

## Two Decades of Progress in Globalizing U. S. Extension Systems

Barbara G. Ludwig  
Professor and Chair, Ohio State University Extension  
The Ohio State University

1<sup>st</sup> Runner-Up Outstanding paper presented at the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education Conference, Baton Rouge, LA, April 4-7, 2001

### Abstract

The paper highlights the results of a 2000 study of U.S. Extension directors who described their Extension systems related to efforts to globalize. Barriers were also identified. Fifty land-grant Directors participated. Directors recognize that globalization of Extension is underway and will become more integrated into future Extension programming. In 1990, 40 states identified no or minimal efforts to globalize. Positive changes in globalizing were seen between 1990 and 2000 with 35 Extension systems moving towards globalization. By 2010, 14 directors project globalization will be integrated into extension programming and 30 project globalization will continue. The barriers most likely to limit globalizing of state Extension systems were: limited financial support, a lack of time, lack of clientele support and globalizing not being viewed as a programming priority. Over 150 comments from directors add richness to the quantitative results reported.

### Introduction

Extension programs across the globe are being challenged to consider their impact, relevance and effectiveness in a rapidly changing society. In the coming century, global components will become more central to our mission for Extension. They tie to the goals of economic well-being and quality of life for citizens and acknowledge that we are part of a larger global community. Globalizing Agricultural Science and Educational Programs for America (GASEPA, 1998) established a vision for colleges of agriculture and described globally competent stakeholders, faculty and students who live, compete and work in a dynamic and interdependent world community. Studies conducted in 1990 indicated there had been little emphasis on internationalizing by Extension systems across the country. (Poston & O'Rourke, 1991; Rosson & Sanders, 1991). Poston & O'Rourke (1991) reported 80% of Extension directors viewed their state had

achieved either a low level or had not achieved any level of globalization.

The current study sought to determine what changes had occurred, identify barriers and Extension directors' projections for the future. Ludwig (1999) established a definition for globalizing U.S. Extension systems which provided the basis for the study. Globalizing was defined as: The incorporation of global content into Extension efforts so that clientele develop a fundamental understanding of global interdependence and international economic forces as they relate to the issue areas with the Extension mission. Institutional commitment is evident in a structure to support staff development and a capacity to reward accomplishments in globalization.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the study was to describe changes in land grant Extension Systems from 1990 to 2000 related to globalizing the Extension Program and project changes by 2010.

## **Goals**

1. To ascertain state Extension system characteristics which relate to globalizing.
2. To ascertain efforts to globalize by state Extension systems
3. To compare state Extension systems which are globalized with those which are not as identified by their director
4. To ascertain barriers that limit globalizing of U.S. Extension systems

## **Methodology**

### Instrumentation

A survey instrument was developed following a review of literature to clarify the concepts being studied. A five point Likert-type scale was used. Respondents were invited to add position statements describing their response. Respondents identified major barriers to globalizing and completed open ended items requesting short descriptions of state systems efforts to globalize over a 20 year time period. Face and content validity of the instrument were assured through the use of a panel of experts. The reviewers, six faculty from universities in the U.S., were knowledgeable of Extension systems, research methodology and international programs. The instrument was pilot and field tested with university faculty from 10 universities to help control measurement error. Cronbach's alpha for the instrument was .85. This met criteria established for internal consistency (Nunnally, 1967).

### Data Collection and Analysis

Instruments were distributed to all Extension directors during a February 2000 meeting. Follow up contacts in March and May, 2000 encouraged response. Individuals responding to the May mailing of the questionnaire were considered late respondents. Descriptive statistics were calculated. Responses were coded for computer analysis using SPSS. A .05 level of significance was established *a priori*. Early and late respondents were compared, using late respondents as a surrogate for non-respondents (Miller and Smith, 1983). Using a t-test at the .05 alpha level, no significant differences were found between early and late respondents.

## **Results**

The results of the study represent the collective opinion of the directors participating in the study at a single point and time and cannot be construed to be representative of any other population or situation. The directors included in the study were from 50 state land grant institutions and the District of Columbia. One state did not respond resulting in a 98% response rate. Comments made by the directors provided additional information to describe the ratings and clarified issues. Forty-nine usable instruments were received. Forty-three directors report having traveled outside the U.S. on professional business during the last 10 years.

