmers of Mississippi are experiencing financial difficulties, which have led to bankruptcies, foreclosures, and stressful emotional conditions. According to the most recent census for the state of Mississippi, the number of limited resource farmers has declined as much as three-time that of non-limited resource farmers. The major factors lead to the decline of small farmers includes, but are not

limited to: poor management, shortage of capital, marketing, limited knowledge of available USDA programs, enterprise diversification and value-added processing and risk management.

Impact

The Small Farm Outreach Project is committed to continue its efforts to serve socially disadvantaged and small farmers to improve their socioeconomic status. During FY 2002, the Small Farm Outreach Training and Technical Assistance Project conducted one hundred sixty two (162) workshops, group meetings, seminars, conferences' and fairs with one thousand nine hundred thirty one (1931) small farmers participating. The activities were covered under the four arms of the Risk Management Umbrella which are Production Risk, Marketing Risk, Financial Risk, and Legal and Human Resource with each containing several headings. Through these efforts, farmers are more equipped to make better sound managerial decisions that will minimize risk and increase production which increases profit. There were three (3), four (4) week comprehensive training courses conducted in which farmers received training in the areas of business and financial management, crop production, and livestock production. After graduating from the training courses, these fifty-five (55) farmers and potential farmers are qualified to receive additional or new funds from the USDA Farm Service Agency due to the extensive training received. Farm Management Specialist assisted farmers in completing loan applications to apply for federal dollars in the amount of two million forty-nine thousand four hundred (\$2,049,400) and Small Farm Development Center funds in the amount of two hundred forty-four thousand five hundred dollars (\$244,500). There were forty-two (42) youth loan applications completed for two hundred ten thousand dollars (\$210,000). The youth loan project will contribute to enhancing the student's knowledge of managing a small business, creates a more responsible student and increase self-esteem which is a major factor in juvenile crimes. These loans will add a boost to the local and state economy of two million five hundred three thousand nine hundred dollars (\$2,503,900) and give the farmers a better chance at having a productive operation and improving the quality of life for themselves and their families.

Source of Funds

Funds expended for this goal for this program was from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

The Small Farm Outreach Project provided technical assistance to nine (9) Delta counties and fourteen (14) counties in Southwest Mississippi with tested farm management techniques, planning and profitable alternatives farm and non-farm activities. The program provided training for farmers who are interested in supplementing or creating a farm income through agricultural enterprises. The project conducts farm finance and business management seminars, small farmers conferences', workshops, group meetings, newsletters, etc., all of which provided support to improve farm income which in the end will improve their quality of life.

Extension/Research Farm and Technology Transfer Center

Extension/Research Farm and Technology Transfer Center mission is to help reverse the decline on small family farms. The center has placed special emphasis on sweet potato research and demonstration for limited resource farmers in the delta region of Mississippi.

Impact

Research on sweet potatoes being conducted at the center are beneficial for small farmers. Through effective deployment of “best practices” small farmers witness first hand the importance of applying proper farm management techniques. A joint effort entitled “National Sweet Potato Collaborators” which includes USDA/ARS from Charleston, South Carolina, North Carolina State University, Mississippi State University and Louisiana State University is under way. The purpose of this collaboration, utilizing a variety of trials, is to investigate yield, quality, maturity and plant production efficiency. Data is being collected and analyzed. Results will be compiled and submitted at conclusion of study.

Remote Sensing Research, utilizing spatial imagines to enhance profitability of sweet potatoes. Factors evaluated were : soil, yield quality, plant population, insect, disease and weed population. Results of this project enable student interns to receive training in the use of ground truthing and remote sensing technology. On-going research/demonstrations are being conducted at the center on cultural, varietal and fertility trials on such vegetables as cabbage, greens, broccoli, squash, butter beans, peas, cucumber and tomatoes.

Source of Funds

Cooperative Extension/State

Scope of Impact

Activities being conducted at the center are geared toward improving the quality of life and increasing the economic base of communities within the service area.

Forestry Management Program

The most effective method of outreach has been to hold target meetings in communities where a small group of key people assist in getting landowners involved. By incorporating extension agents and other service providers into these activities, participants gain needed assistance. Establishing and maintaining contacts are critical points and aids in the efforts of tracking and follow-up.

Impact

During FY’ 2002, forestry specialist and agriculture agents conducted sixty (60) workshops, fields days and seminars. Five hundred and sixty-five (565) small landowners participated. As a result of these educational programs, eighty-two (82) small farmers sold two thousand three hundred and eighty-four (2384) acres of timber value at four hundred eighty thousand five hundred and fifteen dollars (\$480,515).

Source of Funds

Mississippi Forestry Commission and State funds

Scope of Impact

Activities being conducted are geared toward improving the quality of life and increasing the economic base of communities within the service area.

GOAL 2: To provide a safe, affordable, reliable, and nutritious food supply.

Goal Narrative

According to Campbell, CC (1991), there is an average of 1.5 supermarkets available per county in Mississippi. Supermarkets generally supply the most variety, afford-ability, and healthier foods for consumption. Many people shop at neighborhood grocery stores, whose food supply is inadequate and far more expensive to purchase than if the food was home grown or came from a supermarket. A relative number of the target audience are living in rural areas, but they do not take advantage of growing their own food. The problem of not knowing how to grow and store food for future use is also prevalent.

To get to adequate food sources, transportation is also a problem. The trouble is that many of the consumers in the state do not have access to this food source. Women, Infant and Children Program (WIC) is also a food source, but there are strict qualifications and limitations in order to receive assistance. The elderly, lactating mothers, and young children seem the most at risk. The need to provide information and education to this group is overwhelming.

Approximately 20 percent of the states population are living in households below poverty. According to the Mississippi census, of the 2,615,208 residents, approximately 35 percent are African Americans, of those households, 21 percent are headed by single parent families. Even though this number is extremely high, the number of children residing in families of single households is 58.6 percent. The poverty level and number of people in the household that is currently employed, places these families at risk of not being able to access healthy affordable food sources and supplies due to limitation of resources.

