

Tennessee State University

## Digital Scholarship @ Tennessee State University

---

Extension Publications

Cooperative Extension

---

2008

### Agriculture and Natural Resources Challenges and Opportunities

Clyde E. Chesney

*Tennessee State University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalscholarship.tnstate.edu/extension>



Part of the [Agriculture Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Chesney, Clyde E., "Agriculture and Natural Resources Challenges and Opportunities" (2008). *Extension Publications*. 1.

<https://digitalscholarship.tnstate.edu/extension/1>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Cooperative Extension at Digital Scholarship @ Tennessee State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Extension Publications by an authorized administrator of Digital Scholarship @ Tennessee State University. For more information, please contact [XGE@Tnstate.edu](mailto:XGE@Tnstate.edu).

# **Agriculture and Natural Resources Challenges and Opportunities**

Clyde E. Chesney  
Administrator, Tennessee State University  
Fort Valley State University  
Cooperative Extension Program  
College of Agriculture, Home Economics and Allied Programs  
Mountain Creek Inn  
Callaway Gardens  
Pine Mountain, Georgia  
September 23, 2008

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times; it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness; it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity; it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness; it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair; we had everything before us, we had nothing before us; we were all going directly to Heaven, we were all going the other way." -

-- **Charles Dickens**

Good afternoon. Thank you for inviting me to your strategic planning session. I do hope my comments provide insight for your discussion and deliberations. My interest in strategic planning started when I served as chair of the environmental scanning committee of the Strategic Planning effort with the NC Cooperative Extension Service in the early 90's. Since that time, I have used environmental scanning techniques/strategies to stay ahead of the curve ball. I use a variety of reports, newsletters, meetings, journals, newspapers and magazines to help provide insight about the future.

A few years ago (2000), a movie called *A Perfect Storm* premiered based on historical events in the 1997 book The Perfect Storm by Sebastian Junger. This book and movie tell an exciting story of men against the sea when weather, the ocean tides, etc caused an extraordinary storm in the North Atlantic. How many of you have seen that movie/or read the book? I would like to use that visual title and suggest that over the past few years the perfect storm has occurred in America – It was not just Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 or Gustav and Ike in 2008. It is also the hurricanes of rising deficit spending, war on terrorism, housing foreclosures, loss of manufacturing jobs, increased energy costs (up to \$4.00/gal gasoline), trade deficits, stock market meltdown, bankruptcy, mergers, increasing world food crises, and so forth. . Therefore, the last eight years may have indeed been the best of times for some but the worst of times for many. It is also a time that provides opportunities for Cooperative Extension to step up to the plate and hit a home run.

## Outline of Presentation

Now how do we do that? In my presentation, I will cover the following

- Stages of 1890s Extension
- Leadership and Organizational Change
- Our People and their Needs
- Trends
- Opportunities for 1890s
- Changing Expectations for Extension Faculty

In 2008, we are six years from celebrating the centennial of the Smith Lever Act that created the Cooperative Extension System in 1914. Over time, organizations grow and evolve thru various stages. Since the initiation of federal funding in 1972 for 1890 Extension Programs, I would suggest that we have evolved thru several stages:

### Stages of 1890 Extension Evolution since Federal Funding

#### I. Entrepreneurial 1972 – 1977 – organization seeks viability

##### *Rural Development Act of 1972- Title V*

- Funding provided to 1890's thru the 1862s
- Memorandum of Understanding required

#### II. Emerging 1977- 82 – Organization seeks credibility

##### *Food and Agriculture Act of 1977*

Funding came directly to 1890s

#### III. Establishment 1982 -1997 – Organization seeks stability

##### *Agriculture and Food Act of 1981*

##### *National Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching Act of 1994*

- Association of Extension Administrators (AEA) Organized,
- Facilities Funding Initiated
- Recognition of 1890s as fifth Extension region,
- AEA Strategic Plans developed