### Characteristics

Directors were asked to indicate agreement or disagreement with a series of statements as descriptors of their Extension system. Seven characteristics were examined based on the GASEPA report (1999) and a study of internationalizing U.S. Extension systems (Ludwig, 1999). Tables 1 and 2 report the results. One hundred and five comments were received explaining ratings on the seven

characteristics. Table 3 provides an overview of these comments. The characteristics considered were:

- Programs offered to clientele incorporate global perspectives
- Extension professionals are interested in incorporating a global perspective
- Professional development opportunities exist for Extension professionals to develop global competencies
- Resources are available (i.e. funding) to support Extension professionals wishing to engage in global collaborative efforts
- Agricultural programs focus on the impact of international economic forces on agricultural markets
- Personnel evaluation systems recognize international efforts
- Extension professionals are involved in programs which promote economic and social well-being in other nations

Table 1

Characteristics of State Extension Systems (N = 49)

<b>Item Descriptor</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Programs offered to clientele incorporate global perspectives	3.3	.92
Extension professionals are interested in incorporating a global perspective	3.5	.97
Professional development opportunities exist for Extension professionals to develop global competencies	3.1	1.1
Resources are available (i.e. funding) to support Extension professionals wishing to engage in global collaborative efforts	2.8	1.1
Agricultural programs focus on the impact of international economic forces on agricultural markets	3.6	1.1
Personnel evaluation systems recognize international efforts	3.0	1.0
Extension professionals are involved in programs which promote economic and social well-being in other nations	3.0	1.1

Scale: 1 - Strongly disagree; 2 - Disagree; 3 -Neutral (Neither disagree or agree); 4 - Agree; 5 - Strongly Agree

Comparison of Systems

ANOVA was used to examine differences between state Extension systems which were identified as more globalized by their director with those having no or minimal globalization for 1990 and 2000 and for each of the seven characteristics studied. No statistically significant differences ( $p < .05$ ) were found between groups.

Efforts to Globalize

Directors were asked to describe their state Extension systems efforts to globalize in 1990 and 2000 and project efforts for the year 2010. For purpose of analysis, the comments were coded into three categories based on the descriptors provided by directors: (1) none or minimal globalizing; (2) moving in a direction of globalizing; (3) globalization integrated into Extension programming. Positive changes towards globalizing were shown from 1990 to 2000 with increasing globalization efforts projected in 2010. Changes reported from 1990 to 2000 showed 35 Extension systems moving towards globalization with one state reporting having achieved globalization. Three states

Table 2

Characteristics of State Extension Systems by Frequency of Response (N=49)

Item Descriptor	Rating Scale					Valid Percentage
	1	2	3	4	5	
Programs offered to clientele incorporate global perspectives	2	17	40	33	8	100
Extension professionals are interested in incorporating a global perspective	2	16	29	41	2	100
Professional development opportunities exist for Extension professionals to develop global competencies	4	31	31	18	6	100
Resources are available (i.e. funding) to support Extension professionals wishing to engage in global collaborative efforts	8	45	18	21	8	100
Agricultural programs focus on the impact of international economic forces on agricultural markets	2	12	29	35	2	100
Personnel evaluation systems recognize international efforts	6	29	37	22	6	100
Extension professionals are involved in programs which promote economic and social well-being in other nations	6	34	23	29	8	100

Scale: 1 - Strongly disagree; 2 - Disagree; 3 -Neutral (Neither disagree or agree); 4 - Agree; 5 - Strongly Agree

