

# **FY 2004 Annual Report of Accomplishments and Results**

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**Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program**

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# **Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program**

## **A. Introduction**

Alcorn State University's Cooperative Extension Program is the conduit through which educational agendas are directed toward small farmers and other limited-resource residents of communities. Its plan of work is driven by the concept of "Providing Education to Help People Help Themselves" through the development of rapid response delivery of educational programs that impart relevant information and address the issues and concerns of citizens of communities especially in the Southwest and Delta counties of Mississippi.

The Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program (ASU/CEP) at the state level consists of state specialists designing, developing and implementing educational programs, events and activities in the areas of Agriculture, Nutrition & Health, Community Resource Development, 4-H and Youth Development, and Family Life and Child Development. At the county level, its county staff arrangements and delivery system have expanded its educational programming efforts to serve 30 counties including three off-campus demonstration centers, an on-campus model farm, and a farmer's market.

Its outreach centers have various multi-focus educational approaches addressing relevant issues specific to geographic areas of the state. In the southwest part of the state is the Natchez Marketplace which provides an accessible market to limited-resource farmers and homemakers so they may sell vegetables, produce and value added products such as jam and jellies to consumers. (The Alcorn State University Cooperative Extensive Program partnered with the City of Natchez on this project.) In the North Delta region, the Marks Processing Plant provides limited-resource farmers the opportunity to process different types of vegetable crops and valued-added products to enhance their potential income.

In the east central part of the state is the Small Farm Incubator Center that enables farmers during the first year of the program to gain educational knowledge and training about alternative vegetable production and marketing on demonstration plots at the center to enable them to transition their educational knowledge to their own farming operation. In the northwest region is the Mount Bayou Research and Extension Demonstration Center that focuses on demonstration plots of alternative vegetable crops specific to this region of the state to explore how to produce the maximum yields to enhance farmers' and producers' incomes. At Alcorn State University, the model farm center primarily focuses on conservation practices utilizing crop rotation on demonstration plots of vegetable crops to explore ways to enhance farmers and producers income.

The ASU/CEP has moved into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with technological advancement and the capacity of delivering a structured approach to community engagement that advances learning outcomes and developing leaders who practice their disciplines with the highest sense of ethics and civic responsibility.

## **MISSION**

To improve the quality of life for limited-resource audiences through education in a time of dynamic change.

## **VISION**

The Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program is a premier Extension Center of Excellence for limited-resource audiences. It is a proactive, responsive and collaborative learning organization, committed to the growth and development of people through life-long learning.

## **OUR CORE VALUES**

- Learning
- Collaboration
- Accountability
- Accessibility
- Innovativeness
- Inclusiveness

The ASU/CEP makes its programs available to all residents of the State of Mississippi in collaboration with Mississippi State University without regard for race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion or handicap.

The ASU/CEP utilizes citizens' and stakeholders' inputs through advisory committees, town hall meetings, focus groups and a dialogue with local government officials to set program priorities, allocate resources, and evaluate program outcome.

Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program encourages imaginative, original, and inventive analysis in the creation and delivery of its educational programs.

## **B. Planned Programs Accomplishment Report**

**Goal 1: To enhance global participation, competitiveness, and profitability of agricultural producers, especially family farmers, non-traditional producers, and those who lack adequate economic and social resources.**

### **Goal Narrative**

According to the 2002 census of agriculture, 72% of all farms in the U.S. have an annual gross income of \$40,000 or less. In Mississippi, there are nearly 35,000 farms that fall into that category, accounting for 82% of the total farms in the state. Such farms range from 13 to 650 acres. The sustainability of small farms is dependent upon the farmer's ability to minimize risk in a number of managerial areas and perform at a level that generates profits sufficient to keep the land in production 12 months of the year. According to the most recent census for the state of Mississippi, the number of limited-resource farmers has declined up to three times more than non-limited resource farmers. The major factors leading to the decline of small farmers include, but are not limited to: 1) poor management; 2) shortage of capital; 3) lack of availability of markets; 4) limited knowledge of available USDA programs and 5) lack of enterprise diversification; .

The ASU/CEP has made significant contributions to the agriculture industry in the state of Mississippi. These efforts are designed to improve the quality of life for limited-resource, small family farmers and producers. Major educational program emphasis is being placed on risk management education and sustainable agriculture. The goal of the 2501 Project is to identify, develop and promote successful risk management strategies that small/limited-resource, socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers can utilize to remain economically viable in a rapidly changing agricultural environment. The ASU/CEP is currently working with small/limited-resource farmers and ranchers in adopting modern farm management techniques, and the development of alternative enterprises in order to improve farm income and quality of life through minimizing risk. These efforts are being addressed through educational programs, activities and events. In order for small farmers to sustain themselves in the fast changing farming industry, strategies must be developed to identify a combination of high cash value alternative and traditional agricultural enterprises that will provide significant net return.

Resources of the ASU/CEP over the past year have been devoted to implementing educational programs, activities and events designed to assist small farmers and their families in becoming more viable and competitive. For instance the production of beef cattle and goats make up a large percentage of the production in Mississippi because small and part-time farms are very suitable for these enterprises. Greater revenue can be realized from livestock production by improving forage crop production. The quality of livestock produced is directly related to quality of forage produced. Forage crop production by small farmers has traditionally been of low quality and yield because of native species and poor fertility.

A focus of ASU/CEP has been on the improvement of production, harvesting, processing and marketing of syrup crops that could make syrup crops more profitable and more desirable as an alternative crop. Farm income needs to increase in order to raise many small farmers above the poverty level. Alternative crops like sweet sorghum and sugar cane for syrup can increase farm income.

Sweet sorghum and sugar cane for syrup have been crops traditionally grown in the state. Low prices, aging producers/processors and the above mentioned reasons reduced this enterprise to bare existence by 1995. Traditionally processors have packaged syrup in large metal cans, which are unattractive and too large for the modern consumers. Many counties do not have syrup processing plants available for the new and few remaining syrup producers. There is an immediate need to create interest and train young producers and processors in this alternative enterprise. New and existing producers/processors need to master production, harvesting and marketing skills, and value added practices that are capable of making these syrup crops a very profitable enterprise. Existing syrup producers and processors are not connected with each other or with the consumer because there are no associations, mailing lists or annual events that bring these individuals together. Because of this disconnect, educational information, technology, and marketing strategies are not shared within the state.

**Goal 1: Planned Program Overview**

The following are planned programs included under Goal 1. The specific program subject areas for Agriculture & Natural Resources planned programs area are included in the chart. The subject areas are: Agronomy, Animal Science/Forage, Forest Management, Horticulture, Risk/Farm Management, and Syrup Production/Processing/Marketing.

Output activities under this goal are provided in the table below.

<b>Planned Program Area /Subject Area</b>	<b>Extension Events</b>	<b>Extension Contacts</b>
Agronomy	82	3,147
Animal Science/Forage	322	6,276
Forest Management	104	3,817
Horticulture	202	3,348
Risk/Farm Management	214	3,804
Syrup Prod/Proc/Marketing	98	2,872

## Overall Estimated Expenditures for Goal 1

Function	FTE		Expenditures	
	Federal	State	Federal	State
Extension Program	6.39	4.17	\$ 489,082.04	\$ 319,559.37

Progress toward intermediate and long-term outcomes and impacts for ongoing programs for Goal 1 are documented under the following key themes.

### Key Theme: Small Farm Viability

a. The severe decline of small farms, particularly minority-owned farms, is generally attributed to their size. Because of their small size, many small farmers are unable to use modern machinery efficiently, and therefore are unable to earn adequate income from the traditional agronomic crops (corn, rice, soybeans and cotton). Therefore, new knowledge that enables small farmers to use management techniques that reduce capital expenditures and capture a larger share of the food market is being disseminated. This knowledge includes production and distribution practices of horticultural crops (such as vegetables that utilize low inputs and other inputs that can be derived from on-farm biological resources) and marketing strategies for the commodities produced.

b. During the past growing season, information about horticultural crops were disseminated to small farmers about basic production practices, pesticide usage, disease control, crop rotation and marketing techniques. During the past growing season 16 demonstrations were conducted at both the demonstration farms and the participating farmers' fields. The on-farm demonstrations afforded the opportunity to use the farmers' fields as laboratories where other farmers and homemakers could receive hands-on experience on the activities related to best practices.. Approximately, 50 farm visits /group meetings and a field day were conducted during the past year. Hence, three grower association cooperatives were organized to assist small farmers in pooling their resources together. About 400 limited resource farmers increased their awareness and knowledge of best management production practices. In addition, about 300 farmers adopted best management practices that optimized income. As a result, approximately \$115,000 was generated from the sale of greens, \$80,000 from peas and \$150,000 from the sale of sweet potatoes.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy of 1977 (NARETPA) and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific educational programs, events and activities that had a positive impact on limited resource farmers and their quality of life. These farmers live in small farm communities located in 29 Mississippi counties, 14 of which are in Southwest Mississippi.

