

STRATEGIC PLAN

2011 — 2015

BLUEPRINT for excellence

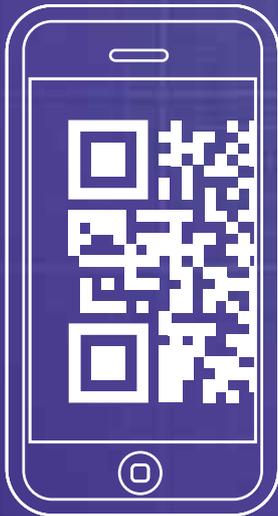
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Using QR CODES:

The checkerboard above is a QR (Quick Response) code. It stores information such as web addresses or videos much like a barcode. To access the information, download a free QR scanner app to your smart mobile device and scan the code. Look for these QR codes throughout the strategic plan to see short videos describing our work. To view the videos online without scanning the code, go to <http://division.uaex.edu>.

Working towards a better Arkansas

A B L U E P R I N T T O T H E F U T U R E

At the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, our mission is to help enrich the lives of our neighbors by drawing on what we learn from our research and using our outreach skills. The Division is unique, as well, by its physical presence in communities and all 75 counties statewide, affording Arkansans immediate and timely access to cutting-edge, sound and unbiased information and knowledge.

Early in 2010, we asked hundreds of our friends, neighbors and colleagues in the Natural State to tell us what they saw as the most critical issues affecting the quality of life in Arkansas. We listened to their responses about agricultural production and processing; environment, energy and climate; families and youth programs; access to safe and nutritious food; and community development. We have also assessed how our state needs interface with the priorities and opportunities emerging at the national and global levels.

The way ahead will no doubt include economic, natural and social challenges. However, we believe our 2011–2015 strategic plan will serve as the blueprint for achieving our mission to benefit all of Arkansas.

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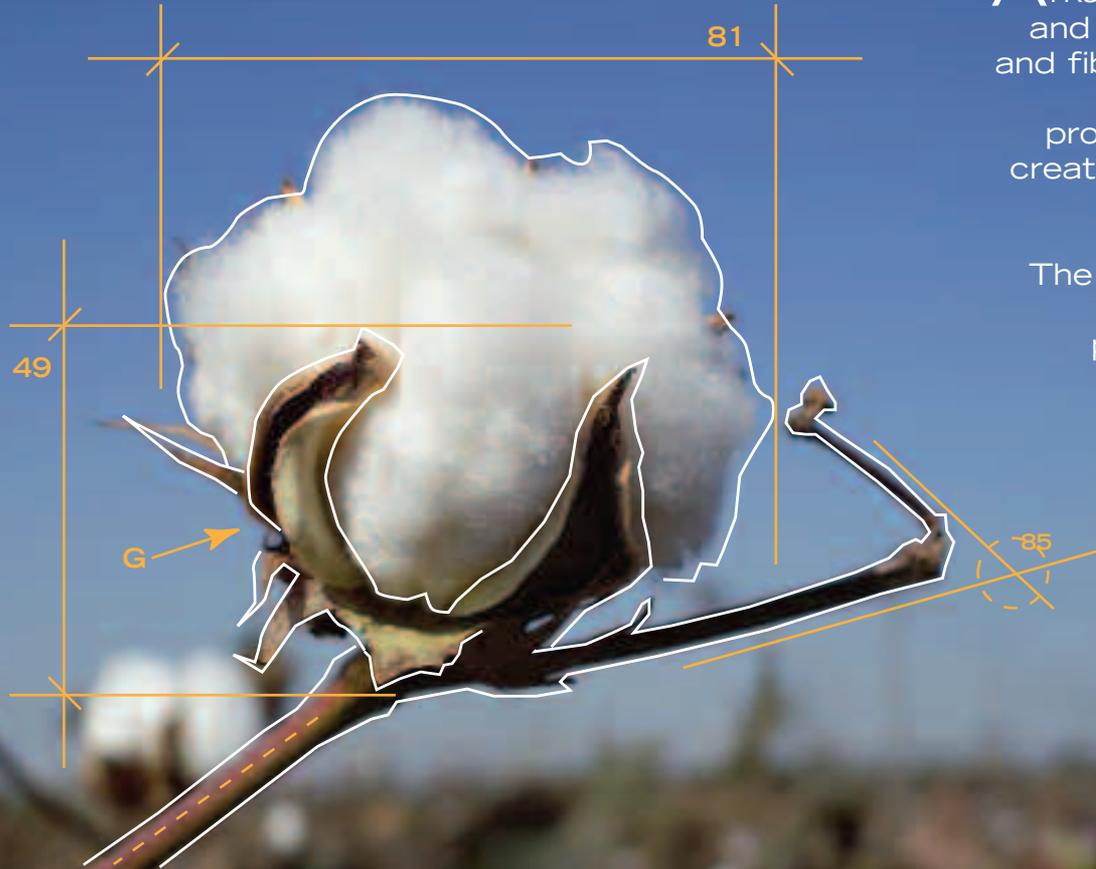
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Why is agriculture important to Arkansas?

