Assessing Needs and Writing Program Objectives
EXTENSION PROCESS

- Educational Mission
- Situation Analysis
- Target Audience
- Needs Assessment
- Program Objectives
- Educational Program Design
  - Content
  - Learning Strategies
- Implementation
  Learner Assessment
  Educational Program
- Evaluation
- Reflection
Key Questions

• What is an Extension program?
• What is “Needs Assessment”? 
• Why do “Needs Assessment”?
What is an Extension Program?

• A planned educational response to an identified need.
What is Needs Assessment?

• a focused process that analyzes those specific audiences who have been targeted by the organization for educational programming emphasis.
• seeks to identify current circumstances or conditions faced by the targeted audiences.
Why Needs Assessment?

- Unlimited Needs, Limited Resources
- Program Planning
- Curriculum Development
- Educational Design
- Needs Change Over Time
How “Need Assessment” Help Your Programming

- Set priorities
- Clarity and focus
- Curriculum Development
- Build public support
- Reinvented and/or energized the program
- Funding Sources
- Whether an extension program should be developed (or improved)
Who is your Audience?

- Field Crop Producers
  - Conventional
  - Organic
- Livestock Producers
- Vegetable Growers
- Landscape Companies
- Turf Growers
- Crop Consultants
- Legislatures
- Home Gardeners
- Greenhouse Growers
Who are the potential audiences

- Primary Audience - Field Crop Grower
- Secondary Audience - Crop Consultants
- Tertiary Audience - Ag. Business/Other Government Ag. Agencies?
Formal Need Assessment Design?

- **Survey methods**
  - Mailed Survey
  - Interview Survey
  - Many methods and kinds of surveys

- **Social indicators**
  - Importance of a new invasive pest
  - Excess pesticide in streams
  - Soil testing results not used correctly
  - Many new farmers in an area
  - More consumers wanting organic grains

- **Group processes**
  - Focus Groups
  - Nominal Group Technique
  - Quality Assurance Committees
  - Localized Steering Committees
Less Formal Methods

• Consult Local Advisory Groups-
• Personal contact with the audience-
  – Seems to be the prevailing method of determining needs.
  – These can be much more effective at getting at real issues but takes a lot more time
For TAg More Than Just Needs

For a NYS TAg program

• Do I have participant buy in?

• Grower identified needs - IPM / ICM

• Participant commitment: -Season long participation -minimum of 4 participants /team?
Questions to Ask

• What are the objectives of this project?
• How much time will this project take?
• What resources do I have for this project?
  – Money, guidelines, scouting techniques, technical backup etc
• Can I get pre-made curriculum?
• Will I have to develop my own curriculum?
• How will the meetings be structured?
• Are there other professional educators that might want to be involved?
Setting Objectives

- **Long Range Goal:** To Educate Field Crop Producers In Eastern NYS in IPM Practices

- **Process Objectives:**
  - Develop a new set of teaching modules on IPM for soybean TAg by April 2007.
  - Establish a TAg Soybean TAg team by April 2007 in the Northeast region of the county.

- **Outcome Objectives:**
  - 8 alfalfa growers will increase their knowledge of IPM by correctly answering 80% or more of the post-test correctly.
  - Measured by a post-survey 8 wheat producers in a TAg program will adopt 80% of the IPM practices presented
What makes a good Outcome

Objective

• **Target** for change

• **Results** to be achieved

• **Criteria** for measuring results
What are the Intended Educational Outcomes?

Identify Core Ingredients:

1. **Specific audience**: Field Crop Producers
2. **Intended Outcomes**: Adoption of IPM Practices
3. **Criteria or indicators for measuring results**: Measure on completion of the TAg program with a survey.

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Re-write 1-3 in sentence form =

8 Field crop producers will adopt 80% of the IPM practices presented by completing an exit survey.
Examples of Objectives

- We will use exit survey results to demonstrate that 6 Oneida County field crop producers will adopt 80% of the field corn and alfalfa IPM practices taught during a TAg program.

- 4 organic corn producers in Essex County’s TAg program will adopt 85 percent of organic pest management practices demonstrated after completing an exit survey.

- 6 soybean growers in the Madison County TAg program will retain 80 percent of the factual information presented by completing a post-test.
Who can Help?

• Identify Collaborators
  – Other Extension Educators
  – University Faculty and Specialist
  – Other Government Agencies
    • Soil and Water
    • NRCS
    • Farm Services
  – Other Agricultural Groups
    • NOFA, Farm Bureau, Consulting firms
Questions?
Targeting Audiences Worksheet

- Groups of 3
- Pick a recorder
- Pick a presenter
- Pick One Topic (Subject) Area
- As a group complete the worksheet
- 5 Minutes
- Present your work