### **Key Theme: Risk Management**

a. Farmers will continue to face significant challenges in maintaining farm operations and sustaining the growth of their business. Research has shown that small farmers have 1) restricted income generating capability; 2) low production yields; 3) higher input costs; 4) limited managerial capability; and 5) limited access to credit. Small farmers of Mississippi are experiencing financial difficulties, which have led to bankruptcies, foreclosures, land loss and stressful emotional conditions which have had a significant impact on their quality of life.

The Alcorn State University Small Farmer Outreach Training and Technical Assistance Program (known as the 2501 Project) has provided numerous educational programs, events and activities for small and limited-resource farmers throughout the state of Mississippi. The impact from these programs and technical assistance has continued to contribute to the improvement in the management and efficiency of small farm businesses resulting in an enhanced quality of life for many Mississippi residents.

b. In FY 2004, the 2501 Project provided educational program and technical assistance utilizing the Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program's agents and outreach centers. In all, 1,457 small farmers participated in the educational programs conducted in the area of farm management. Participants received two comprehensive training programs (each lasting six weeks) in the areas of business management, financial management, crop production and livestock production.

A total of 25 limited-resource farmers participated and graduated. These participants were loan holders and potential loan holders of USDA Farm Service Agency and Alcorn State Small Farm Development Center... By participating in the training, the participants will have met the agencies' requirement of having a select number of hours per credit hour in their area of production as well as in financial management and record keeping.

Overall, 49 farm visits were made to provide technical assistance on farm management and a total of 27 loans were prepared for small farmers to support their farm businesses which totaled \$2,034,000..

The Small Farmer Outreach Training and Technical Assistance Project also co-sponsored the Small Farm Field Day at the ASU/CEP Small Farm Incubator Center in Preston, Mississippi. This field day introduced farmers, ranchers and potential farmers to new types of alternative enterprises that require minimal input. These sessions were introductions to enterprises that deviate from traditional crop production but will have a greater return potential on profits based on acreages. There were 142 people in attendance who received such information.



In FY 2004, the 2501 Project co-sponsored a Small Family Farm and Women in Business Conference. The conference included a series of educational workshops that dealt with risk management, financial and production management of alternative enterprises, business development, entrepreneurship and women in business. This conference provided an avenue for small/limited-resource farmers to interact and connect with state and federal agencies involved in agricultural areas ranging from financing and cost sharing conservation to crop and livestock production. Approximately 290 interested small farmers, business owners and other individuals in attendance obtained educational information.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy of 1977 (NARETPA) and state matching funds.

d. The Small Farm Outreach Project provides state-specific technical assistance to nine Delta counties and 14 counties in Southwest Mississippi including tested farm management techniques, farm planning, profitable alternatives, and farm and non-farm enterprises. The project also disseminates technical assistance to clients outside of targeted counties upon request.

#### **Key Theme: Animal Production Efficiency**

a. Small livestock producers in Claiborne County do not grow their own hay and winter grain for their animals. Statistics show that 35% of cattle producers purchase their hay from other sources; this practice increases input costs for production. The limiting factor is that 65% of small producers do not own or have access to hay equipment. As a spin off from the Field Day event, ASU/CEP provided technical assistance to small livestock producers that were interested in improving pasture soil fertility, planting winter grasses and grains, and acquiring farm loans to purchase equipment. To help evaluate each farm, ASU veterinarians provided expertise in animal production to land owners.

b. Beef cattle producers in Claiborne County cut 35% of their input costs for production by planting improved varieties of ryegrass and winter grains. A total of 12 producers have incorporated hay testing analysis, annual soil testing for pastures and rotational grazing as part of their management procedures. One producer was awarded a FSA loan to purchase hay equipment which has cut this producer's input costs for production.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy of 1977 (NARETPA) and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Animal Production Efficiency (Beef Cattle)**

- a. A beef cattle and hay producer in Claiborne County grew up on a family farm where his father raised cattle, soybeans and hay on 200 acres successfully. This farmer always had a knack for farming since he had assisted his father for many years. This farmer attended and participated in various production workshops given by ASU/CEP and gained knowledge about opportunities available for a beginner farmer. His goal was to purchase land suitable for raising beef cattle and hay and to build a new home for his family. The farmer is very knowledgeable of the cattle industry and is committed to being a successful young farmer and an example for others to follow. His intent is to rear his children on the farm just as his father had done and to be a good steward of the land. As a young farmer he was interested in acquiring capital to purchase additional farm acreage, to learn about superior beef cattle genetics, and to improve his livelihood by building a home. He contacted the Alcorn State Cooperative Extension Program to get technical assistance to help put together a farm plan and loan application that would provide him with adequate cash flow. With the assistance of the 2501 Project, he evaluated sales receipts and records from previous years of farming which helped him to determine the overall farm loan amount to be borrowed from the Farm Service Agency.
- b. This farmer was awarded \$60,000 from the Farm Service Agency to purchase land (100 acres), equipment and cattle to improve his farm. He is now raising quality animals and marketing hay to other producers in Claiborne County. He was also able to build a home for his family on the new farm site. He is grateful to ASU/CEP for the support and assistance that he received which enabled him to get funded to achieve his goals.
- c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy of 1977 (NARETPA) and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).
- d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Animal Production Efficiency**

- a. In Lincoln County, many small and minority farmers are below the national poverty level. Livestock can provide an additional income source. Many livestock producers do not have the managerial skills necessary to operate livestock operations efficiently. Stakeholders in the farming community held a forum meeting to target areas of need. It was indicated that many small and minority farmers cannot afford quality livestock which can provide a positive income.
- b. A group named Bogue Chitto Self Help has formed. Its members are hoping to purchase beef cattle, goats, and rabbits through the Heifer International project. This diversification can increase positive incomes.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available) .

d. State specific.

**Key Theme: Forestry Management Program**

a. Forestry is big business in Mississippi. Approximately 66% of the forests in Mississippi are owned by private non-industrial land owners. Small and disadvantaged forestry land owners in Mississippi may be able to enhance their incomes by becoming more aware of forestry issues and resources.

b. Small forestry land owners are being served through the Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program in cooperation with the Alcorn State University Outreach Forestry Program. Small forest landowners have the opportunity to participate in forestry programs, workshops, field days, and forestry tours. As a result of the Underserved Small Farmer Forestry Outreach and Technical Assistance Program, 750 landowners were provided with information on forestry assistance during FY 2004. About 300 forest management plans were written for small forest landowners. A total of about 100 small forest landowners sold timber totaling 212,735 acres and generating an average income of \$60,000 for each family in FY 2004. Activities being conducted are geared toward improving the quality of life and increasing the economic base of communities within the service area.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy of 1977 (NARETPA) and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available) along with Mississippi Forestry Commission and state funds.

d. State specific.

**Key Theme: Forestry Management Program**

a. Simpson County is primarily an agricultural county with a population of 27,639. The

U.S. Census (2000) revealed that the county is comprised of about 270,000 acres of forestland. Of that figure, 210,000 acres are owned by private landowners. Major areas of concern are: lack of productive planting of idle acres, poor marketing practices, and improper management of established stands, poor seedling survival, and grass and weed control. Based upon this situation, forestry meetings were conducted to address and improve these areas of concerns. In these meetings, issues such as timber stand establishment, thinning techniques for pine plantation, timber marketing, herbicide use, forestry and wildlife, and taxation were discussed.

b. As a result of these meetings and programs. A total of several hundred thousand

dollars has been gained for some producers. Approximately 80% of the contacts made resulted in increased income for small forestland owners.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy of 1977 (NARETPA) (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

**Key Theme: Animal Production Efficiency**

a. Beef cattle producers in Claiborne County are often plagued by low market prices because of insufficient herd health practices. A total of 32% of cattle producers in Claiborne County do not have a herd health plan for their operation. A total of 25% neglect their pastures annually by not planting grass for summer and winter nutrition and have low soil fertility due to overgrazing. When providing technical assistance on financial management, 40% of the beef producers do not have adequate farm records to determine if their operation is profitable. This has caused some producers to go out of production. Another factor that has plagued producers, is control breeding.