Table 3

## Characteristics of State Extension Systems - Comments

<p>1. Programs offered to clientele incorporate global perspectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· We should do more, but the developed country view we hold keeps us from full deliberation, involvement and access to all ideas and thoughts. We are Ameri-centric in our programs.</li><li>· Programs include global topics when appropriate for the particular audience</li><li>· In Ag marketing, trade issues, related to beef and wheat industries</li><li>· Some Extension faculty have had international experience and incorporate a global perspective at the state and county level</li><li>· Majority of programs focus on local perspectives, incorporation of global perspectives is limited</li></ul>
<p>2. Extension professionals incorporate a global perspective in their programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Educators who have international experiences back a strong commitment to globalizing Extension programs</li><li>· Perhaps we do a bit better in natural resources and the environment than in agriculture and family living</li><li>· Extension staff are interested in incorporating global perspective into their programs however this is limited by their knowledge of appropriate issues. This is a topic for upcoming professional development activities.</li><li>· Local people really prefer to think smaller, not broader to world issues – most specialists and educators focus on local and immediate issues</li><li>· Program areas where a global component is appropriate are aggressive , economics</li><li>· Extension professionals are interested in incorporating global perspective in their programs</li></ul>
<p>3. Professional development opportunities exist for Extension professionals to develop global competencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· True, but very few and often not from sources with CE; international experiences are not a high priority when resources are limited</li><li>· Some opportunities exist. I do not believe we have had much discussion on global competencies – nothing formalized</li><li>· We have several ways through which Extension professionals can participate. Only have funding for a few at a time but we do make it possible.</li><li>· Local people/county committees resist their county educators involvement in international work because of the gap it creates in local programs</li><li>· XXX state reopened assistant dean for international ag programs which is helping make international issues and globalization a higher priority</li><li>· Limited, although have done more with sabbaticals and short-term international experiences</li><li>· We offer Extension county and state faculty one month every two years to engage in an international experience. They are required to take leave but must seek to find their own source of funding. Many cooperate with VOCA.</li><li>· We don't have much inservice that helps and issues are very complex and systems oriented</li></ul>
<p>4. Resources are available, i.e., funding to support Extension professionals wishing to engage in collaborative efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Not much funding available for anything, we lack state support, can barely afford telephones, travel.</li><li>· No financial resources available or allocated for global efforts</li><li>· The university and college are strongly supportive of international experience</li><li>· Budgets are tight, but motivated people are successful in finding adequate support for good programs</li><li>· Only from grant sources for international experiences</li><li>· Yes, based on programmatic justification; funds are available on research side for grants</li><li>· Time is allowed without leave, i.e., one month per two years but no funding</li><li>· Our sabbatical leaves support full salary leave for six months but individuals have to pursue their own resources generally.</li><li>· Funds are available on a very limited ad hoc, basis but no special funds have been designated to support such programming</li></ul>

<p>5. Agricultural programs focus on the impact of international economic forces on agricultural market.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· International marketing is a vital priority for Extension programs, for farmers and industry</li> <li>· Not as much as we would like because of staff retirements</li> <li>· An increasing number of Extension programs include a discussion of the impact on agricultural markets, especially programs by agricultural economics</li> <li>· Probably moving more in this direction than in other areas; varies by community and geographic region</li> <li>· Emphasis is placed on local and specific region market and economic development</li> <li>· Research in fisheries marketing has Extension applications. This is highly global in perspective.</li> <li>· To a degree, our programs deal primarily with alternative crop production and potential markets for raw products. Most markets are local or within the range of a few states. However clients are aware of trade issues and particularly NAFTA.</li> </ul>
<p>6. Personnel evaluation systems recognize international efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Typically not except when a person is going for "full professor." At that stage "international and national reputation" may be part of the assignment. Part of that local and state forces often like to see faculty connections and program commitment being close to home - thought of as funder-based.</li> <li>· Not at present</li> <li>· Really just beginning, not totally engaged yet in the evaluation and reward system</li> <li>· Performance appraisals document for both county and state faculty are flexible and can include global components as appropriate</li> <li>· There are have some serious negative consequences when faculty are gone for extended international assignment</li> <li>· Limited recognition, needs to contribute to planned programs and scholarship...viewed primarily as an extra service activity</li> <li>· Evaluation systems do not particularly focus on international work but diversity or personnel development are recognized.</li> <li>· International work is generally not recognized at the same level as quality teaching, research content or Extension.</li> <li>· If someone did well on an international project, that would be recognized. It does not mean that international work would be valued more</li> <li>· Faculty, yes. CE educators, this doesn't apply in practice</li> <li>· Faculty are evaluated on the impact of their programs on the people of the state to the extent their international efforts do that, then yes they get credit.</li> </ul>
<p>7. Extension professionals are involved in programs which promote economic and social well-being in other nations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· A number are involved in short term humanitarian and development projects. A few have been involved for extended periods in Morocco, Russia and Poland.</li> <li>· Not as a rigorous formal program objective; this is usually through sabbaticals, other leaves or special travel opportunities</li> <li>· Extension professionals collaborate with professionals in the South Pacific</li> <li>· We have some who are/have been very involved. Clearly most are not.</li> <li>· Probably more on a personal than professional basis</li> <li>· Faculty in department more than field faculty</li> <li>· Only occasionally and not with any systematic or coordinated effort</li> <li>· Some of the professional staff have taken the initiative to get personally involved globally, as well as incorporate with their program efforts</li> </ul>