In the area of Family Life and Child Development, this goal will be addressed through the program of “Maintaining Family Stability, Health and Nutrition”. The first phase of the program will be to determined the number and variety of available food sources, safety factors, accessibility, risk factors and afford-ability. The second phase of the program will be to provide practical self help techniques to help families overcome this problem.

The area of Family Life and Child Development will work collaboratively with the department of home economics food scientists, and agricultural food specialists to determine strategies for addressing the issue of safety, accessibility and afford-ability of food to the targeted.

The Claiborne County Family Health Center, Mississippi Department of Human Services, Women, Infant and Children Program and the state Food Stamp Services will play a role in identifying families who have problems in accessing healthy food. These agencies will also be used as resources in the educational aspect of the program.

KEY THEME:

Food Safety and Handling

The Family Life and Child Development Specialist serve a dual role as a nutritionist. A resource manual was developed and distributed to the agents to use as a guide to set up food safety programs in the county. Pamphlets were written in low literacy and demonstrations were held in public housing, local industry, and low income sections of the communities to prevent food borne illness and safe food preparation storage. Seventy-five (75%) of the program efforts were supported through extension state supported funds.

Impact

Twenty five (25) workshops were held in the thirteen (13) counties serviced by ACEP.

According to the Mississippi State Board of Health, during the year 2001-2002 on one case of a food borne illness was reported. Two hundred (200) participants enrolled in this program. As a result of this training, one hundred-twenty five (125) of the participants reported that they had made a change in their purchasing and storing of foods.

Source of Funds

ACEP devoted a total of nine (9) full time FTE's for this effort. Funds expended for this goal for this program was sixty-thousand dollars (\$60,000) from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

Program efforts were concentrated in the 14 counties in southwest Mississippi. Emphasis are being placed on improving the health and effective means of addressing of individuals within the service areas.

GOAL 3: To achieve a healthier, more well-nourished population.

Goal Narrative

As we move into the 21st Century we have observed major changes in the family structure, computer technology, supermarket products and an increased concern within the small communities on health issues, proper food consumption and food safety. Millions of dollars are spent on nutrition, diet and health research each year causing an explosion of information that is valuable to the consumers. Each day scientists are finding stronger links between lifestyle, diet and good health. In spite of this wave of information in health maintenance and disease prevention, more and more Americans are suffering from nutrition-related conditions such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, strokes, heart disease, high infant morbidity and mortality rates. Mississippi has been ranked third in the nation for obesity. Consumers in the southern region traditionally consume diets high in fat and simple carbohydrates. Rural agricultural counties along the Mississippi river in southwest Mississippi are medically under served areas, with a shortage of health care professionals. Community-based educational programs to improve individuals and families knowledge based on the relationship between diet, lifestyle, and health is greatly needed in order that valuable information learned through research can reach the health conscious consumers.

The Nutrition, Diet and Health program is community-based and offers nutrition and health education activities and services geared toward intervention, prevention and maintenance. The mission of the program is to improve and maintain the southwest communities' optimal health and social well-being throughout the span of life. The program achieves its goals through four components: (1) The Nutrition Resource Library is open to partnership organizations in order to assure the general public proper accessibility to knowledge, facilities, and equipment needed to promote health. (2) Medical Nutrition Therapy is available to women, men, and children throughout the span of life who have received a medical risk assessment and need therapeutic diet counsel. The program offers complimentary consultations with a Registered Dietitian with monitoring and appropriate intervals. (3) A Health and Fitness Program offers a two-hour comprehensive nutrition class once a week for eight weeks. The Health and Fitness

Program focuses on the practical application of positive influences to promote healthy food choices, a positive self-image, stress reduction, and increased physical activity. (4) The Community Fitness Club encourages and assists graduates of the Health and Fitness Program to continue the application of positive eating habits and healthy lifestyle practices by joining or organizing a Community Fitness Club. The club serves as the core of communication for gathering feedback on current nutrition concerns of the community.

The Didactic Program in Dietetics, The Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, Alcorn Extension Services, The Department of Social Sciences, and the Alcorn School of Nursing will be the internal linkage utilized on a on-going basis. The external linkage will be Primary Health Centers, The State Department of Health, Department of Health and Human Services, community colleges/organizations, and Mississippi Department of Agriculture.

KEY THEME:

Nutrition, Fitness and Health Program

The Nutrition PLUS Health and Fitness Research Project investigates the lifestyle changes of the rural inhabitants in Southern Mississippi. The objective of the project was to decrease high fat foods consumption and improve healthy lifestyle through knowledge, enhancement and modification of sensitive cultural practices that promotes obesity.

Impact

Data analysis showed an average mean score of 3-4 pounds weight loss in 77% of the subjects with 73% showing improvements in diastolic and systolic blood pressure readings. The consumption of vegetable and dairy products increased 28%, while the consumption of high fat foods decreased by 24 %.

Source of Funds

As of June 30, 2002, funds expended for this goal for this program was from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

Program efforts were concentrated in the 14 counties southwest Mississippi. Emphasis are being placed on improving the health and effective means of addressing of individuals within the service areas.

Mr. Gingerbread Learner Survey Result Presentation

The purpose of this project was to present the results of data collected on Mr Gingerbread Teacher Questionnaire to the Extension Home Economist. The program provided early childhood education to address the common nutrition-related problems occurring among children in rural communities. Mr. Gingerbread program prevention message focused on childhood obesity, iron-deficiency anemia, high blood cholesterol, healthy snacks and physical fitness. The objective of the program was to apply the dietary guidelines and the food guide pyramid into the daily menu plan. Prepare a variety of foods that are safe, healthy and have high acceptance within the rural communities. Practice appropriate personal health protection measures against iron-deficiency anemia. Integrate physical activity into daily lifestyles with the school and home. Adopt health wise principles to reduce the risk of childhood obesity, preventable illnesses

and diseases.