IV. Erosion and/or Return to Roots 1998- 2008 – Questions about relevancy

*Agricultural Research, Extension and Education Reform Act of 1998 (ARRERA)*

- Matching non-federal cost share required
- 1890 Program Teams organized
- Extension Benchmarks of Excellence Established,
- Scholarship of Engagement

V. Enhancement /Elevation Stage 2008- A more competitive environment

*Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008*

- National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)
- Road Map for Research, Education and Extension

Strategic planning and futuring helps prevents erosion and propels you forward thru the erosion stage (Create 21 and new Farm Bill). Strategic planning is a way to help cope with the perfect storm of trends and events. Two recent examples of strategic planning efforts are the Virginia State University School of Agriculture, Strategic Plan 2007-2012<sup>1</sup> and the Tennessee State University Academic Master Plan 2008-2028- *Envisioning the Future through the Lens of Our Heritage.*<sup>2</sup> If fully implemented, these plans will profoundly change their institutions. Likewise, I trust that the plan you are developing will also provide you a challenging roadmap for the future.

So today, we are eight years into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, ten years from the legislation mandating non-federal matching requirements for 1890 Extension and Research Programs and thirty-six years from the 1972 inaugural federal funding for the 1890 Extension and Research Programs. We have come a long way but have a long way to go, when we consider the current issues, trends and the environment facing us in land-grant universities. Three particular issues facing 1890s are:

- Using *limited resources* (money, people, time, etc) to develop educational programs that produce appropriate outcomes/impacts
- Identifying, recruiting, developing and retaining *appropriate faculty and staff*
- *Rapid response* to social, demographic, economic, technological and environmental changes

#### Perspective on Leadership and Organizational Change

Dealing with these issues, is sometimes like walking in the wrong direction on a moving walkway or walking up the down escalator. Both are dauntless tasks. Before I discuss some of those demographic, social, economic, technological and environmental changes affecting agricultural and natural resource programming, I would briefly like to focus on leadership and organizational change- a prerequisite for developing an innovative strategic plan and necessary for short and long-term implementation. You do not want to develop a strategic plan just for the library shelf – effective planned change should be the measuring rod. During my tenure as Administrator at TSU, I have used four books as guides to help propel organizational change:

- Leading Change, John Kotter, 1996

- Who Moved My Cheese?, Spencer Johnson, 1998
- Good to Great, Jim Collins, 2001
- The World Is Flat, Thomas Friedman, 2005

In this perfect storm environment, I believe we need to have a perspective on leadership and organization change that includes – continually evaluating the quality and quantity of our cheese and timely searching for new cheese supplies before the old supply is eaten (Who Moved My Cheese?)<sup>3</sup>

Second, we need to make sure right people are on the bus and in the right seat (Good to Great).<sup>4</sup> Third, recognize that center of the world is not necessarily Atlanta, and may not be New York or Washington, DC but is where ever intellectual, technological and/or financial capital is created and controlled (The World is Flat).<sup>5</sup>

Here is a brief summary of the Eight-Stage Process<sup>6</sup> of Creating Major Change from Leading Change:

1. Establishing a Sense of Urgency
  - Examine the market and competitive realities
  - Identifying and discussion crises, potential crises, or major opportunities
2. Creating a Guiding Coalition
  - Putting together a group with enough power to lead the change
  - Getting the group to work together like a team
3. Developing a Vision and Strategy
  - Creating a vision to help direct the change effort
  - Developing strategies for achieving that vision
4. Communicating the Change Vision

- Using every vehicle possible to constantly communicate the new vision and strategies
- Having the guiding coalition role model the behavior expected of employees

#### 5. Empowering Broad-Based Action

- Getting rid of obstacles
- Changing systems or structures that undermine the change vision
- Encouraging risk taking and nontraditional ideas, activities, and actions

#### 6. Generating Short-Term Wins

- Planning for visible improvements in performance, or “wins”
- Creating those wins
- Visibly recognizing and rewarding people who made the wins possible