reported during the time period 1990-2000 a movement from having a moderate level of globalization to minimal efforts as funding sources for international projects were lost. In 1990, 40 states identified no or minimal efforts to globalize. By 2000, 13 states reported minimal efforts and 35 state directors recognized their systems as moving

Table 4

toward internationalization. By 2010, 14 directors projected globalization would be integrated into their Extension programming, 30 forecast continued progress in globalizing and 5 projected minimal efforts to globalize. Tables 4 and 5 provide an overview.

State Directors' Identify Efforts to Globalize State Extension Systems 1990-2010 (N = 49)

Action Descriptors	Frequency & Valid Percentage					
	1990		2000		2010	
None or minimal globalization	40	82%	13	27%	5	10%
Moving in the direction of globalization	9	18%	35	71%	30	61%
Global elements integrated into Extension programming	0	0%	1	2%	14	29%

Barriers

Eight barriers that limit globalizing (Ludwig, 1999; Knight, Elliot & Krenzer, 2000) of state Extension systems were listed and directors asked to select the three barriers most impacting their system. The barriers most likely to limit globalizing of state Extension systems were: limited financial support available (65%), and a lack of time (25%). Directors also viewed lack of clientele support (19%) and not a programming priority (17%) as barriers.

**Implications for Leaders** - *We cannot become what we need to be by remaining what we are.*  
Max DePree

Martin (2001) in reviewing the results of the study expresses concern that while some progress has been made, U.S. Extension systems could be characterized as globally challenged. The lack of a plan for globalization or adding an international perspective to Extension programming is evident in responses from most states.

Ludwig (1999), Knight and Elliot (2000) in studies involving Extension personnel in two states found similar perceptions. Extension personnel viewed lack of time, financial support, and not being a program priority as the primary barriers. Concern about clientele support appears to be greater perceived barrier

for directors than Extension educators who deal directly with local clientele. It will be important for clientele to experience strong consistent programming while Extension professionals are outside of the country and be able to see the benefits they gain from a more cosmopolitan Extension professional. Extension personnel appear to have more concerns about whether the organization saw globalizing as a priority. Extension directors and program leaders will need to demonstrate their support of globalizing. This will be accomplished both by securing funds to support efforts and providing a vision of how globalizing will contribute to cross cultural competency, economic advantage in the global market and protection of the environment we share.

The handwriting seems clear\_incorporation of global concepts into local programming should be a part of Extension's future in the United States. In most states, personal and organizational desires to be involved in globalization. Globalization may be an area where multi-state programming for professional development can flourish. What is needed next is a plan and impetus for globalization of Extension systems to become a high priority of the land grant system.

## References

GASEPA Task Force (1998). Globalizing agricultural science and education programs for America. International Agriculture Section, National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, Bobby D. Moser Chairman. Washington D.C.

Ludwig, B. G. (1999, March). Extension professionals' perspectives on global programming. 1999 conference proceeding of the Association for International and Extension Education. Port of Spain, Trinidad. Un-numbered pages.

Martin, R. (2001). Two decades of progress in globalizing – A critique. 2001 AIAEE Conference. Baton Rouge, LA. 1 page handout.

Miller, L. & Smith, K. (1983). Handling non-response issues. Journal of Extension, 21, 45.

