

January 27, 2012

Dear County Faculty,

As the county program reviews draw closer, I wanted to take a few minutes to give you a better idea of what you can expect. First, I want to be clear about the purpose of the reviews: they are conducted to help you improve your programming. *Every county* will be reviewed eventually on a rotational basis. The county program reviews are independent of the customer satisfaction surveys, affirmative action reviews, and performance evaluations. You will know what the review team sees as your program area's strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats by the time the review is complete. You'll be able to use this information to develop a plan for action in the year to come.

Background Information

It may be helpful for you to understand who is involved in the county program reviews. The county program reviews are conducted based on a directive from Dr. Millie Ferrer-Chancy, who ultimately has the final say over the county program review process. Dr. Tom Obreza works with the DEDs to select the counties and the review team members. Review team members are a combination of county faculty, specialists, program leaders, CALS department heads, and Deans. This information is passed on to me in the fall. The next several months are spent planning and preparing for the reviews. Diane Craig, PDEC, takes all the information you've submitted to us and works with ICS to develop a professional quality booklet highlighting your programs and your county so that the review team knows something about your county before they arrive. I lead the review team training in April, and reviews begin in May. Finally, your DED will work with you after the review to identify some priorities to focus on in the coming year.

Your Responsibilities during the Review

To date, you've been asked to submit some background information for the county booklets. There are a few more things that I'm asking you to do before your review:

- 15 minute presentation – please develop a presentation of no longer than 15 minutes that covers the highlights of your program area; agents in the same program area should work together for this presentation and may take 5-10 more minutes if needed.

Consider identifying the needs that your program area is focused on addressing, target audience, the activities used to reach them, and evidence of program outcomes. Program assistants and multi-county agents can and should contribute as appropriate. Following your presentation, the review team will have questions for you. You can see a list of sample questions by going to: http://pdec.ifas.ufl.edu/program_reviews/

- Stakeholder invitations – please invite your program area’s stakeholders to attend the “stakeholder” discussion portion of the review; typically, this means advisory council members but it isn’t limited to them. Please reassure your stakeholders that the review team is not there to cut anything, as this is a common concern. You may want to share the sample questions for stakeholders with them so they feel prepared.
- County commissioner/administrator – CEDs, please invite the appropriate person(s) to lunch with the review team.

During the review, you’ll only need to be available at the very beginning, during the times that are specific to your program area, and for the final report presentation. Aside from welcoming your stakeholders, you do not need to attend that portion of the review either. Hopefully, this will help to minimize the disruption to your schedule.

After the Review

The county program reviews are not an end-product; rather they are the start of an effort to improve program quality in your county. I know there are already high-quality programs going on in Florida, so to borrow from 4-H, the idea is *to make the best better*. Towards this end, your county is required to draft a response to the review team’s final report. This report must be submitted to your DED and copied to me within 60 days of the review. The exact format of this report will vary slightly based on your DED’s expectations, but each county include 3-5 priority areas for action identified from the final report on which to focus in the coming year. At the completion of one full year, your county will report on its progress in those priority areas by submitting a brief report at:

http://pdec.ifas.ufl.edu/program_reviews/oneyear/a.pl

Questions?

I will be available to answer any questions you may have before or during your review. Please feel free to contact me at amharder@ufl.edu or 352-273-2569. Although I will do my best to return phone calls in a timely manner, I am currently working part-time and may be out of the office on a day that you call. Your patience is appreciated.

Sincerely,

