



## Sharing Knowledge

Good ideas never go out of style. Since 1868, Kansas State University has been delivering research-based information directly to Kansas citizens.



According to the *History of Kansas State College of Agriculture and Applied Science* by Julius Willard, the Board of Regents passed resolutions in June 1868 to create farmers' institutes by "requesting members of the faculty to visit the more populous parts of the state, and, by lectures on agricultural subjects and free conversation, disseminate information on correct agricultural principles and the aims and character of the college."

### Farmers' Institutes Begin

The first farmers' institute in November 1868 covered "the relation

of the college to agricultural interests in the state, tree borers, forest tree culture, and the economy of the farm." All still relevant topics. For example, current projects involve preserving the Ogallala Aquifer, addressing insects invading Kansas trees and crops, and improving financial management practices for producers.

Willard wrote, "By 1905 the value of farmers' institutes in the several localities of the State had become so thoroughly appreciated, and demands for assistance from the college on such programs had reached such a volume,

that the Board of Regents employed Mr. John H. Miller to serve as field secretary and organizer of farmers' institutes."

In April 1905, the St. Joseph and Grand Island Railway Co. ran a special dairy train with a lecture car, three exhibition cars for showing dairy apparatus and products, and a Pullman for sleeping.

Later that year K-State President Nichols persuaded the Rock Island railway system to operate a farmers' institute train that covered the entire 1,030-mile system, making 30-minute

stops with concurrent sessions on wheat and corn at 135 stations. It took two weeks to complete the trip. Farmers' institutes were the forerunner of today's extension activities.

K-State's Department of Extension was formed in 1911, with Miller as director. On Oct. 30, 1912, the department was changed to the Division of Extension, and Miller was promoted to dean. H.J. Umberger, namesake of Umberger Hall on the Manhattan campus, became dean in 1919.

### Programs for the People

For many people, 4-H is synonymous with extension. Kansas 4-H started in 1905, and Kansan Otis Hall wrote the national 4-H pledge in 1919. Last year, 65,200 Kansas youth participated in hands-on learning opportunities.

The first Home Demonstration Unit was created in 1914 when Leavenworth County women requested help in food preservation. Nutrition, childhood obesity, and financial management are among topics now addressed by extension family and consumer sciences professionals.

Created in 1931, the Kansas Farm Management Association continues to offer management recommendations for farm families and landowners. The *AgManager.info* website averages more than 70,000 visits by more than 25,000 unique visitors each month.

### Smith-Lever Act of 1914

This year marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Smith-Lever Act, a federal law that provided funding for outreach endeavors at the land-grant universities founded by the Morrill Act of 1862. It was introduced by Senator Hoke Smith of Georgia and Representative A. F. Lever of South Carolina.

The act established the Cooperative Extension Service as a shared partnership among the federal, state, and county levels of government to ensure support from each level.

A centennial celebration in Washington, D.C., on May 7-8, 2014, will acknowledge extension's heritage, while launching its educational programs for the future.

### Building on the Past

When Daryl Buchholz, associate director for extension and applied research, received a copy of the 1922 *Extension Worker's Code*, he was amazed that it still applied to current K-State Research and Extension programs.

"The foundation and principles of taking knowledge to the people are as relevant today as when the Cooperative

#### THE EXTENSION WORKER'S CODE 13

##### Do More Than "Get By"

It is really a sad state of affairs to see a worker drifting along, doing just what is necessary "to get by," because in every case it is just a question of a comparatively short time until such a person will be relieved of his duties.

If you are not conscientious and interested in the work, and willing to put your very best efforts into every undertaking, you should find other employment. The slacker will not get far in extension work and the sooner he radically mends his methods the better it will be for him and for the extension service.

##### Have a Vision

It is of paramount importance that every extension worker have a vision. When the work for the year has been mapped out and the calendar of work adapted to it, try to visualize the results which should be obtained. Leave nothing undone which might contribute toward success. No really worthwhile undertaking has ever been carried to a successful completion without careful and definite plans being made in advance.

##### Keep Your Eye on the Big Things

Everywhere we see workers neglecting the big things to attend to the little. While they are doing some little detail that should be left to a clerk, a stenographer, or an office boy, they lose sight of some great advantage which they might have gained—some real problem they might have solved, had they been free to attend to it. No one is great enough to be a leader and at the same time bury himself in details. Either the big things or the little things must predominate; the one is sure to outweigh the other.

Extension Service was created by the Smith-Lever Act in 1914," said Buchholz.

He offered some examples:

*From the 1922 code: No really worthwhile undertaking has ever been carried to a successful completion without careful and definite plans being made in advance.*

"This statement directly relates to our strategic planning for Vision 2025, and K-State Research and Extension's important role in making Kansas State University a top 50 research university."

*It is better to specialize on a few problems, making them an outstanding success, than to spread out over the whole field of extension work . . . .*

"We have identified five grand challenges facing Kansas — global food systems, water, health, developing tomorrow's leaders, and community vitality. K-State Research and Extension programs address issues that affect all Kansans."



The soil improvement train stopped in Pittsburg, Kansas, 1926