Poston, T. and O'Rourke, U. (1991, November). Globalization and cooperative extension, final report: November 1991 (Publication 91-53). Washington State University: Social and Economic Sciences Research Center (SESRC).

Rosson, C.P. & Sanders, L.D. (1991, Summer). Extension in a global context. Journal of Extension, XXIIIIX, 21-23.

Nunally, J. (1967). Psychometric theory. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

Table 5 Sample Descriptors of U.S. Extension Systems Efforts to Globalize

1990	2000	2010
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Hampered by the challenges of budget cuts we look to direct value to direct payers</li> <li>· Limited to international research projects</li> <li>· Trailing off in 1990s with shift in USAID dollars</li> <li>· Minimal very limited (23)</li> <li>· Not recognized by Extension administration</li> <li>· Active, but focused on a few at the state level (3)?</li> <li>· Gestation phase, first involvement in "going global"</li> <li>· Support of USDA international efforts several people went to Poland (3)</li> <li>· International committee, kept international awareness of front of agents</li> <li>· High interest, but fewer opportunities than today</li> <li>· Recognition of need for global perspective</li> <li>· Very active in international programs (several projects); high priority (4)</li> <li>· We have a great tradition</li> <li>· Extension professionals participate in certain Caribbean agricultural organizations</li> <li>· Understanding global economics, trade, diseases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Global summit &amp; international conferences</li> <li>· Increased funding and program professional dev. (2)</li> <li>· No change from moderate involvement in 1990</li> <li>· We understand that progress and potential are tied up with the entire globe and yet are very Ameri-centric in thought and action</li> <li>· Extension is moving towards a central focus with training provided for a central group of staff</li> <li>· Programs across all mission areas incorporate a global perspective</li> <li>· Some efforts with special programs; piecemeal</li> <li>· Learning new ways/means (example, World Bank)</li> <li>· Recognized as important (8)</li> <li>· Very limited (5); mostly by a few individuals</li> <li>· Starting a new international experience program targeting county faculty. Have fully realized the need.</li> <li>· Breaking out as a total university</li> <li>· Issues (global) more visible, better integration</li> <li>· Global marketing program funded at \$1.2 million</li> <li>· Strong links to ag marketing</li> <li>· Decreased emphasis from 1990 (3)</li> <li>· Strong peer encouragement</li> <li>· Have international ag office in several programs</li> <li>· Momentum is growing; Interest, awareness, involvement is expanding</li> <li>· We program with global economy more in mind</li> <li>· Global competitiveness requires that we be very involved</li> <li>· Includes business development globally, international ag marketing</li> <li>· Individual interests, but funders not supportive</li> <li>· Supportive of a small number of faculty and agents to obtain global experience (2)</li> <li>· Many state level faculty use in programming</li> <li>· Globalization is a buzz word, it doesn't mean anything.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Our team has expanded efforts with opportunities for staff and clientele alike.</li> <li>· International activities and perspectives, including increased exchange opportunities and program content will become important parts of the total Extension effort (2)</li> <li>· Efforts will have increased greatly over today (6)</li> <li>· Increased involvement in degree/short course and technology-based programs</li> <li>· Integrated into programming</li> <li>· Limited (3) or piecemeal</li> <li>· Essential; Proactive to keen interest, frequent exchanges</li> <li>· Increased efforts in field faculty involvement</li> <li>· Incorporation of global components across base programs as appropriate</li> <li>· More positions and more money towards international work and awareness (3)</li> <li>· Extensive, many efforts to bring opportunities to our staff and provide encouragement to participate</li> <li>· Increased funding and program and professional development</li> <li>· Expanded educational programs for farmers</li> <li>· Greater use of "best practices" in educational projects</li> <li>· Global perspective will drive most programs</li> <li>· Seamless</li> <li>· More fully integrate current aspects, including multilingual training</li> <li>· Much more engaged, much more involved</li> <li>· We will have many agents and faculty overseas</li> <li>· Recognition and understanding of a truly global system</li> <li>· Will engage in global collaborative efforts</li> <li>· Expanded focus on economics</li> <li>· Dependent on financial support available</li> </ul>