After conducting demonstrations and providing technical assistance to beef producers, the ASU/CEP and the ASU animal veterinarian planned a Beef/Forage Field Day that assisted producers with the overall production of beef cattle. The field day was designed to provide hands-on training which allowed producers to have an active role in learning herd health techniques such as vaccinations, dehorning, reproduction management, soil fertility and record keeping.

b. As a result of the Field Day, 15 producers have adopted a herd health plan for their operation. A total of 36 producers are now planting winter forages for their animals. Overall beef production has improved among small landowners due to better record keeping and sounder financial decisions. A total of 12 producers are currently submitting hay samples for basic analysis on TDN, crude protein, Dry Matter percentage and NDF. A total of 83 producers attended the Field Day.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy of 1977 (NARETPA) and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

**Key Theme: Value-Added Agricultural Products**

a. There is a heightened interest in dairy goat production and its value-added products. Many consumers with health problems are seeking sources of fresh goat milk. Farmers markets are continually seeking out vendors with alternative enterprise products including value added items such as fresh goat cheese, soaps, lotions, etc. Producers in Pike and

Walthall counties are also seeking to set up alternative enterprises of this kind. This is in light of a declining dairy industry, rising fresh milk prices and increased costs for producing dairy products. A dairy goat tour to the only Grade A dairy goat farm in Mississippi was planned and implemented as a means for producers to learn the process from goat to cheese five producers/potential producers learned the process and was also made aware of health department regulations. These individuals were able to purchase several different varieties of cheese and were interested in returning for a future workshop in cheese making.

b. As a result of the tour, there were some producers that purchased goats to use as an alternative enterprise for the value added cheese production from goat's milk.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy of 1977 (NARETPA) and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

#### **Key Theme: Alternative Agriculture**

a. A third-generation farmer from Darling, Mississippi, decided that he was going to stop farming. He decided that he had had enough. But the process of working with the land and smelling the soil was something that he couldn't erase. So he decided to get back into farming. When he was growing up, his father was the point man for a huge okra cooperative. Having knowledge of okra production as an excellent crop to make money, he decided to grow this crop. He requested information from the ASU/CEP concerning okra production. He wanted to make sure that he did everything correctly to get the full potential out of his initial investment.

b. The farmer planted his crop, and worked with the crop to the best of his ability. He enlisted the help of the ASU/CEP to help with problems as they occurred and also to help with some marketing issues. He sold okra all summer long to various vendors in North Mississippi and Tennessee which quadrupled his income.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy of 1977 (NARETPA) and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

#### **Key Theme: Adding value to old Agricultural Products**

a. Each year, Pike and Walthall counties continue to lose the valuable expertise of seasoned syrup makers. Most of our youth have not had the opportunity to be introduced to the art of syrup processing. Current producers are not making the most from their products by using value-added practices. Conducting yearly syrup processing and

marketing demonstrations allows potential new producers to gain experience at processing syrup and gives everyone who attends exposure to this dying art. Producers who order containers collectively and use strategic marketing practices may then demand premium returns for their product.

b. This year's demonstration attracted well over 50 people and gave at least three individuals the opportunity to gain syrup processing experience. At least two others have built their own set up and are learning by doing at their own farms. Two youths have applied for FSA Youth Loans to build portable business processing syrup for a fee.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy of 1977 (NARETPA) and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific

### **Key Theme: Niche Market**

a. Southwest Mississippi is not known for the production of catfish. Farmer(s) producing catfish find it difficult to raise and market their catfish in the Delta counties as well. The average cost for trucking the catfish is \$1.50 per mile one way. Finding individuals with the seining knowledge and the harvesting of catfish is an issue in this area.. Accepting the challenge, the ASUEP agent, along with other specialists, received training in catfish production. After the harvesting of catfish several times, the agent and specialists found that the prices were too low because of foreign prices and the cost of transporting the catfish. Since the process was marginally profitable, the farmer(s) declined to market their catfish in this manner.

b. The farmer(s) decided to start a fee fishing program. The farmer(s) also began to invest in a small scale processing plant so that they can create a niche market by selling live and processed catfish.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy of 1977 (NARETPA) and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Niche Market**

a. Small farmers have traditionally struggled to make inroads into the mainstream agricultural system as it relates to traditional and non-traditional crops. However, small farmers are a viable force in shaping economic development at the community level. While small farms have difficulty competing with large farms that supply most of the national and international food markets, they can compete by supplying local and regional food markets. In order for small farmers to survive in the fast changing farming industry,

strategies are needed to identify and produce high value fruit and vegetable crops that will reward small farm families for their labor and management skills. Through a cooperative venture between the Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program and the City of Natchez, Mississippi, the Main Street Marketplace was established. The Marketplace now provides an outlet for small farm producers and small farm families to increase and/or supplement their incomes through the sale of fresh fruits, vegetables, crafts, and other consumer goods. WIC recipients in the area also are able to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables from the market which aids in augmenting their diets with healthy foods.

b. Six farmers supplemented their income from the sale of fruits and vegetables in the amount of approximately \$4,300.00. Also, farm families were selling other valued-added products and crafts at the market totaling approximately \$1,750.00. This market can be a major component in the regeneration and elevation of downtown commerce. Its potential is immeasurable in terms of economic impact and community development.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy of 1977 (NARETPA) and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Animal Production Efficiency (Swine)**

a. Swine production and marketing have proven to be an excellent alternative farm enterprise among land owners in Southwest Mississippi. Producers would often raise feeder pigs (45-65 lbs.) to be marketed through livestock auctions to increase farm income. The ASU/CEP has assisted 15 producers to raise quality hogs despite low market prices which have forced the majority of swine producers in Mississippi out of business. Old-fashioned hog slaughters on the farm are still popular because of the rising pork prices in grocery stores.

The Alcorn State University Swine Center in Church Hill, MS has continued to provide quality animals for swine production in Southwest Mississippi at a low cost to producers. With that being the case, four producers purchased hogs to be used for breeding, reproduction and home consumption. Because there is no local swine market, small producers in Mississippi, with ASU/CEP assistance, often sell their animals in Monroe, Louisiana.

b. As a result, 42 hogs were marketed at 55 cents per pound with the average hog weighing 185 pounds. Also, six hogs were slaughtered on the farm and yielded 35 pounds of sausage and other prime cuts of pork.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy of 1977 (NARETPA) and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

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

**Goal Narrative**

Many of the health problems that plague Mississippians are the result of microbial pathogens in food that cause an estimated 6.5 to 33 million cases of human illness and up to 9,000 deaths in the United States each year. Over 40 different food-borne microbial pathogens, including fungi, viruses, parasites, and bacteria, are believed to cause human illnesses. For six bacterial pathogens, the costs of human illness are estimated to be \$9.3 to \$12.9 billion annually. Of these costs, \$2.9 to \$6.7 billion is attributed to food-borne bacteria.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates there are between 60 and 80 million cases of food-borne illnesses like salmonella each year. According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, nearly one-third of all food-borne illnesses start in the home. About 36 percent of food-borne illnesses in the home result from "cross contamination." That means contaminated cutting boards, counters or utensils are not properly disinfected or sanitized before the preparation of foods eaten raw such as fruits or vegetables (Source: American Society of Microbiology).

More than 200 known diseases are transmitted through food. The causes of food-borne illness include viruses, bacteria, parasites, toxins, metals, and the symptoms of food-borne illness range from mild gastroenteritis to life-threatening neurological, hepatic, and renal syndromes.

Data indicates that there have been significant improvements in recent years in food safety-related consumer behavior. People have continued to be at a lesser risk of eating raw foods. More people are washing their hands before eating, and food handlers are washing hands, wearing gloves and washing cutting boards/food preparation areas to prevent dangerous cross-contamination between foods. The 2.6 million citizens of Mississippi spend approximately \$8.1 billion each year on food. The major causes of food borne-illness are improper cooling, cooking, holding and reheating practices. The National Center for Health Statistics/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provided a summation of progress achieved in meeting the targets of selected objectives in the Food Safety focus area.

**Goal 2: Planned Program Overview**

The following are planned programs included under Goal 2. The specific program subject area for the Nutrition and Health program area is included in the chart. The subject area is Food Safety.



Output activities under this goal are provided in the table below.

Planned Program Area /Subject Area	Extension Events	Extension Contacts
Food Safety	932	16,632

### Overall Estimated Expenditures for Goal 2

Function	FTE		Expenditures	
	Federal	State	Federal	State
Extension Program	0.89	0.58	\$ 68,149.51	\$44,527.94

Progress toward intermediate and long term outcomes and impacts for ongoing programs for Goal 2 are documented under the following key themes.