Impact

The Extension Home Economist successfully distributed over 5000 kits throughout Southwest Mississippi. The counties received seven letters from teachers and mothers expressing appreciation as well as gratification for having an education and service program within their reach that addressed the local concerns of the community. Data collected from the Teachers Questionnaire showed that ninety-eight percent (98) of the teachers agreed that students of all ethnic groups and economical backgrounds were able to identify with the characters of the coloring books. One hundred percent (100%) of the teachers would like for more early childhood prevention programs similar to Mr. Gingerbread Learner Kit, accessible to schools and one hundred percent (100%) agreed that the program made a substantial impact on the nutritional knowledge of children as well as the parents.

Source of Funds

As of June 30, 2002, funds expended for this goal for this program was from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

Program efforts were concentrated in the 14 counties in southwest Mississippi. Emphasis are being placed on improving the health and effective means of addressing of individuals within the service area.

Nutrition PLUS Health and Fitness Research Project Lifetime Member Survey

The purpose of the survey was to collect valuable information from the projects subject to assess Nutrition PLUS feasibility, acceptance, impact and model design. Validate Nutrition PLUS community Fitness Association sustainability and community activities. Assess feedback to make informed decisions in the development of high quality community service programs that meet the demands of rural communities in Nutrition and Health. The objective of feasibility study was to develop an instrument to assess the long-term effects of Nutrition PLUS Health and Fitness Research Project. By conducting an aggressive tracking strategy of N-PLUS lifetime members to validate the sustainability of the N-PLUS Community Fitness Association.

Impact

Eighty-nine percent(89%) out of one hundred and ninety-two (192) lifetime members of N-PLUS Community Fitness Association responded to the survey. Findings from the survey showed that seventy-seven percent (77%) of the participants reported and improved knowledge of medical conditions of heart disease, hypertension and diabetes. Eighty-three percent (83%) showed improvement in physical fitness activities and ninety-nine percent (99%) responded “yes” to the statement: “Would you recommend N-PLUS, or similar weight loss program to a friend or family member?” The study showed N-PLUS Community Fitness Association is self-sustainable and has been successful in promoting healthy lifestyle within the family structure and local communities. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the respondents supported the need to expand N-PLUS services to neighboring counties and forty-three percent(43%) of the respondents suggested the need to establish N-PLUS Community fitness Association charters throughout Southwest Mississippi.

Source of Funds

As of June 30, 2002, funds expended for this goal for this program was from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

Program efforts were concentrated in the 14 counties in southwest Mississippi. Emphasis are being placed on improving the health and effective means of addressing of individuals within the service area.

Alcorn Nutrition Education Resource Center

The purpose of the center is to lend support to nutrition and health programs through high quality user-friendly educational resources in nutrition. The objective is to address health and nutrition concerns of health conscious men and women within rural communities.

Impact

Published five (5) user-friendly brochures for Alcorn Nutrition Education Resource Center. "Alcorn State University Sweet Potatoes-Farmers", and revised Bolivar County Extension/Research Farm Technology Transfer Center Sweet Potatoes cookbook to promote the increase utilization of sweet potatoes in the lower delta. "The Potassium, Calcium and Sodium Link" addresses the need to information exchange concerning current research finding for the treatment and management of hypertension. "The Starting Point Menu Plan" I a 21 day cycle menu plan for that provides residents who are suffering from chronic disease with a pre-planned menu for the following medical conditions: obesity, diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, high risk pregnancy and cancer.

Source of Funds

As of June 30, 2002, funds expended for this goal for this program was from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

Program efforts were concentrated in the 14 counties in southwest Mississippi. Emphasis are being placed on improving the health and effective means of addressing of individuals within the service area.

Dessert-Life Satisfaction Cookbook

The purpose of the publication is to provide a cookbook of desserts for persons with medical history of diabetes and obesity. The objective was to develop sugar free, low-fat dessert recipes palatable to the tongue, economical and easy to prepare. Publication of an educational tool for extension programs and Count Down WCBS Instructor Guide.

Impact

Seven recipes have been developed and gained acceptance through the school of Agriculture Sensory Panel. The recipes are: Peanut Butter Cake, Sweet Potato Cobbler, Peach Cobbler, Strawberry Short Cake, Oat Meal Clusters, Cherry Rice Pudding, Lime Luscious Mold and Cherry Chocolate Dream Pie.

Source of Funds

As of June 30, 2002, funds expended for this goal for this program was from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

Program efforts were concentrated in the 14 counties southwest Mississippi. Emphasis are being placed on improving the health and effective means of addressing of individuals within the service area.

Dining with Diabetes Program

The purpose of this program is to improve the management skills of persons with a medical history of diabetes through four series of workshops. Participate in a partnership effort between Alcorn State University and Mississippi State University. The objective was to expose clients to current research interaction with a Registered Dietitian.

Impact

Thirty (30) participants completed requirements of the program.

Source of Funds

As of June 30, 2002, funds expended for this goal for this program was from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

Program efforts were concentrated in the 14 counties in southwest Mississippi. Emphasis are being placed on improving the health and effective means of addressing of individuals within the service area.

GOAL 4: To achieve greater harmony (balance) between agriculture and the environment.

Goal Narrative

The rich soils and long growing seasons in the state of Mississippi favor the production of a wide variety of crops and livestock. However, the increased production of livestock in confinement and the excess use of pesticides contaminates water supplies and creates an imbalance in the environment.

Animal Waste Management is becoming a major concern in the state. Environmental pollution from food producing animals is a serious concern among federal, regional, state, and local consumers' groups. Nitrogen and phosphorous are the primary environmental pollutants excreted in animal waste. Contamination of groundwater especially in rural areas where more than ninety-five percent (95%) of the population's water is obtained is a serious problem.

Small farmers in Mississippi have traditionally been concerned about conserving and sustaining their farmland. However, they have not participated in conservation programs provided by the USDA/NRCS at the same level as large farmers. Alcorn's Cooperative Extension Program will provide the leadership in getting these farmers to partner with the

various agencies to improve their participation in the environmental programs.