#### 7. Consolidating Gains and Producing More Change

- Using increased credibility to change all systems, structures, and policies that don't fit together and don't fit the transformation vision
- Hiring, promoting, and developing people who can implement the change vision

#### 8. Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture

- Creating better performance through customer and productivity-oriented behavior, more and better leadership, and more effective management
- Articulating the connections between new behaviors and organizational success
- Developing means to ensure leadership development and succession



## Our People and their Needs

### **Mother to Son by Langston Hughes**

Well, son, I'll tell you:  
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.  
It's had tacks in it,  
And splinters,  
And boards torn up,  
And places with no carpet on the floor—  
Bare.  
But all the time  
I've been a-climbin' on,  
And reachin' landin's,  
And turnin' corners,  
And sometimes goin' in the dark  
Where there ain't been no light.  
So, boy, don't you turn back.  
Don't you set down on the steps.  
'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.  
Don't you fall now—  
For I've still goin', honey,  
I've still climbin',  
And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.



- Drop out rates – 33% for AA<sup>7</sup>
- Prison Population – 1:60 for whites 1:25 for AA<sup>8</sup>
- Under-prepared students
- AIDS and chronic diseases including obesity<sup>9</sup>
- Decay of family structure
- Loss of land ownership
- Un-employment and under employment<sup>10</sup>
- Loss of homeownership –foreclosures<sup>11</sup>
- Decline in net worth
- Sustainability of small and African-American farmers<sup>12</sup>
- Globalization<sup>13</sup>
- Water quality and quantity<sup>14</sup>
- Browning and Graying of America<sup>15</sup>

These issues are consistent with the AEA Strategic Plan – *Setting the Pace for the Next Millennium*, November 1998, Updated in 2006. In 2007 sixty-two Extension Directors and Administrators ranked problems and necessary program actions<sup>16</sup> as:

- Create pathways to energy independence – 89%
- Assure an abundant and safe food supply-85%
- Sustain profitable plant and animal production systems-84%
- Prepare youth, families and individuals for success in the global workforce and all aspects of life -84%
- Assist in effective decision-making regarding environmental stewardship - 82%
- Help U.S. residents to become physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy-82%
- Assist communities in becoming sustainable and resilient to the uncertainties o economics, weather, health and security- 58%.

### Opportunities for 1890's

#### **Still I Rise by Maya Angelou**

You may write me down in history  
With your bitter, twisted lies,  
You may trod me in the very dirt  
But still, like dust, I'll rise.  
.....  
Out of the huts of history's shame  
I rise  
Up from a past that's rooted in pain  
I rise  
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,  
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.  
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear  
I rise  
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear  
I rise  
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,  
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.

I rise  
I rise  
I rise.

- Fifth Region Recognition by USDA<sup>17</sup>

"When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion." -- Ethiopian proverb

Collectively, the 1890 region (18 universities) is a powerful force

- National Institute Food and Agriculture (NIFA)<sup>18</sup>
- Collectively the integrated teaching/research/extension faculty and staff makes Colleges of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences potentially one of strongest on campus (integration Effort at TSU)<sup>19</sup>
- Facilities funding for technology and infrastructure<sup>20</sup>
- Specialization (discipline) and comprehensive (community based)
- Engagement Scholarship /w all colleges and schools<sup>21</sup>
- Urbanization – where people are and where problems are- urban gardening, community resource and economic development (ANR needs to be relevant)
- Faith Based Initiative – And still I rise- spirit of the people
- Community Service and Service learning
- Strengthening Linkages with African countries and their universities<sup>22</sup>
- Identifying, recruiting, developing and retaining appropriate faculty and staff/succession planning<sup>23</sup>
- Outreach to the Hispanic community and international immigrants
- Using soft touch and high technology to reach our people
- Aggressively linking minority landowners to forestry management initiatives<sup>24</sup>
- Selecting an appropriate role in helping your state use enormous private forestry resources in global climate change<sup>25</sup>