#### Key Theme: Food Safety and Handling

a. Food-borne illness can affect anyone at any time, but certain people are more likely to get sick from food-borne bacteria. Once they're sick, they face the risk of serious health problems, even death. Such at-risk people include: pregnant women, young children, people with chronic illnesses and/or weakened immune systems, and older people. Also, underlying illnesses such as diabetes, some cancer treatments, and kidney disease may increase a person's risk of food-borne illness.

b. The Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program (ASU/CEP) remains committed to addressing food safety program issues. During FY 2004, there were approximately 7,175 educational sessions conducted on food safety. ASU/CEP conducted 406 events through direct and indirect teaching, mass media, and published information. The total estimated dollar value of savings by participants resulting from knowledge gained during educational meetings is estimated at \$50 per person amounting to total savings of \$358,750.00.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

#### Key Theme: Food Safety

a. It has been estimated that 97% of reported foodborne illnesses are due to the mishandling of food after the food is processed. Most foodborne illnesses are of short duration and are not life threatening. However, it is known that certain types of foodborne illnesses can have long-term health effects such as arthritic conditions, heart complications, kidney failure and central nervous system disorders. In some cases,

foodborne illness may even cause death. The Center for Disease Control reports that the most commonly reported food preparation practice that contributes to foodborne illnesses involve improper temperature in cooking or handling food. The second most commonly reported practice involves poor personal hygiene of food handlers. The ASU/CEP Family Nutrition Program teamed up with the Copiah County Women Infants and Children Department, and the local county residents to present a session on food and kitchen safety. The session used traditional instructions on buying, storing food, checking dates on food products, the importance of using proper kitchen safety procedures, cooking preparations, and preventing growth and avoiding common food preparation accidents. Group sessions were provided in Claiborne County to 3rd and 4th grade students. The students discussed food safety in the kitchen, were shown videos entitled, "Fight Bac" and "How Clean is Clean." In addition, educational materials on food safety were distributed to the students.

b. Positive behavioral changes were demonstrated by 97% of the participants who recognized the importance of handling food properly, hand washing techniques, and kitchen safety techniques. An estimated 91% of the participants gained basic knowledge on how important food safety is on reducing cases of foodborne illnesses

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

### **Goal 3: To promote a healthy, well-nourished population.**

#### **Goal Narrative**

Research scientists are finding strong links between lifestyle, diet and good health. In spite of this wave of information in health maintenance and disease prevention, Mississippians are suffering from nutrition-related conditions such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, strokes and heart disease. Mississippi has been ranked No. 1 in the nation for obesity.

Consumers in the southern United States traditionally consume diets high in fat and simple carbohydrates. Rural agricultural counties in Southwest Mississippi are medically underserved areas with a shortage of health care professionals. Community-based educational programs are greatly needed to improve residents' knowledge regarding the relationship between diet, lifestyle, and health. Valuable research based information is being delivered through the ASU/CEP.

The Nutrition, Diet and Health area provides community-based nutrition and health educational programs, activities and events geared toward intervention, prevention and maintenance of nutrition-related conditions among limited resource audiences in local communities. The program's goal is to improve and maintain citizens of Southwest Mississippi communities' optimal health and social well being throughout their span of life.

#### **Goal 3: Planned Program Overview**

The following are planned programs included under Goal 3. The specific program subject areas for Nutrition and Health programs areas are included in the chart. The subject areas are: Basic Foods, Dietary Quality, Food Security, Human Nutrition, Nutrition Related Disease, and Shopping/Food Res. Mgt.

Output activities under this goal are provided in the table below.

<b>Planned Program Area /Subject Area</b>	<b>Extension Events</b>	<b>Extension Contacts</b>
Basic Foods	60	875
Dietary Quality	1,007	26,956
Food Security	245	4,791
Human Nutrition	113	6,230
Nutrition Related Disease	22	418
Shopping/Food Res. Mgt.	465	4,941

### Overall Estimated Expenditures for Goal 3

Function	FTE		Expenditures	
	Federal	State	Federal	State
Extension Program	4.05	2.65	\$310,163.63	\$202,656.58

Progress toward intermediate and long-term outcomes and impacts for ongoing programs are documented under the key themes in the next section.

#### Key Theme: Behavior Modification

a. It was found that 41% of Mississippi's adult population and 30% of our high school students are overweight. Recent statistics have shown that our children are facing a health crisis. Nearly one in three children and adolescents are now overweight or at risk of being overweight. Poor nutrition and a lack of physical activity account for 300,000 deaths per year. Research confirms that properly designed nutrition educational programs, focusing on behavior changes, can be effective at improving diets and nutrition related behaviors. It has been estimated today's busy schedules make it difficult for Americans to find time for regular meals, much less to find time to prepare them at home. Some of the factors related to obesity include lack of adequate physical exercise, poor eating habits, the cost of buying healthy food, and portion sizes.

b. The Family Nutrition Program (FNP) is a part of Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program which conducts nutrition education training in the Adams County public school system. It has undertaken the task of tackling this problem by conducting Nutrition and Health programs in the public schools to teach our children how to choose foods that are lower in fats, sugars, and other unhealthy qualities. In FY 2004, the Program Assistant targeted over 300 second and third grade students. Lessons include a variety of topics such as The Food Guide Pyramid, Healthy Snacks, Serving Sizes, and Understanding Food Labels. The pre/post tests conducted with 57 participants indicated that there was a 70% change in the participant's dietary selection of healthy foods and snacks. After completion of this series of lessons on dietary quality, about 80% of the 300 students in the second and third grade were able to recognize and choose healthy snacks.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

## **Key Theme: Human Health**

- a. Two-thirds of the adults in the United States are officially overweight. The rates for African Americans and Latinos are even higher. Among American children between the ages of six and 19 years old, 15%, or one in six, are overweight, and another 15% are in danger of becoming overweight. Statistics taken show that two million teenagers and young adults joined the ranks of the clinically obese between 1996 and 2001 (Time, 2004). Recent statistics show that nearly one in three children are now overweight or at risk of being overweight. Research confirms that properly designed nutrition education programs, inclusive of physical activity, can have a positive influence on weight control. Implementation of sound nutrition education programs can aid in managing chronic diseases and improving symptomatic conditions resulting in substantial health care savings and enhanced quality of life.
- b. During FY 2004, there were 124 activities conducted on healthy nutritional principles that will reduce the risk of stress, depression, chronic diseases and preventable illness with 4,662 participants. There were eight activities on the benefits of exercise programs and encouraging the integration of physical activity into daily life conducted with 164 young people and 48 adults. The pre tests and post tests conducted with 300 participants indicated that there was an 85% change in the participants' dietary selection of healthy foods and snacks.
- c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) (amounts and FTE not available).
- d. State specific.

## **Key Theme: Human Nutrition**

- a. Diet related diseases are the second leading cause of preventable deaths in the United States. According to the American Medical Association, Mississippi has the highest percentage of overweight and obese residents at 24.3% and a diabetes rate of 8.8%. Claiborne County has one of the highest rates of overweight and obesity cases, especially among younger residents. Although they receive a brief introduction to The Food Guide Pyramid and a test on its use, many young people in Claiborne and Warren counties do not understand the importance of using The Food Guide Pyramid and the number of servings needed daily. In FY 2004, ASU/CEP and MSU-ES staff worked together to educate students in Claiborne and Warren Counties on how diet and exercise can help prevent heart disease, stroke, diabetes, obesity, and cancers. The groups were trained on how to use the Food Guide Pyramid daily for healthy eating. Four nutrition programs (The Pyramid Power Is Yours, Five a Day Healthy Snacks, Healthy Snacks for the Holidays, and Kids–n–the–Kitchen Fun Camp) were taught in Claiborne County and Warren County schools for 4-H and Cluster Club members.

b. As a result of these nutrition programs and activities, over 100 youths and adults in Claiborne and Warren counties now are aware of how diet and exercise play an important part in their lives. After a period of instruction, the young people and adults were able to prepare a healthy, nutritious snack. After administering the post tests on nutrition activities, over 70% of the participants agreed that they increased their knowledge regarding The Food Guide Pyramid, the amounts of servings needed daily, physical fitness, and the preparation of a healthy snack. They plan to share information gained with family, peers, and friends in their communities.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Human Nutrition**

a. In Hinds County the 2003 population was 180,827 and the obesity percentage was 24.1% (43,510) for residents who were 18 years of age or older. Many women and men do consider the importance of eating nutritiously. However, they do not effectively plan meals or observe the importance of consuming the recommended daily servings of food from the various food groups.

b. Women and men were trained about the value of nutrition and the importance of good eating practices. During the programs, 40 participants demonstrated that they acquired knowledge with regard to seeing a need to change patterns of behavior regarding their food purchases, food preparation and eating habits.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Human Health**

a. Coronary heart disease and heart attacks affected 945,846 Mississippians between (year) and (year). Heart attack is the largest killer of Americans. About 47% percent of the people who experience coronary heart disease will die from it. During FY 2004, ASU/CEP agents conducted an Eating Right & Light Program which utilized teaching modules discussing The Food Guide Pyramid and the importance of regulating the serving size, fat content, sodium intake and sugar content of food. Physical activity was also emphasized, according to a physician's recommendations.

b. An ASU/CEP agent conducted an Eating Right & Light program for individuals in rural Walthall County. There was a slight decrease of around 1% of heart attack victims in