Small farmers also need to acquire technique on improving water quality in order to maintain their fish operations. During FY 2000, educational programs conducted under goal 4, were directed toward improving sustainable agricultural practices being implemented by small farmers. Extension agents and specialists conducted sixteen (16) education workshops, seminars and tours, three hundred sixty (360) small farmers, youth and community leaders participated.

Farmers participating in water quality workshops improved both the quality and quantity of agriculture production.

Incubator Farm in Kemper and Winston Counties

The Alcorn Small Farm Incubator Farm for Winston and Kemper Counties is an innovative approach to providing technical assistance to small farmers. The center began operating in the summer of 1997. It provides an opportunity for small farmers that are interested in the production of commercial vegetables to acquire hand-on training, utilizing the state-of-the-art equipment and under the guidance of a commercial vegetable specialist. The overall objective of the farm is to provide an outdoor classroom for small farmers to acquire the latest techniques for the production of commercial vegetables where all of the necessary resources are available to insure a successful operation. The center assists farmers in maintaining computerized records.

Impact

During FY 2002, the center has conducted educational workshops, seminars, field days, youth days, and tours. More than one thousand eight hundred (1,800) small farmers, educators, youth, and community leaders participated. The participants attended monthly trainings on various topics. Workshops on available finances for small farm operators were conducted at the center. Financial institutions participating in the seminar included the Small Farm Development Center at Alcorn State University, USDA Farm Service Agency, Small Farm Business Administration, and a local bank.

Farm Management Specialist employed by Cooperative Extension Program at Alcorn State University, provides management assistance for participating farmers. A complete farm plan is developed for each individual farmer. Each participant has a folder that contains their farm plan and is kept in the office.

The following maps are an overview of assigned plots and crops for the current year.

- **Demonstrations** - To expose small farmers to a variety of approaches to commercial production hence, several demonstrations are conducted. Demonstrations conducted during the spring, summer, and fall of 2002 will include vegetative barriers, sweet potato, sweet corn, no-till vegetables, sugar cane, peanuts, watermelons, tomatoes, cantaloupe, and hot peppers on black plastic mulch. We have also demonstrated various sustainable agricultural practices to include cover crop practices.

The objective of the no-till vegetable demonstration is to show the sustainable practices that are both economically and environmentally beneficial. This spring, the cover crops will be sprayed with herbicide and after the grass die back sweet corn will be planted and that will be followed by southern peas and butterbeans.

- **Research** - The farm will also conduct research to validate, enhance, and improve

commercial production of vegetable and other speciality crops. Sweet potatoes row spacing project under the leadership of Dr. Franklin Chukwuma is one of the new innovative ideas we will be looking at.

- **Natural Products** - This is another new venture we have started. This is a collaborative effort with The University of Mississippi, School of Pharmacy, and The University of Southern Mississippi. The objective is to look at plants with medicinal value that can do well in the Mississippi climate. The plants will be evaluated on how well they did in various row spacing and soil types as well as the quality of the medicinal extracts. This year we have expanded to include a few of our participants growing catnip and fever few on one half to an acre demonstration plots.
- **Marketing** - All participating farmers will be responsible for marketing their own crops. The center coordinator will provide assistance in identifying marketing outlets as needed. The center will depend on the marketing specialist with the Small Farm Outreach, Training and Technical Assistance Program and the Small Farm Development Center for the lead in identifying markets. Beat-4 Cooperative has recently opened a farmers market in Macon on Highway 45 and has requested our assistance. This summer the vegetable grown in our outreach and demonstration plots will be sold to that market. We will help them keep the market supplied. We will also help them to locate produce that they need that are not produced in the area. Farmers also sell their produce to the farmers market on the reservation in Philadelphia, Mississippi.

Source of Funds

Cooperative Extension/State

Scope of Impact

Since opening the center in 1997, Kemper and Winston Counties, eighteen (18) area small farmers have produced 95 acres of vegetable crops at an estimated value of \$109,000. Although it was a dry summer during FY 2002, small farmers has a fairly successful production yield. The profits ranged from eight hundred dollars (\$800.00) to seven thousand dollars (\$7,000.00) respectfully. The center has provided temporary employment for over 25 persons from both counties hence contributing to area economy.

Sustainable Agriculture

Small farmers produced a combination of traditional and alternative agricultural enterprises and incorporated sustainable agricultural practices which resulted in clientele continued increased in farm income.

Impact

In addition to twenty six (26) workshops, nineteen (19) demonstrations, two hundred thirty nine four (234) farm and home visits, eight (8) field days/tours and fourteen (14) group meeting on Sustainable Agriculture Practices were conducted. There were one hundred sixty five (165) small farmers trained on Sustainable Agriculture practices, sixty three (63) small farmers that adopted recommended sustainable practices on field crops and nine hundred forty one (941) small farmers reached with Sustainable Agriculture practices on syrup crops. Also there were three (3) group meetings that trained 12 participants in Sustainable Agriculture proposal writing.

Eighty three (83) small farmers planted five hundred seventy four (574) acres of cover crops. This was a result of four (4) demonstrations, two (2) field days/tours and two hundred ninety two (292) farm and home visits. Nineteen (19) farmers planted grass strips, eighteen (18) planted three thousand four hundred eighty six (3,486) acres of no-till crops.

Our records show that ACEP had two thousand three hundred seventy four (2,374) small farmers farming full time and three thousand five hundred seventeen (3,517) part time farmers in the counties that we serve in FY' 2002. Comparing ACEP agronomy results for FY'2001, there were twenty three thousand nine hundred three (23,903) acres of field crops and one thousand six hundred forty three (1,643) acres of alternative forage and cash crops. The lower acreage amount in FY 2002 is a result of fewer FmHA Farm Business Management Specialist (2501 Program) employed in 2002; thus fewer counties reporting in ACEP program. Because of fewer counties reporting and a mid-summer drought followed by heavy fall rains, the total dollar value to participants is less in FY' 2002.