Arkansas farmers, ranchers and foresters produce food and fiber for the state, nation and world. Agricultural production and processing creates one in every six jobs in Arkansas.

The University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture provides innovative and timely research and extension educational programs to help food and fiber producers and processors improve production and guarantee the sustainability of agriculture and forestry in the state.



EMPHASIS AREA

ONE

Agricultural
Production & Processing



The Division helps Arkansas's agricultural industry fulfill its roles of being a major contributor to the state's economy, being a good steward of our natural resources and remaining a sustainable producer of food and fiber for the state, the nation and the world.

Agriculture contributes more than 12 percent of Arkansas's gross domestic product, greater than any other southern state and well above the national average. Agriculture and forestry are critical to the stewardship of the state's environment, with about

54 percent of Arkansas's land base in forests and 42 percent in farms. Arkansans benefit from agriculture's contributions to maintaining a healthy, natural environment that contains a diversity of plant and animal species and provides recreational opportunities and beautiful rural landscapes.

Challenges and opportunities for farmers and those engaged in processing and marketing food and fiber products range from the adoption of specific best management practices to the integration of comprehensive production and marketing systems for each enterprise. Agricultural productivity issues can be overshadowed by the needs and desires of consumers and the beliefs, attitudes and actions of the general public and of policy-makers. Sustainable agriculture and forestry industries will require continuous adaptation to changing markets, technology, environmental conditions and societal concerns. There will need to be increased emphasis on efficient production and

The Division remains committed to providing cutting-edge research, education and extension programs.

processing, innovative marketing strategies, and an increased public knowledge about and appreciation for the sources of our food and fiber products.

Efficient Production and Processing

To stay in business, producers and processors must have the most efficient systems available. The Division works with stakeholders to improve efficiency through discovery and delivery of science-based solutions. Critical areas for the present and future include energy, water, soil nutrients, pesticides and other production inputs. Environmental impacts of production practices must continually be considered. The Division serves diverse agricultural sectors, with a wide range of plant and animal enterprises from the Delta to the Ozarks. The state is a leader in the production of major commodities, including rice, broilers, cotton, catfish, turkeys, soybeans, feed grains, beef and timber, as well as locally important enterprises such as hay, fruits, vegetables and other specialty crops.

The Division remains committed to providing cutting-edge research and unbiased diagnostic services that producers need to make informed decisions. Division researchers continue to discover





Producers have access to answers about plant and animal disease, nutrition and genetics through the Division.

methods to increase food and fiber productivity. One innovation is a new nitrogen soil test that determines fertilizer rates needed to optimize crop yields and minimize runoff in surface water. Poultry scientists are assisting

that vital state industry with continual improvement in feed conversion by broilers, which is a key to efficient production. Division testing services are provided for crop varieties, soil, manure, water quality and forestry genetics. Diagnostic and analytical services are provided for animal and plant diseases, nematodes, and poultry and cattle nutrition and genetics. Food sensory analysis and other analytical services assist Arkansas's food processing industry.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Develop and deliver efficient, sustainable agricultural production and processing best management practices.
- Discover and promote adoption of breakthrough science-based technologies.
- Analyze and explain the impact of issues affecting Arkansas agricultural production and processing.