- Using technology and distance education to effectively reach limited resource clientele in your state and in Africa
- Letting Go of Stuff – personal and organizational
- Innovation and Creativity/ Futuring<sup>26</sup>
- Leadership, Team Building and Succession Planning<sup>27</sup>
- New faculty and staff not a bad thing (Generation X)
- Retaining Institutional Memory of Retiring Baby Boomers<sup>28</sup>
- Celebrate Small Victories-Enjoy the journey
- Accountability – Outcomes/Impacts<sup>29</sup>
- Communication/Communication/Communication (A Science Road Map for Agriculture)<sup>30</sup>

#### Changing Extension Faculty Expectations

- Increase Expertise in Discipline – PhD required
- Plan of Work- Extension Signature Program /w Logic Model
- Professional Development Plan (10% of time devoted to “Sharpening the Saw”)
- In-service Training via Distance Education
- CSREES Funding Workshops
- Contracts and Grants
- Applied Research and Publication in Journal of Extension
- Peer Reviewed Publications and Fact Sheets
- Participating in an eXtension Community of Practice (COP)
- Aggressively Using the Resources of the Southern Rural Development Center
- Embracing University Engagement Scholarship
- Systematic Evaluation/ Documentation of Outcomes/Impacts to Key Decision Makers

## Summary

- Colds vs. Pneumonia
- Our Purpose Driven Work<sup>31</sup>
- Change, Change, and more Change- Social, Demographic, Economic, Technological and Environmental Changes
- Integration and Interdependence (A Science Road Map)
- Accountability and Documentation of Impacts/Outcomes

End Quote: "No individual has any right to come into the world and go out of it without leaving behind him distinct and legitimate reasons for having passed through it." -- George Washington Carver

My challenge to you - As an Extension professional working at an 1890 university, you have no right to work or a career without leaving behind distinct and legitimate reasons for having passed through that university. Good luck with your strategic planning efforts!

## References

- 
- <sup>1</sup> Virginia State University School of Agriculture Strategic Plan 2007-2012
- <sup>2</sup> Tennessee State University Academic Master Plan 2008-2028: Envisioning the Future through the Lens of Our Heritage, August 2008
- <sup>3</sup> Spencer Johnson, *Who Moved My Cheese?*, New York, NY, G.P. Putnam and Sons, 1998
- <sup>4</sup> Jim Collins, *Good to Great*, New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers, 2001
- <sup>5</sup> Thomas Friedman, *The World Is Flat*, New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005
- <sup>6</sup> John Kotter, *Leading Change*, Boston, MA, Harvard Business School Press, 1996
- <sup>7</sup> Online News hour Report Transcript, High School Dropout Rate Rise, June 27, 2006, Public Broadcasting Station
- <sup>8</sup> James Lanier, *Lockdown: The Race to Incarcerate African Americans*, National Urban League Report,, 2003
- <sup>9</sup> Spearheading of 1890 Consortia, a draft report of meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, Summer 2008
- <sup>10</sup> Online News hour Report Transcript, Unemployment Rate Jumps to Five Year High, September 5, 2008
- <sup>11</sup> USA TODAY, Herd Mentality Leads Wall Street off a Cliff, Editorial page 10A and John Waggoner, Markets in Turmoil, USA TODAY, September 16, 2008, pages 1A-2A.
- <sup>12</sup> Association of Extension Administrators, Strategic Plan, Setting the Pace for the Next Millennium, November, 1998, Updated 2006. Farm Production Expenditures Hit Record High in 2007, USDA Reports, USDA-NASS News Release, Washington, DC, August 7, 2008
- <sup>13</sup> Extension Committee on Organization and Policy, Leadership Advisory Council 2006 Report, National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges
- <sup>14</sup> A Strategy for Federal Science and Technology to Support Water Availability and Quality in the United States, Report of the National Science and Technology Council Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Water Availability and Quality September 2007