Source of Funds

Funds expended for this goal for this program was from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

On-farm income was increased by planting a mix of traditional and alternative agricultural enterprises. Programs were primarily implemented in fourteen (14) counties in Southwest Mississippi.

GOAL 5: To enhance economic opportunities and the quality of life among families and communities.

Goal Narrative

Since the mid-1980 there has been a growing recognition that in Mississippi, economic and community development is a major concern. Factors such as underemployment (a measure of economic distress in labor markets; rural residents who work or would like to work), unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, inadequate education, joblessness, welfare dependency, crime, desolate environmental conditions, hopelessness and despair have taken root in rural and urban communities. Mississippi communities continue to struggle through these disruptive forces of socioeconomic conditions. Socioeconomic indicators illustrate that the survival of rural communities in the southwest and lower delta region of Mississippi depends on the development of human capital, as well as economic opportunities for residents and ecological quality of these communities. According to the United States Bureau of Census reports, these communities collectively form pockets of "rural poverty" that are considered the worst in the United States, Mississippi rank among the poorest states in the nation. In fact, the survival of many of these rural communities will be determined to a substantial degree by the negative trends outlined above and by developments yet to unfold.

Creating and implementing economic development strategies is a difficult task. Rural communities are being challenged to link community based organizations, public entities and private business in creating long-term job security for the sociably disadvantaged.

Alcorn Cooperative Extension Program emphasizes management and control over

development, utilizing an holistic approach to solving and recognizing that development is not a fixed state of harmony, but rather a process of change, in which the direction of resources are used toward investments, orientation of technical development, education through outreach, and institutional changes are made consistent with the future, as well as present needs. An educated and well-informed public is the most powerful tool toward positive community growth, sustainability and survival.

Mississippi's demographics are overwhelming, particularly in the southwest and delta region of the state, which harbor the state's highest poverty and unemployment rates. According to a national statistical report released by the Kids Count Project (1995), Mississippi ranks (50th) among all states in caring for children. In all four income categories—median household income, median income of families with children, average annual pay for workers, and per capita personal income—Mississippi ranks last in the nation. Furthermore, 30 of the state's 82 counties have been labeled as “severely distressed neighborhoods or communities with deplorable conditions.

These conditions include: (1) poverty rates above 27.5%, (2) dropout rates above 23.3%, (3) welfare dependency above 17%, (4) male unemployment above 46.5% and (5) high percentages of female-headed households.

Overall, the single greatest inequity seems to be the lack of available, long-term employment, thereby creating dependency on government subsidy and transfer payments. In contrast, the area is rich in abundance of natural resources and thrives economically from its agricultural-based products. However, special attention to public preservation and conservation of these natural resources is not being provided in a coordinate effort and poses a risk of contributing to the deterioration of these natural resources. Consequently, revitalizing these rural communities depends primarily on the development of a more informed, active and responsible citizenry.

The President's Council on Sustainable Development (1997) emphasized that an educated and informed public is our nation's most powerful resource for meeting the challenges created by a decreasing economic tax base, social equity demands, and decadence of natural environment. As consumers and producers, individuals make choices that cumulative have impact on whole communities, economies and environments. Without education through outreach services among the rural public, the societal consensus needed to direct rural communities toward a sustainable path cannot be attained. The target audiences will consist primarily of local government officials, community action groups, visionary “grass-root” leaders, school-age youths and county extension agents who function to serve the local residents. Extension specialist will also provide technical assistance and related services to various economic division (i.e., industrial operations, community development corporations, and home-based businesses) and selected social services organization, churches and school on request. Extension specialist will help rural students (kindergarten through higher education), local volunteers, government officials, educators, and community groups learn about the environment as it rates to their daily lives, through the creation of a community/campus environmental education program.

There is a growing awareness that the problems relating to teen sexuality cannot be addressed with simplistic or superficial methods. Young people must be urged to go beyond the mechanics of sex and discover the beauty of their sexuality in the context of the family, love and commitment. To help people make choices that safeguard their health in the broadest sense, they need more help to live successfully with the choices they have made. The adult community should hold up the values that build character in the individual and maintain stability in the family.

Because there is a decline in the pool of quality workers in the overall youth population,

employers are becoming concerned about the workforce pool for the future. Although the education is available, the delivery and motivational and method have failed to reach the majority of these youth. Which means when they are ready for the employment market they are ill-prepared for the available jobs. There is a mood of fatalism spreading and it is being carved out of poverty, lack of health care, a lack of positive role models and persistent failure in school, which lead to the inability to achieve the degree of knowledge necessary to be productive and successful individuals in today's society; thus, jeopardizing the future of this great nation.

"All children are at risk to some degree." Without help, youth are most vulnerable and many not develop into healthy, productive adults. Prevention and intervention strategies for youth can be developed that will enable them to build skills and abilities that each possesses in order to gain a positive future. These skills can be further nurtured by involving youth in organized community or school based 4-H clubs. A good education, a positive self-image, personal development and employment skills are all essential in the development of a productive individual. If today's youth do not reach their full potential, it will represent a drain on the nation's future economic system and social stability. This is needed to reduce the neglect outcome and focus on the development of health, productive adults. There should be a renewed emphasis and increase investment in all aspects of their lives, with concentrated effort in the areas of youth development, education, leadership and citizenship.

The national plan for investments in the area of school-to-work transitions are centered around apprenticeships for older adolescents. The stages of career development should not be bound by age or developmental stages, nor should it begin with what to do after high school, but it should be a lifelong process. Youth need more opportunities at a very young age to develop aptitudes and values which prepares them to contribute in more positive ways as they enter adulthood.

Families in Mississippi are in need of assistance of coping with the changes in lifestyles of families. Although Mississippi is sparsely populated relative to its rural nature, 11,000 violent crimes were reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Mississippi has a low literacy, high infant mortality and usually high teenage pregnancy rate. Parents are finding it increasingly difficult to deal with the ills of society with assistance and support. The purpose of developing programs is an alternative means of addressing family cohesiveness, decision making, and family violence.

