

## **GUIDE FOR USE IN INVITING KEY PERSON TO HOST COUNTY LISTENING SESSION – OPTION A**

Every four years, the Florida Cooperative Extension Service develops a long-range plan. The purpose of this plan is to help us prepare for the challenges and changes facing the people of Florida over the next four years. It also is a time for us to reflect upon our purpose, vision, and strategies for carrying out our mission. By examining our past while looking to the future, we can better determine how well-prepared we are in helping people cope with the changing world.

One step of the planning process is to ask stakeholders, county extension advisory committees, traditional and potential audiences and Extension faculty to come together and help translate Extension's purpose, vision, and strategies into tangible future programs that address economic, environmental and life quality issues facing individuals, families and youth, and communities in this county. Attention also will focus on how such issues affect those involved in the food and agricultural system and natural resources and the environment in which we live and work.

We plan to hold a county listening session where we will invite about **40<sup>1</sup>** individuals to participate in a forum to discuss emerging issues impacting what they value in this County and establish priorities for Extension education in addressing those issues. The information generated during this listening session will be used by the county Extension faculty and the county Extension advisory committee in developing long-range objectives and action plans to guide our educational programs for calendar years 2004 to 2007.

We ask your help in chairing the county listening session. This involves the following activities:

1. Helping compile a list of individuals to be invited to the session.
2. Co-sign the letter of invitation (county Extension director also co-signs)
3. Welcome invitees to the session
4. Introduce county extension director (who will review purpose of session and activities to be conducted during the session)
5. Close the session by thanking participants for their involvement and explaining that the information will be used by the county Extension faculty and the county Extension advisory committee in developing long-

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<sup>1</sup> Because of the wide variation in county population across Florida, the number to be invited is left to the discretion of the county Extension director. In counties with populations of less than 15,000, a minimum of 15-20 individuals is suggested; 30-40 participants should be the goal of mid-size counties and 60-80 for very large counties. The upper limit is left to the discretion of the CED and Chair of the Overall Advisory Committee.

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