Walthall County according to statistics from the Department of Health. A total of 75% of the participants attending the program stated that they acquired knowledge benefiting themselves and their families. A total of 15% of the participants commented on their intent to change eating habits to include healthy foods, to add physical activity to the diet, to read labels, and to take medication as prescribed by their physician. A total of 5% expressed a desire for more programs to address obesity and nutrition in Walthall County.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Human Nutrition**

a. Most Americans don't get enough calcium. For growing kids, calcium is essential to build stronger bones. Yet 70% of girls and 60% of boys who ages ranges six to 11 aren't getting the calcium they need daily. June is Dairy Month, promoting the use of all dairy foods and supporting America's dairy farmers. A random survey was conducted with young people throughout Jefferson County to determine how many young people drink sodas as compared to fruit juice or milk. The result of the survey indicated that 75% of the young people drink more sodas than fruit juice or milk. As a result of the survey findings, the ASU/CEP staff decided to conduct a series of ongoing workshops with young people in Jefferson County. These workshops served two purposes:(1) to educate the young people on the importance of calcium for strong bones and teeth and for the prevention of osteoporosis later in adulthood and (2) to expose them to tasty alternative drinks using milk and fresh fruits.

b. Of the 50 young people participating in these types of workshops, 70% reported that they now have a greater understanding of calcium as it relates to strong bones and teeth. Most importantly, the participants now are aware of more creative choices including fresh fruits and milk.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Human Nutrition**

a. Even though there is an increasing awareness of obesity in response to various advertising campaigns and educational programs, the number of obese people in the United States is expected to reach 94 million by 2012. During FY 2004, the Alcorn State University Extension Family Nutrition Program provided nutritional educational programs,

games and other activities to more than 40 parents during one-on-one home visits and to more than 300 children in the Adams County public school system. Lessons were taught on planning menus, choosing healthy foods, The Food Guide Pyramid, meal preparation and serving sizes.

b. A survey was conducted with 60 students in Adams County who participated in the lesson on proper dietary intake of fruits and vegetables. As a result, 75% of the students who participated reported eating more fruits and vegetables daily.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Human Nutrition**

a. According to the National Institute of Health, Americans have a serious weight problem. The excess pounds take a terrible toll on the human body; significantly increasing the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, diabetes and other illnesses. From 1996 to 2001, two million teenagers and young adults joined the ranks of the clinically obese. In Jefferson County, 26.1% of the current population is obese. The ASU/CEP and MSU-ES staff members worked together to start an intervention providing young people with workshops that teach healthy nutrition, cooking as well as the importance of physical activity. Before the workshops began, the young people were given a pre test to complete. The pre tests revealed that most of the participants did not understand The Food Guide Pyramid. The first workshop dealt with instruction on kitchen safety. The second workshop, entitled Food and Fitness for a Life Time, discussed The Food Guide Pyramid, suggested serving sizes, and the importance of doing physical activity daily. The last workshop was the most exciting for participants because they had hands-on experiences preparing recipes using fresh vegetables and fruits.

b. By attending these workshops, 65 participants learned the importance of eating healthy and doing physical activities. A post test was given on the last day of the workshop. The result indicated that the participants' knowledge about these issues had increased by 60%. At the conclusion of the workshop, some of the participants said they were eager to get home and prepare a healthy and tasty dish to share with their families.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.



## **Key Theme: Health Care**

- a. Every year more than 1,600 Mississippi women learn they have breast cancer, and over 400 die from the disease. Breast cancer is the second leading cause of death in Mississippi women; precautionary measures often can save our lives. It is important for women to know the best techniques for practicing breast self exams.
- b. Breast cancer awareness has been an ongoing project in Jefferson County for several years. In FY 2004, ASU/CEP, along with professionals in the medical field, worked together on various projects in the area of cancer. These efforts focused primarily on women. In October, ASU/CEP sponsored a Walk-A-Thon for women in Jefferson County. A total of 55 women participated in a three-block walk. The ladies received educational material and were instructed on the corrected method to perform the self breast exam. In surveys administered after the Walk-A-Thon, 60% of the women reported that they are now having mammograms; a total of, 20% said that they are doing breast self exams more often.
- c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) (amounts and FTE not available).
- d. State specific.

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

**Goal 4 Narrative**

Small farmers in Mississippi have traditionally been concerned about conserving and sustaining their farmland. However, they have not participated in conservation programs, because of program requirements, reluctance to share privacy data and joint heirs in the property. The rich soils and long growing seasons in the state of Mississippi favor the production of a wide variety of crops.

**Goal 4: Planned Program Overview**

The following are planned programs included under Goal 4. The specific program subject area is Agronomy (sustainable agriculture).

Output activities under this goal are provided in the table below.

<b>Planned Program Area /Subject Area</b>	<b>Extension Events</b>	<b>Extension Contacts</b>
Agronomy (Sustainable agriculture)	82	3,147

**Overall Estimated Expenditures for Goal 3**

<b>Function</b>	<b>FTE</b>		<b>Expenditures</b>	
	Federal	State	Federal	State
Extension Program	0.54	0.35	\$41,251.87	\$26,953.40

Progress toward intermediate and long-term outcomes and impacts for ongoing programs are documented under the key themes in the next section.

**Key Theme: Diversified/Alternative Agriculture**

a. The income of rural residents and the sustainability of agriculture have shown an increase through educational programs offered by the Alcorn Cooperative Extension Agronomy Program. On-farm income has increased by diversification through the utilization of alternative cash crops, especially value-added syrup crops. Income from traditional and alternative livestock has increased through emphasis on proper forage management and production of summer pastures and winter grazing. Small farmers produce a combination of traditional and alternative agricultural enterprises by incorporating sustainable agricultural practices into new alternative crops. These farmers

are striving to increase farm income through improved production practices on existing crops and the adoption of new crop enterprises.

b. The Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program delivered a wide variety of educational programs on diverse crops in FY 2004. The ASU-CEP has continued to stress alternative crops, value-added processing, and new products to new and established farmers. Programs have promoted sustainable agriculture as an integral part of farming practices.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

## **Goal 5: To enhance economic opportunities and the quality of life among families and communities.**

### **Goal Narrative**

Healthy families promote the emotional, physical and social welfare of individual family members. Among the many factors that contribute to this process are a family's internal strengths and the durability of the family unit. Unlike any other social group, families are able to provide the close emotional support needed to produce self-confident and well-adjusted children and adults. Likewise, families that function in a healthy manner are well equipped to deal with the many normal changes and unexpected crises that confront them throughout their lifetime. Therefore, the family's primary function is to create a healthy environment where family members can successfully grow and develop.

According to the Kids Count Data Book (2003) the total population in Mississippi in 2003 was 2,871,782. Of this number, 11% were young adults ages 18-24, and 26% were children under the age of 18. A total of 27% of Mississippi's children lived below the poverty level; 35% of families with children were headed by single parents. The median family income was \$ 39,300. A total of 39% of the females ages 16-19 gave birth in 2003. A total of 11% of teens, ages 16-19 were high school dropouts, and 13% didn't attend school and were not working. A total of 19 percent of young adults between ages 18-24 were considered "disconnected" which is defined as not enrolled in school, not working, or not working on a degree beyond high school. This data confirms the fundamental link between poverty and a range of negative outcomes such as academic failure, early pregnancy and other risk factors that can diminish a child's chances of adult achievement and success.

The issues facing young people are in many ways overwhelming, both in number and complexity. Youth are facing such staggering issues as violence, poverty, sexual transmitted diseases, unintended pregnancies as well as drug, alcohol, and tobacco use. Families can make a difference in the lives of their children. Research has identified several factors that promote resiliency in children. Among these are social competence, problem-solving skills, autonomy and a sense of purpose and future (National Network for Family Resiliency, 1993). Children whose families promote these skills have a better chance of becoming successful adults. In addition, families who express caring and support, create high expectations for family members, and encourage children's participation in school and other activities are more likely to have happy and successful family members. Often, it is perceived that the best way to reduce negative outcomes in child behavior is to strengthen our state's most vulnerable families and increase their ability to provide some real educational and economic security for their children.

The Alcorn State University Extension 4-H Youth Development/Youth At-Risk Program provides a positive setting to support the young people by structuring programs that are developmentally appropriate and have clear expectations. These programs play an essential role in helping young people acquire the assets to help them become successful

adults. The educational programs and activities were designed, developed, and implemented to address issues in the following areas: Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Youth Health Issues (STD/HIV/AIDS), Career Development/Workforce Preparedness, and 4-H Youth Development.

According to the 2000 United States Bureau of Census report, Mississippi’s demographic data in all income categories (median household income, median income of families with children, average annual pay for workers, and per capita personal income) rank the state last in the nation in these categories. Although there has been marked improvement in income, education, and housing, Mississippi remains well below the national average in these areas. Mississippi ranked 49<sup>th</sup> among the states in per capita income and 48<sup>th</sup> in median family income, according to the 2000 Census. The state’s median family income was \$39,266, more than \$10,000 less than the \$49,507 median family income figure for the United States. Overall, 50 of the state’s 82 counties have been labeled as “severely economically distressed or communities.” Overall, the single greatest dependency is in government subsidies and transfer payments. Yet Mississippi is rich in historical sites, natural resources and agricultural-based products. Consequently, revitalizing these rural communities depend primarily on the development of its economic resources and more active, informed and responsible citizens.