This program will be implemented in three stages: Developing and working with existing basic family support systems which will provide training and assistance for families in self-reliance and empowerment. Further emphasis will be placed on families in the second stage of the program. The role of the family in maintaining the stability of the community will be explored. More importantly, violence in the family will be emphasized to increase the awareness of the dangers of this crisis and to provide families with strategies for combating this social phenomenon.

KEY THEMES:

Parenting Education

The goal of the parenting education program is to assist targeted clients with problems related to parenting. Through a demographic survey, it was found that 75% of the parents participating in the program had concerns with drug usage of their children, how to discipline effectively and what should they do to be an effective parent. Pre/Post Natal Care was also high on the list for assistance, adoption and child separation is of a great concern among high risk parents. A resource manual entitled "Challenges and Principles of Parenting" was developed in

2000. Five brochures have developed to support this manual. Two brochures were developed in 2002.

This manual has a series of 10 lessons and an evaluation to determine the outcome of the training. This manual is in the second year of usage by our clients. To date 513 parents have been trained and have developed skills in working with children. 1000 copies of the effective parenting brochure, which was developed by the family life and child development specialist, have been revised and are currently being used. Videos and publications were provided to ACEP Extension agents for program support and implementation.

Another phrase of the parenting education included early childhood education. The purpose of this parenting education effort was to provide educational information to parents via Web TV. Households who did not have access to a computer was given a Web TV Box and trained how to use it to access the extension Web site and receive training via technology. Only one percent of the families had a computer.

Separation and Attachment for Adopted and/or foster children. This phase of parenting education was done on a request basis from the Department of Human Services. A training manual was developed and perspective parenting was given 15 hours of educational information. This training was a part of their eligibility participation package. Participants were made aware of the symptoms to look for in children that's has recently been separated from their primary environment. Participants were trained in skills to reintroduce children to a primary household.

Impact

Five hundred thirteen (513) clients in thirteen (13) southern Mississippi counties have used this manual. Fifty (50) parents under court order have been advised to take this parenting course. Four hundred (400) parents successfully completed the parenting education training October 1 thru July 21, 2002. As a direct result of community leaders interested in the program, the training was requested in Bolivar County, Yalobusha County, Calhoun County, and Tupelo, Mississippi. Received a seventy-nine thousand dollar (\$79,000) grant to implement a "Nurturing Home Initiative". Thirty (30) families were given a Web TV unit. Thirty-five (35) families received early childhood training via technology. One-hundred and thirty-five (135) children received learning incentives through the program. Ten (10) Safety Gates were given to homes to keep children within a safe learning environment. Thirty-five (35) homes where children were kept were given a safety fire inspections by the state to ensure protection for children. Fifteen (15) smoke detectors and thirty-five (35) fire extinguishers were placed in home that did not previously have them.

Forty (40) participants were given training in the Natchez Regional Medical Center, twenty (20) were given training at the Brookhaven Department of Human Services, and fifteen (15) participants were given training at the Claiborne County Department Human Services.

Sources of Funds

ACEP devoted a total of nine (9) full time FTE's for this effort. Funds expended for this goal for this program was from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) and \$79,000 from the Department of Human Services.

Scope of Impact

Activities conducted and income generated impacted family income and quality of life of the communities in which they live.

Stress Management Education

A resource manual “Stress Identification and Management: Take Control of your Life” were developed by the family life and Child Development Specialist and provided to each of the home economist in the service area of ACEP. Videos and publications were revised and provided by loans to agents for program support and implementation. This program was developed to provide our target population with information to help them deal with stress as it relates to child rearing, marriage, financial situations, unemployment, and stress related to job retainment. Key components of the training manual includes: (1) an introduction to stress, (2) transparencies, (3) a medical basis for stress, (4) stress and brain chemicals, (5) integrative medicine: a guide to stress relief, (6) children, violence and post-traumatic stress, (7) evaluation.

Impact

Thirteen (13) workshops were given to participant in the ACEP service area. One hundred-fifty (150) participants received training. Training was provided in New Orleans, LA to the National Alumni Association (ASU) in February of 2002, one hundred (100) participants received training and provided feedback to the trainer. Twenty (20) staff members of the Natchez Regional Medical Center received training. AARP of Mound Bayou requested and received training for fifty (50) of their members. Extension agents provided additional training after being trained. One support group was formed in Bogue Chitto, MS. A resource manual on coping with grief was developed.

Source of Funds

ACEP devoted a total of nine (9) full time FET’s for this effort. Funds expended for this goal for this program was from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

Activities conducted and income generated impacted family income and quality of life of the communities in which they live.

Teenage Pregnancy Prevention

The purpose of this program is to decrease the incidence of pregnancy among the youth population. In the state of Mississippi there is a notable decline in the number of out of wedlock pregnancies among women between the ages of 17-20. However, teen pregnancy among girls between the ages of 9-12 has increased. In addition to teen pregnancy, risky behavior among teens has caused an increase in HIV infections. Extension has and will continue to provide good decision making skills to parents and their children.

Impact

Three hundred (300) females between the ages of 16-19 were given training in the thirteen (13) counties served by ACEP. One hundred (100) males between the ages of 16-20 were provided training in teenage pregnancy prevention.

Source of Funds

ACEP devoted a total of nine (9) full time FTE’s for this effort. Funds expended for this goal for this program was sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000) from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

Activities conducted and income generated impacted family income and quality of life of the communities in which they live.

Communitiversity Program Integration

Five (5) proposals were written to assist local communities to help themselves. Each proposal was directly related to the strengthening of the family unit. However, only two of the proposals were funded.