---

<sup>15</sup> James H. Johnson, Jr., Director of the Urban Investment Strategies Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Presentation at Joint AEA and ARD Conference, Memphis, TN, June 9, 2008

and Ron Crouch, World and United States Trends- New Rules for a New Ballgame, Paper, Kentucky State Data Center, University of Louisville, 2006

<sup>16</sup> Strategic Opportunities for Cooperative Extension, Cooperative Extension Section, National Association of State Universities, October 2007

<sup>17</sup> Report to the Council of 1890 Presidents/Chancellors, Association of Research Directors and Association of Extension Administrators, July 28, 2007, Charleston, SC. Report to the Council of 1890 Presidents/Chancellors, Association of Research Directors and Association of Extension Administrators, July 31, 2008, Nashville, TN

<sup>18</sup> Sue Kirchhoff, Money for Crop Research Just a Drop in the Bucket, USA Today, July 31, 2008. Tom Harkin, Opinion: Farm Bill Advances Nation's Land-Grant Universities, A Public Voice, NASULGC Online Newsletter, August 2008

<sup>19</sup> Trends Impacting Higher Education, Excerpt from Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation goes to College", National Panel Report- Association of American Colleges and Universities. Scott Carlson, News Analysis: Students May Need Grounding in Agriculture as Much as in the Liberal Arts, The Chronicle of Higher Education, March 24, 2008

<sup>20</sup> Land-Grant Focus Newsletter, Ft. Valley State University, vol. 7, No. 4, Summer 2008

<sup>21</sup> Clyde E. Chesney, Leadership Challenges Facing the Cooperative Extension System, Cooperative Extension Program Presentations, and Paper posted at E-Research @ Tennessee State University, 2007

<sup>22</sup> Karen Fischer and Megan Lindow, Africa Attracts Renewed Attention from American Universities, The Chronicle of Higher Education, July 18, 2008. Paul Schattenberg, Land-Grant Universities Play Vital Role in Addressing World Food Crisis, Southwest Farm Press, and July 25, 2008. Michelle J. Nealy, Florida A & M Delegation Travels to Ghana to Establish Economic, Educational Collaborations, Diverse Education Online, June 4, 2008

<sup>23</sup> AEA Professional Development Committee Report on Survey of Professional Development Activities/Opportunities, June 1, 2007. Clyde E. Chesney, Round Table Discussion on Succession Planning, Galaxy III Conference, Indianapolis, IN, September 17, 2008

- 
- <sup>24</sup> Minority Landowner Magazine, Raleigh, NC: Cierra Publishing Company, Vol. 3, Number 3 summer 2008
- <sup>25</sup> Journal of Forestry, Special Issue on Global Climate Change, Society of Foresters, Vol. 106, Number 3, April/May 2008
- <sup>26</sup> Daryl Hobbs, Environmental Scanning/Futuring, Paper Presented at the Association of Extension Administrators , 1890 Extension System-Wide Conference, Atlanta Airport Marriott, June 22-26, 2003
- <sup>27</sup> Clyde E. Chesney, Strategic Planning and Getting to Success, Cooperative Extension Program Presentations, Paper posted at E-Research@ Tennessee State University, 2008
- <sup>28</sup> Duane Acker, Knowledge, Wisdom, and Freedom- The Role of Extension, Seaman A. Knapp Lecture, New Orleans, LA, November 16, 2003
- <sup>29</sup> Extension Committee on Organization and Policy, Leadership Advisory Council 2008 Draft Report, National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges,
- <sup>30</sup> A Science Road Map for Agriculture, National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, Update 2006
- <sup>31</sup> Larry E. Rivers, President of Fort Valley State University, Black Universities are Still Needed, Editorial in Atlanta Journal Constitution, January 14, 2008