The educational programs implemented by the Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Family, Youth and Community Development unit are designed to provide practical and research-based information to address issues in communities.

**Goal 5: Planned Program Overview**

The following are planned programs included under Goal 5. The specific program subject areas for Family Life & Child Development, Youth Development/At Risk, and Community Resource Development planned programs areas are included in the chart. The subject areas are: Child Care Giver Training, Child Development, Family Life Issues, Family Resource Mgt., Family Stress Management, Career Development/Workforce Preparation, Club Maintenance, Communication/Leadership, Disease Control/Prevention, Entrepreneurship, Healthy Lifestyle Education, Personal Development, Tobacco Education, Business Development, Community/Economic Development, Faith-Based Development, Governmental Training Land Stewardship/Retention, and Leadership Skills.

Output activities under this goal are provided in the table below.

<b>Planned Program Area /Subject Area</b>	<b>Extension Events</b>	<b>Extension Contacts</b>
Child Care Giver Training	52	856
Child Development	5	196
Family Life Issues	32	824
Family Resource Mgt.	77	764
Family Stress Management	12	119

Career Dev/Workforce Prep	43	2,242
Club Maintenance	155	2,491
Communication/Leadership	198	664
Disease Control/Prevention	16	2,286
Entrepreneurship	24	118
Healthy Lifestyle Ed.	146	9,320
Personal Development	203	4,879
Tobacco Education	38	3,539
Business Development	32	1,632
Community/Economic Dev	440	11,049
Faith-Based Development	19	6,621
Governmental Training	30	1,525
Land Stewardship/Retention	40	1,463
Leadership Skills	107	1,789

### Overall Estimated Expenditures for Goal 5

Function	FTE		Expenditures	
	Federal	State	Federal	State
Extension Program	7.44	4.86	\$569,267.95	\$371,951.72

Progress toward intermediate and long-term outcomes and impacts for ongoing programs are documented under the key themes in the next section.

### Key Theme: Child Safety

a. During the Executive Advisory Council meeting of the (agency) in (month), members requested child safety programs for parents of young children. They stated that these parents should be more responsible for their children's safety and well-being. The local hospital reported that it receives at least three or more cases of accidental ingestion of poisoning each month. Therefore, a need for increasing parent's knowledge of how to keep children safe was recognized. Realizing that education was a part of the solution to the problem above, the 4-H Youth agent, the CYFAR program assistant, and the home economist planned a Child Safety and Protection Fair in observance of Child Safety and Protection Month which is observed nationally every November. A news release publicizing the event was published in the local newspaper. Educational leaflets and brochures were collected from the local health department, MDOT, The National Safe Kids Campaign, and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. These leaflets covered safety issues on water, bicycles, pedestrians, car restraints, appliances, prescription drugs, etc. The site of the exhibit was at a local supermarket, one of the most frequently visited businesses in the county. Shoppers gathered information on child safety and were

encouraged to visit a local Mississippi Highway Patrol checkpoint to have child safety restraints inspected for proper installation. Individuals were counseled on how to protect their children most effectively from preventable injuries.

b. As a result of this fair, 66 people increased their existing knowledge of child safety issues. Initial questioning revealed that clients' knowledge may have been increased by 90%. Clients receiving information from the exhibit may have possibly saved themselves at least one trip to the hospital emergency room. With hospital visits averaging \$500 per visit, this event has potentially saved clients a total of \$33,000.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Child Care/Dependent Care**

a. In the State of Mississippi for licensing purposes, all child care staff, directors, director designees and caregivers is required to complete 15 contact hours of staff development, annually. Such training sessions must be approved by Mississippi State Department of Health. ASU/CEP employees who have been trained to deliver educational sessions can award a portion of the fifteen hours, but the caregivers must also seek other sources for the remainder of the hours. There are 10 licensed child care facilities in Claiborne County. It is important for these facilities to have well-trained employees. These employees must know how to increase the quality and efficiency of their centers. Individuals interested in starting new centers must also have access to training sessions about the startup and operation of a quality center.

During FY 2004, a total of four "Going to School" workshops were conducted for child caregivers. This training was offered to childcare providers and parents in Claiborne County. The training was held for four weeks at the multipurpose center in (city) every Tuesday evening in September. A total of 35 child care providers and individuals interested in starting a center pre-registered for the training. The training taught caregivers to prepare preschool children for "big school." They also learned techniques for encouraging and mentoring students as well as strategies to protect, guide, limit and inspire children. The participants also learned the importance of teaching children language, and familiarized themselves with the "10 hallmarks" of children who succeed in school.

b. A total of 60% of the providers who completed the first assessment test after the workshops scored better than 80. After administering the second assessment, this number increased to 100%. Only 40% of the 35 registered participants attended the first session. By the last session, this number had increased to 68%. This increase could probably be attributed to the fact that participants eagerly shared information with co-workers. All participants tested scored 80 or better on achievement tests given at the end

of each session. On evaluation forms completed by participants, the program received high marks and very positive comments

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

**Key Theme: Child Care/Dependent Care**

a. Pike County has 28 licensed child care centers. In the state of Mississippi, child care staffs are required to complete 15 hours of staff development yearly. This training must be approved by Mississippi State Department of Health and ASU/CEP agents who have been trained to conduct these sessions. Individuals who are interested in starting new centers must attend these sessions, interested parents are also invited. In FY 2004, ASU/CEP agents conducted a child caregiver's seminar. The training was offered to child care providers and interested parents in Pike County. The training was held on a Saturday allowing participants to earned six hours of staff development credit. A total of 35 child care providers pre-registered for the training. The training taught child caregivers how to work with children who bite, how to encourage good eating habits in young children, and how to take the stress out of care giving. The training also taught the child care providers how to handle situations with children in the classroom. Child care providers also earned how to teach children to share and solve problems.

b. A total of 90 percent of the participants passed the test with a score of 90 and above. A total of 10 percent of the participants scored between 80% and 90% on the test. The participants also participated in hands-on-learning techniques and role playing.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

**Key Theme: Children, Youth and Families at Risk**

a. The future of every society depends on the positive development of its children within their families. The 4-H Youth Development/Youth-At-Risk program has created developmentally appropriate educational programs to help young people make decisions. The Alcorn State University Extension 4-H Youth Development Program/Youth-At-Risk Program has implemented programs on youth health issues (STD'S /HIV/AIDS) Using the curriculum entitled B.A.R.T (Becoming A Responsible Teen) in various counties in Southwest Mississippi, this program helps teens to clarify their values about sexual decisions and pressures as they practice skills to make good decisions regarding sex and



risky sexual practices. The curriculum also helps them to develop skills in the areas of assertive communication and assertive refusal.

b. Five ASU/CEP 4-H Youth agents participated in two Teen Pregnancy Prevention training sessions using the B.A.R.T curriculum. About 350 copies of the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Fact Sheet were distributed to teachers and counselors in local schools in Southwest Mississippi. During FY 2004, a total of 126 Teen Pregnancy Prevention workshops and group meetings were held that were attended by 10,095 young people and approximately 200 parents. The overall effectiveness of the program was assessed using a pre test and a post test on the B.A.R.T. curriculum. The results of the post test showed that a total of 46% of the young people participating said they would postpone sexual activity until marriage or until they were in a committed relationship. Such a reduction in the number of teens becoming pregnant would result in savings of approximately \$3,500 per teen this year.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available) .

d. State specific. Program efforts were concentrated in fourteen (14) Southwest Mississippi counties served by Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program. The targeted audiences were at-risk middle and high school students.