1. Post Employment Job Assistance for low income families (not funded)
2. Job Training for welfare recipients (TNAF) (not funded)
3. Nurturing Home Initiative for At-Risk Families (not funded)
4. Family Mentoring in Employment Assistance for At-Risk Families in Jefferson County (Funded \$100,000)
5. Post Employment Job Assistance for low income families in Franklin County (funded \$223,000)

Impact

Three hundred (300) families are currently being given employment assistance in Franklin and Jefferson County. Twenty-five (25) workshops were held in the two (2) counties serviced by ACEP. Evaluation of the program is in process. Programs do not end until September 2002.

Source of Funds

ACEP devoted a total of nine (9) full time FTE's for this effort. Funds expended for this goal for this program was sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000) from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

Activities conducted and income generated impacted family income and quality of life of the communities in which they live.

Children, Youth, and Families at Risk

The Extension Specialists and Extension Agents conducted group meetings, workshops, field days, day camps, and youth summits in the local public school systems and communities on Teenage Pregnancy Prevention, Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD's/HIV/AIDS), Career Development/Workforce Preparedness, Tobacco Prevention and Education and 4-H and Youth Development.

Impact

During FY 2002, three thousand and one hundred eighty-four (3,184) youth and one hundred seventy-five (175) parents participated in forty-seven (47) Teen Pregnancy Prevention group meetings and workshops. In general, the overall effectiveness of the program was assessed using pre-post test designed by the teen pregnancy curriculum "Becoming A Responsible Teen (B.A.R.T.), and Project SNAPP". In the area of teen pregnancy this year, we experienced a twenty-three percent (23%) reduction in the number of youth that became pregnant. There has been a noticeable decline in the 14 counties served by the Alcorn Cooperative Extension Program (ACEP) and the state of Mississippi. From the pre-post test

over 49% of the youth who participated in the various workshops said they would postpone sexual activity until marriage or until they were in a committed relationship. Most of the objectives were met in the various workshops.

In the area that relates to Youth Health Issues, there were fifty-four (54) group meetings conducted on Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD's) and AIDS Awareness. Three thousand seventy one (3,071) youth and three hundred forty-eight (348) adults participated in these programs in ten (10) local schools and seven (7) community centers. To determine the effectiveness of this program, the evaluation tool developed with the Project SNAPP curriculum was used. According to objectives of the program, the main thrust of these workshops were to promote awareness and provide knowledge that dealt with the transmission and prevention of STD's. According to the post-test, sixty-six percent (66%) of the youth participating in the workshops understood how STD's and HIV/AIDS are transmitted and prevented.

Source of Funds

The Alcorn Cooperative Extension Program devoted a total of (1.2) FET's to the accomplishment of this education program implemented under Goal 5. Funds expended for this goal consist of forty seven thousand one hundred sixty one dollars (\$47,161) from section 1444 of the National Agriculture Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) and \$13,205 of state matching funds.

Scope of Impact

Program efforts were concentrated in the 14 Southwest Mississippi counties served by The Cooperative Extension Program. The targeted audience was middle and high school students.

Human Health

The Alcorn Cooperative Extension Program, along with the Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi conducted a Tobacco Prevention and Education Project entitled "Project STAR". The program was designed to reduce the number of youth smokers in Southwest Mississippi.

Impact

In FY 2002, five thousand eight hundred (5,800) youth participated in eighty-eight (88) workshops. Twelve (12) Tobacco Education Day Camps were conducted in six (6) Southwest Mississippi Counties and two (2) North Mississippi counties with one thousand four hundred ninety (1490) youth participating. Two Youth Tobacco Summits were conducted on the campus of Alcorn State University, one hundred seventy-five (175) elementary school students and one hundred seventy-five (175) high school students attended the two summits. Twelve (12) Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) with seventy three (75) members, eleven (11) Allies Middle School Tobacco Teams with one hundred six (106) members, fourteen (14) frontline tobacco education teams with two hundred sixty-five (265) members. Five hundred forty four (544) youth participated in thirty seven (37) organized tobacco education teams in Southwest Mississippi and North Mississippi. All of the objectives were either satisfied or exceeded. A special note, the sessions on self-esteem and decision making sessions and activities was considered to be the most influencing by the participants primarily because these sessions offered real life resolution and interaction to internal conflicts faced by the targeted population.

Source of Funds

The Alcorn Cooperative Extension Program devoted a total of one (1) FTE to the accomplishment of the educational programs implemented under Goal 5. Funds expended for this goal consist of eleven thousand four dollars (\$11,004) from section 1444 of the National Agriculture Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), eleven thousand four dollars (\$11,004) of state matching funds and one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for the Mississippi State Legislature and Mississippi Attorney Generals Office.

Scope of Impact

Programs were concentrated in the fourteen (14) counties served by the Alcorn Cooperative Extension program. The targeted audiences were elementary, middle, and high school students.

Workforce-Youth and Adult

The Youth Development Specialist developed a Career Development curriculum entitled “The Working Class” to provide educational information to middle and high school students.

Impact

The Alcorn Cooperative Extension Staff conducted eighty-nine (89) Career Development/Workforce Preparedness workshops in the local junior high, high schools, and vo-tech centers. Four thousand two hundred ninety (4,290) youth and three hundred ninety (390) adults participated in the Career Development/Workforce Preparedness Program, “The Working Class”. The program involved the extension staff, teaching faculty, and local businesses. The Career Development/Workforce Preparedness Program was successful. Ninety percent (90%) of the youth that participated in this program could accurately complete a letter of application, a resume, and two types of applications and successfully completed the interviewing process. The number of students who successfully completed the portfolios and two successful interview sessions assessed the effectiveness of this program.

Source of Funds

The Alcorn Cooperative Extension Program devoted a total of two (2) FTE’s to the accomplishment of educational programs implemented under Goal 5. Funds expended for this goal consists of seventy eight thousand six hundred two dollars (\$78,602) from section 1444 of the National Agriculture Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) and twenty two thousand nine dollars (\$22,009) of state matching funds.

Scope of Impact

Program efforts were concentrated in the five (5) counties served by the Alcorn Cooperative Extension Program. The targeted audiences were middle and high school students in tech prep, business and communication classes and vocational education programs.

4-H Youth Development

Through the efforts of the Extension Agents and the Youth Specialist, various youth development programs and activities were conducted. Also several 4-H community and school-based clubs have been organized.

Impact (Youth Development)

Other activities building self-esteem and self-imaging enjoyed an equal degree of success. Eighty-two (82) group meetings and workshops were conducted on building self esteem for youth and adults. One thousand six hundred eight (1,608) youth and one hundred eighty seven (187) adults participated. These programs were designed to improve youth self-concept; a pre/post test was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Thirty percent (30%) of the youth participants stated that they felt better about themselves.

Impact (4-H)

The 4-H Youth Development Program through the efforts of the Extension Youth Agents have organized fifteen (15) community-based youth clubs with one hundred seventy-five (175) members enrolled and eleven (11) school based clubs with three hundred seventy-five (375) enrolled. Five (5) volunteer leader trainings were conducted for sixty (60) volunteer leaders. Fifty-nine (59) youth attended the Southwest District Project Achievement Day and forty (40) youth attended State 4-H Congress.

These programs will continue into FY'03 in the fourteen (14) counties served by The Alcorn Cooperative Extension Program.

Source of Funds

The Alcorn Cooperative Extension Program devoted a total of one (1) FTE to the accomplishment of educational programs implemented under Goal 5. Funds expended for this goal consist of thirty nine thousand three hundred one (\$39,301) from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) and eleven thousand four dollars (\$11,004) of state matching funds.

Scope of Impact

Program efforts were concentrated in the fourteen (14) counties in Southwest Mississippi served by the Alcorn Cooperative Extension Program. The targeted audiences for 4-H Youth Development were youth ages 5-18 years of age in various schools and communities.

Clothing and Textiles

The clothing specialist in Family and Consumer Sciences developed a "Kids Clothing Camp" resource manual. Self-esteem and clothing enhancement (SECE) program was established in several counties this year. The overall goal of SECE was to introduce youth and adults to career options helping them acquire skills and self-confidence through the study of clothing, textile and related activities. Additionally three hundred eighty seven (387) high school students were recruited to participate in the Family and Consumer Science Clothing Study. The students were introduced to the following subjects: Clothing selections' technique, personal development, money management, appearance and fitness workshops. Each program was designed to be instrumental in enhancing student's self-esteem, entrepreneurship possibilities, and psychological effects of external and internal body coverings. The main focus of the clothing program is to address the needs of limited resources by empowering the individual to become self-sufficient.

Impact

During FY'2001/2002, the clothing and textile specialist and agents conducted seventy-four (74) workshops, developed five brochures, and published two (2) biannual newsletters that were disseminated to six hundred (600) youths and four hundred (400) adults.

Source of Funds

Funds expended for this goal for this program was from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

The self-esteem and clothing enhancement program efforts were concentrated in the southern region of the state, prioritizing TNAF recipients, industry, and high school students.

Community and Economic Development

Since the turn of the new millennium, Mississippi Economic and Community Development indicators show a continuous decline in its growth factors. Factors such as underemployment (a measure of economic disasters in labor markets, rural residents who work or would like to work) unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, inadequate education, tnaf recipients, crime, and environmental conditions that is rooted in rural Mississippi counties.

According to the latest US Census Data, these communities continuously form pockets of “Rural Poverty”, that are considered the worst in the State of Mississippi.

Through ACEP/CRD community focus effects, special attention and resources are being provided. Consequently, revitalizing these rural communities depends primarily on the development of a more informed and responsive citizenry.

Impact

During FY’2002, the community and economic development specialist conducted 4 county needs assessment with one-hundred (100) participants. The assessment were administered to twenty-five (25) local board of supervisors/aldermen, twenty-five (25) local businesses, twenty-five (25) community leaders (mover and shakers) and twenty-five (25) Faith-based organizational leaders. It was determined from these assessment that there is a critical need for strategic planning, grant writing and methods of attracting industry to local communities. The community and economic development specialist conducted seventeen (17) educational workshops that focus on advisory committees roles within the community and Estates Planning. There were ten (10) brochures, fifty (50) news releases developed and disseminated within the service area.

While promoting economic diversification within the small and poor communities the community and economic specialist conducted three (3) practitioners completed the course. There were twenty-four (24) ACEP/CRD Community Partnership Tools Kits disseminated and one (1) volunteer leader educational brochure developed. These efforts resulted in two (2) county receiving grants funding in the amount sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000.00).

The community and Economic Development specialist placed special emphasis on developing rural entrepreneurship among youth and communities. The following educational activities were conducted: Five (5) rural entrepreneurship workshops were held with seven hundred and twenty-one (721) youth participating. These workshops resulted in exposing youth to skills needed in financial management, career development, self-esteem and leadership. Six (6) community conferences were held involving Mississippi Business Alliance. Mississippi Manufactures and Nissan Auto Manufactures. These efforts resulted in ten (10) new start-up businesses in the service area.

Source of Funds

Funds expended for this goal for this program was from section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA).

Scope of Impact

Alcorn State Cooperative Extension/Community Resource Development Office continuing programmatic activities and efforts are rebuilding and revitalizing rural communities. These targeted communities show income increases which impacts family incomes and the quality of their lives.

STAKEHOLDER INPUTS

The Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program embraces the involvement of its stakeholders.– the major one beings the taxpayers. Accountability to them and results for the customers are the two (2) dominant factors , having expectations of reasonable returns from their investments. The implementation of Town Hall Meeting give these stakeholders the opportunity to voice concerns and offer suggestions on program efforts and services.

During FY' 2002, despite budget shortfalls, efforts to address stakeholders needs continued. The following issues were reviewed and discussed to determine the most effective method of approach:

- Lack of faith based organizational support
- More programs geared toward parents and child relationships
- Need to employ more subject matter specialists and agents in the fourteen (14) counties service area of responsibility
- More health awareness programs
- More innovative programs geared toward youth
- Locating and identifying markets for agriculture enterprises