### **Key Theme: Human Health**

a. According to health statistics issued in 1993 by the Mississippi State Department of Health (MDHS), 31.6% males and 23.7% females in grades 9-12 smoked cigarettes. In Jefferson County, 31.2% teens in grades 9-12 smoked cigarettes. Today's young people are surrounded by advertisements that glamorize tobacco use. Tobacco education is a high priority in Jefferson County. More than 400,000 people die of tobacco-related illness in the United States each year. Furthermore; tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death in Mississippi. To bring awareness of the serious health effects associated with tobacco use, the ASU/CEP staff assisted in conducting several youth summits and parent awareness workshops. During the summits, the youth were actively involved in hands-on activities concerning the harmful effects of tobacco use. The parent workshops consisted of presentations on better communication with sons and daughters, the promotion of healthy lifestyles and the recognition of the warning signs of alcohol and drug use. Financial support was provided through a faith-based grant to encourage the young people of Jefferson County to participate in tobacco education programs. Tobacco awareness teams were organized in schools and community groups for primary and secondary school children. These teams consisted of RAT Pack (grades K-3), SWAT (grades 4-6), Allies (grades 7-8) and Frontline (grades 9-12). Monthly meetings were conducted to teach life skills, communication, self-esteem, goal setting and other relevant topics.

b. More than 750 young people and 100 adults benefited from these tobacco education programs. Workshop evaluations completed by participants included very positive comments, and more than 70% of the participants stated that they had a greater understanding of health risks associated with tobacco use as a result of attending the workshops. Evaluations of the workshops by parents indicated that they learned many helpful tips to enhance their parental skills and that the tobacco summits were a great idea, because they were positive events shared by the entire family.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Human Health**

a. The Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program, along with the Partnership For A Healthy Mississippi conducted a tobacco prevention and education project entitled Project S.T.A.R. (Smoking Tobacco Ain't Right). The program was implemented in elementary, middle and high schools and within communities in Southwest Mississippi to reduce the number of young people using tobacco and tobacco products in the schools and communities of Southwest Mississippi.

b. In FY 2004, 4,389 young people participated in 29 tobacco education and prevention workshops and group meetings. Three youth summits were conducted at the Alcorn State University campus. A total of 2,100 elementary, middle and high school students attended three youth summits. A total of 10 RAT (Reject All Tobacco) teams were organized with a total of 175 members. The teams included 11 SWAT (Students Working Against Tobacco) teams with 75 members; 10 Allies teams with 100 members; and 14 Frontline teams with 360 members. A total of 710 young people participated in 45 tobacco education teams in Southwest Mississippi. As a results of these educational activities, there was a 28% decline in tobacco use among public school high school students, a 47% decline among middle school students and a 40% decline in tobacco use among private school students. It is estimated that these reductions have saved the state nearly \$336 million in future health costs

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available) .

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Youth and Adult Workforce**

a. The Career Development Workforce Preparedness Program was presented in schools and community centers in various counties served by the ASU/CEP using a

curriculum entitled "The Working Class." This curriculum is designed to provide knowledge and skills to prepare young people in grades 9-12 for the world of work using hands-on educational information and activities.

b. The Alcorn State University Extension 4-H Youth Development Program conducted 27 Career Development/Workforce Preparedness workshops in 15 local high school and voc-tech centers. A total of 46 local businesses and three partner agencies participated in two separate school career days. A total of 2,711 young people and 200 adults participated in the Career Development/Workforce Preparedness Program. The program was assessed using a pre test and a post test. It was ascertained from the post test that 85% of the young people who participated in the workshops can now accurately compose or complete a cover letter, a resume, two types of job applications, and a job interview. To complete the program each student had to complete a career portfolio, an interview session, a pre test and post test. Program efforts were concentrated in the nine counties served by the Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program. The targeted audiences were limited-resource high school students in Tech PREP Programs, business technology and communication classes, Jobs for Mississippi Students Programs and vocational education programs.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available) .

d. State specific

### **Key Theme: Youth Development**

a. Age-appropriate competition creates opportunities for developing leadership, teamwork, character, and life skills. 4-H contests and projects prepare young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated and progressive series of activities and experiences which will help them to become socially, morally, emotionally, physically, and cognitively competent. More than half of young people, parents, and teachers in communities today think that 4-H is still only about raising crops and animals. As a matter of fact, 4-H today offers a variety of project areas, trips, and experiences that have nothing to do with animals. The animal contests are offered to those who choose to work with animals. 4-H competitions are very rewarding for young people in Claiborne County. In FY 2004, 4-H members attended and participated in several state, local and regional 4-H contests. First, the 4-H Club Congress was held in June at Mississippi State University. 4-H members ages 14-18 throughout the state competed for trophies and ribbons in various contests. The young people were selected from hundreds of senior 4-H members across the state of Mississippi. In addition, the Annual Extension Leadership Camp for young people ages 14-18 was held at Alcorn State University for youth in (month). Teenagers from several counties attended and participated in this week-long camp.

b. As a result of participating in the state, local, and regional contests/projects the young people of Claiborne County became more motivated, developed leadership skills, improved their self-esteem, and became more aware of the choices they have in 4-H. Through a series of instructional and training sessions, Claiborne County presently has over 140 young people actively participating in the 4-H Program. More than half of them have won trophies, were awarded first and second place ribbons, or were selected to join a prestigious Leadership Team. ASU/CEP in Claiborne County had nine members to compete with all nine delegates winning first or second place honors. Second, the Southwest District 4-H Achievement Day Program was held in Raymond, MS for junior 4-H members ages 8-13. There were eight 4-H members who won trophies and ribbons. Third, the State 4-H Leadership Team consists of senior age members. Claiborne County had one 4-H member to be selected to join the State 4-H Leadership Team which is a highly recognized and prestigious group of young people.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

#### **Key Theme: Youth Development/4H**

a. The ASU/CEP Planning Council met once during FY 2004 to provide leadership and training to volunteers. This training/meeting focused on 4-H and club management. During FY 2004, the ASU/CEP Youth agent was invited to speak to about 10 groups in Hinds County about the importance of 4-H and management. The 4-H presentations lasted for about one hour and the ages of the audience members ranged in age from 5 to 18.

b. A total of 16 volunteers/council members attended this training/meeting. Seven clubs with 59 members were restarted or established. Three individuals participated in the Southwest District Achievement Day contests and one volunteer participated in the Leaders Forum. At the end of the programs, many young people expressed an interest in 4-H.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

#### **Key Theme: Promoting Business Program**

a. Young people in Jefferson County have difficulty finding financial resources because of their age, a shortage of opportunities and lack of collateral for obtaining a loan. The ASU-CEP conducted a workshop on youth loan requirements and provided young people who attended with information on how to complete the loan application form..

b. After completing the workshop and application the young people submitted the applications to the FSA office for funding. A total of six applicants were funded at the maximum level of funding (\$5,000). The funds were used to purchase breeding stock and to start up operations. A collaboration of ASU-CEP agents and FSA will help the young people in starting these operations.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Youth Development/4H**

a. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the United States has a high school dropout rate of 10%, with Mississippi at 11%, and Claiborne County at 4.1%. In this fast-paced, complex, and information-based economy, education is a necessity. In order to compete and become productive members of a community and society, young people depend largely upon the fundamental skills acquired in high school. Young people today need to have the ability to communicate with clarity, confidence, and precision when speaking, reading, and writing in order to function in everyday life. Without an educational background or high school degree, young people are unable to achieve the fundamental skills needed for success in high school. During FY 2004, ASU/CEP and MSU-ES staff members from Claiborne and Jefferson counties implemented a High School Dropout Prevention Program in these counties called, CHOICES. The team-taught program is being implemented at the beginning of the school year. CHOICES is a dynamic, interaction decision-making model in the form of a two-day class period seminar that targets ninth graders. Through creative and hands-on exercises, the students learn about motivation, time management, money management, academic decisions and career consequences. The program stresses self-discipline as the key to success.

b. As a result of implementing this two-day seminar, more than 160 students increased their awareness on, academic sacrifices, career options and consequences, and time and money management. They understood that it would be to their advantage to stay in high school and even go beyond high school. The students all agreed that the CHOICES program made a great impact on their lives. Positive feedback was given on the evaluation forms regarding staying in school and going beyond high school.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available) .

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Community Development**

- a. Southwest Mississippi is one of the most depressed economic regions in the state, and faith-based organizations are not deeply involved in the community and its economic life. The Mid-South Foundation has been instrumental in receiving funding through ASU/CEP's proposal writing efforts. As a result, church-based organizations have begun to involve themselves in non-traditional activities.
- b. In the counties served by ASU-CEP development activities by faith-based programs have increased by 50% .Business ownership by faith-based organizations has increased by 110%.
- c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).
- d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Community Development**

- a. Claiborne County is a rural town with an unemployment rate of 8.5%. To encourage economic development in the county, the infrastructure needs drastic improvement to lure manufacturing plants and other jobs. Although Claiborne County is the third oldest county in the state of Mississippi, county officials have not been able to capitalize on tourism. Overall, 47% of Claiborne County residents were not aware of the available community service programs. ASU/CEP agents in Claiborne County planned a town hall meeting to inform citizens about the services and programs that are provided through ASU/CEP. Local citizens were selected to serve on an issue planning team to help facilitate the town hall meeting. All county and city elected and appointed officials were invited to participate as well. Several areas of interest were discussed concerning community development such as housing, schools, health care and jobs. Prior to the meeting, the media, phone contacts, and home visits were used encourage all citizens to participate.
- b. A total of 82 citizens attended the town hall meeting and provided assessments of needs in nine areas of interest. As a result of the town hall meeting, in the area of health care, the Claiborne County Hospital has been upgraded from General Care to Acute Care and now has a total of four doctors on staff. The school district now has two schools that are operating on a Level 5 which is the highest for the state, and the school district also has increased the PTSA by 40%. As part of the ASU/CEP's community resource development, technical assistance has been provided to the county administrator's office for writing grants and proposals to secure additional funding to improve Claiborne County. The county was awarded \$17,000 in grants to start a farmers market.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Community Development**

a. The civil rights era in southwest Mississippi was a positive and productive period in its history and development. The role of the churches and the citizen involvement has been well documented in rural communities. The ASU/CEP community development area has initiated and participated in two programs: The Black Belt Initiative and the Faith-Based Initiative.

b. A total of 55 impoverished counties in Mississippi will receive federal funds for development. Overall, 10 faith-based organizations have received assistance and six faith-based organizations have submitted grants and have been funded.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Leadership Training and Development**

a. Lack of participation in community issues is a major factor in determining the socio-economic status of limited-resource farmers. Community needs and stakeholder recommendations are many times never communicated to members of the general public which retards their involvement in the participation process. The ASU/CEP conducted a series of local town hall and focus group meetings with citizens' participation as a major factor. Strategic plans were prioritized by the affected communities. Training of local leaders to facilitate the process increased.

b. Due to the local community participation in the assessment and prioritizing effects it is projected that a 100% increase in leadership skills occurred and many of the community forum attendance increased by 25%.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Fire Safety**

a. Southwest Mississippi has experienced decades of poverty and the problems associated with poverty. Lack of adequate fire protection is one of these problems. Participation of the citizens is crucial in the process of making changes. Grant writing sessions were held on property loss due the lack of tax payment, land management and fire protection. Town hall community meetings were conducted to allow citizens to voice their concerns .Local Chamber of Commerce meetings were conducted in five communities, to discuss small business support and possible promotions

b. Two fire grants were funded and ongoing activities were held to promote and provide better fire protection in small communities these included a Community Fair and the development of future partnerships with junior and community colleges and the Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program. The ASU-CEP also assisted community residents in connection with two start-up businesses and two land use (eminent domain) issues.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

### **Key Theme: Youth Entrepreneurship**

a. In response to the rapid changes occurring in communities as it relates to economic growth and job creation situations in the state of Mississippi, entrepreneurship is being explored as a viable option in addressing these changes. In our state there has been a long standing concern with youth unemployment and the drain of young people from their home communities due to lack of the availability of employment opportunities. The need for quality entrepreneurship education and training is becoming apparent to students, policy makers and educators as viable options for job creation and economic growth in communities. ASU/CEP has delivered entrepreneurship, educational programs to young people addressing this issue in local communities to promote business growth.

b. A total of 800 elementary and secondary school students participated in several rural youth entrepreneurship programs to gain knowledge on how to start a business. Three school-based businesses were established within the local school system. These businesses allow students to purchase their school supplies at a 50% discount resulting in a savings of thousands of dollars.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.



## **Key Theme: Estate Planning**

- a. Research cites many cases of land loss including numerous documented cases of land taking in southern states comprising of more than 24,000 acres of farm and timberland. However, very little attention has been given to land loss especially among the social and disadvantaged families and farmers in the state of Mississippi. Land loss continues to occur as a result of issues such as the lack of knowledge on the part of limited-resource residents about how to list, record and manage land resources in communities. Also, the lack of knowledge of property rights, laws and regulations can also result in the loss of property of limited-resource residents with limited educational, social and economic resources. ASU/CEP has provided educational information and technical assistance to address land loss issues and to inform limited-resource residents how to become better stewards of their land in local communities.
- b. A total of 10 training workshops on topics such as land loss prevention, estate planning and land stewardship were conducted with governmental leaders, small farmers, family reunion organizations, cooperatives and stakeholders. Due to this training, legal action was taken by a farming family who saved, more than \$100,000 in a boundary and forestry dispute.
- c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA). (FTE not available).
- d. State specific.

## **Management Goal:**

### **Key Theme: Information Technology (planned under Goal 1)**

a. In the state of Mississippi there are 82 counties spread over a large geographical area. The technological reach for the limited resources population has been almost non-existent. The ASU/CEP's mission is to provide education to residents with limited resources in all counties. Therefore, the investment in Information technology was the appropriate means of connecting our educational programs and outreach centers to our clientele across the state of Mississippi. The ASU/CEP Information Technology unit provided the required cutting edge hardware and software and computer training to enable our county staff and outreach centers to deliver the educational information and programs to limited-resource residents in a more efficient manner. The Information Technology unit (ITU) redesigned the ASU/CEP website to provide more access and availability of educational information and programs to our clientele. The website allows two way communications between ASU/CEP educators and clientele. A secured online database has been designed and developed to allow the county staff to input clientele data about the relevant issues faced by them in rural communities. This site also provides online data analysis tools to document clientele contacts and impacts. The ITU provided infrastructure support for the design and development of the online quarterly ASU/CEP Newsletter which will provide limited-resource clientele access to quality educational information on an ongoing basis. Individual client service plan (ICSP), a secured database engine, has been developed by ITU to study and analyze the various issues faced by limited resource population in ASU/CEP service area.

b. As a result of providing 40 computer notebooks and 20 desktop computers to all state and county staff members, the communications efficiency has been increased by 75% from the previous year. Almost all staff members now communicate through e-mail and they also have ASU e-mail addresses. Five standard computer training modules have been developed and all county and state employees have been trained in order to serve clientele in a more efficient manner. As a result of computer training, usage of multimedia presentations by ASU/CEP educators has been increased infinitely in addressing issues of communities. The ASU/CEP website connects the entire rural population to our programs and educators. Various staff members developed databases and helped ASU/CEP redesign their programs and offerings as per actual needs of our clientele.

c. Funds expended for this goal under this program came from Section 1444 of the National Agriculture, Research, Extension and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), and state matching funds (amounts and FTE not available).

d. State specific.

## **C. Stakeholder Input Process**

The environmental scanning system of the ASU/CEP was implemented in FY 2004. The system consists of implementation of various methods such as:

- Town Hall Meeting Process
- Focus Group Sessions
- Individual Client Service Plan (ICSP) Database
- County Advisory Council
- Annual County Accountability Meeting

### **Town Hall Meeting Process:**

The Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program held a series of 12 town hall meetings in the Southwest and Delta counties of Mississippi from January, 2004 through April, 2004. The impetus for these meetings was to identify the critical needs and concerns among residents living in these limited-resource areas. This ensuing report on the Town Hall meeting process was prepared to communicate the findings and the themes that emerged. This report is compiled to show the specific nature of the cross-county concerns and county-specific issues. The purpose for presenting the data in this two-fold manner is to render a cross-county “big picture” and a location-specific representation. Town Hall meetings were convened in Adams, Amite, Bolivar, Claiborne, Copiah, Hinds, Jefferson, Lincoln, Pike, Simpson, Walthall, and Wilkinson counties. A marketing plan was developed and implemented to create community awareness, stimulate interest, and to facilitate broad-base demographic participation.

### **Focus Group Sessions:**

Focus group sessions were conducted in the same counties as the town hall meetings. More information gathered about the key issues identified during the town hall meeting process. Presently these data are being analyzed.

### **Individual Client Service Plan (ICSP) Database:**

ICSP is a secured web based database program, which is dedicated to serve the limited resource audience in ASU/CEP service area in the state of Mississippi. The data obtained from ICSP website are being used to determine our most underserved constituents and strategically and systematically define our future objectives and method of implementation of specified programs and initiatives. We have already collected over 790 families' information in our database. ICSP database program has an inbuilt data analysis tool which can provide instantaneous meaningful analysis of collected data in terms of all demographic parameters.

### **County Advisory Councils:**

County Advisory Councils have been formed and are now conducting meetings quarterly to identify high priority issues in 11 counties.

### **Annual County Accountability Meetings:**

Annual County Accountability Meetings are held annually to report on yearly accomplishments to stakeholders. Also, priority issues are identified to focus on in counties for the next year.

### **D. Program Review Process**

There were no significant changes in the program review process since the submission of the Five Year Plan of Work. The Plan states, "The review of the program's goals will be done by committees composed of multi-disciplinary personnel for each goal. Committees will include specialists, research scientists, university faculty members, support staff and administrators. The review process will call for the teams to determine the system's level of performance by comparing expected performance to actual accomplishments and the proposed outcomes against actual outcomes and the level of outputs. Indicators will be reviewed on realistic and measurable probabilities. Also, external sources will be utilized to review and determine feasibility of programs."

### **E. Merit Review Process**

There were no significant changes in the merit review process. The merit review process of the Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program consisted of the development and implementation of a Performance Appraisal System that was performed at all appropriate levels of organization by the administrative leadership. The state and county personnel accomplishments were reviewed based on both organizational and programmatic goals. These goals were reviewed yearly for the state and county staffs of the Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program. This process was utilized to measure progress and to determine the level of performance of the state and county personnel regarding organizational and program accomplishments in such areas as environmental scanning, program development, increasing program funding, development of joint programs, technological and professional advancements and the development and implementation of collaborative networks, partnerships and marketing strategies. Merit scores were assessed to determine salary adjustments, modifications and structural changes based on the availability of organizational resources.