Competitive Marketing

Arkansas producers and processors marketing traditional and specialty plant and animal products need assistance through research and education on identifying existing and emerging local, national and global market supply chains. Producers and processors also need to adjust to changing local and global market conditions, meet certification requirements, and respond to regulatory policies and consumer demands.

The Arkansas Global Rice Model is an example of a Division program that provides insight into forces that impact commodity prices in the world market. On a smaller scale, the Division's Market Maker web site helps to match agricultural producers with existing specialty product markets. Market reporting services are provided for livestock and timber producers.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Analyze global and local commodity and product market opportunities and constraints.
- Identify and address the needs of diverse agricultural enterprises related to marketing supply chains.
- Analyze and explain the impact of issues affecting Arkansas plant and animal product markets.
- Help producers and processors take advantage of market opportunities.

Public Appreciation and Understanding of Agriculture

An increasingly urbanized public needs to be educated about the importance of Arkansas agriculture and forestry to their lives and the state's economy, environment and culture. The Division supports academic programs on university campuses and provides science-based curriculum for schools and the public. The Division produces and disseminates information for target audiences and the general public through diverse media outlets. The Division provides news releases, publications, web sites and multimedia products to help tell the story of Arkansas agriculture. The Division's 4-H youth development program provides many opportunities for Arkansas youth to participate in agriculture-related projects and explore future careers in agriculture. Division personnel communicate with individuals, small groups and local organizations in all 75 Arkansas counties about the importance of agriculture and forestry to the state.

The Division works to aid public understanding of agriculture's economic and cultural importance.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Increase public awareness of Arkansas agriculture's economic and environmental benefits.
- Teach the science behind agriculture through youth and adult education programs.
- Recruit and retain agricultural and forestry professionals and leaders.
- Analyze and communicate science-based information about sustainable agriculture issues to the public.



Can we keep the “Natural State” natural? What’s it worth?

Arkansas has abundant natural resources. Water demands, land ownership patterns, new regulations, new scientific understanding, new measures of environmental sustainability and the unintended consequences of decisions all impact our Natural State. These issues require an ability to adapt, to modify behavior, and to fix the problems of our own making. Whether by rule, by incentive or by knowledge gained, we must bring scientific understanding to our daily dollars and cents existence.





SCAN
QR code to
see video

Conserving Water Resources

Mounting pressures placed on Arkansas's water resources, require conservation of water quantity and quality. Declining groundwater escalates competition among residential, recreational, agricultural, municipal and industrial users. Water quality issues focus attention on identifying and controlling contaminant sources. Unbiased science-based knowledge is necessary for effective water policy and workable solutions.

A clean and ample water supply is essential to Arkansas's future in the competitive global marketplace. Concerns include science-based, cost-effective and practical water conservation; better understanding land management trends; conflicting social and economic priorities; conflicting state, local and national regulations; and incentives for improving management and uses of water.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Improve efficient use and conservation of water resources through research and education.
- Educate Arkansans about competing demands for water quantity and quality for agricultural, residential, recreational, wildlife, industrial and municipal needs.
- Inform decision makers with science-based information on water quantity and quality.
- Collaborate with state and federal agencies to sustain water resources.
- Provide the science-based information needed to understand changing environmental regulations.



Arkansas's agricultural base provides a solid foundation for research into bio-energy production.

Alternative Energy and Conservation

Arkansans are interested in energy conservation and alternative energy sources. Arkansas's strong agricultural base positions us well for developing bio-energy production and conversion techniques. Developing alternative energy systems will require impact analysis on the environment, communities and agricultural markets. Although farm and residential energy



The Division continues to explore the potential of bio-energy production and conversion using crops well-suited for Arkansas.

conservation is needed, information on technologies, practices and expertise for increasing energy efficiencies is frequently lacking. The ability of citizens to respond to the changing energy environment requires an educated public capable of making informed decisions.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Develop sustainable and regionally appropriate bio-energy production systems.
- Evaluate and demonstrate energy efficiency and conservation for agricultural and residential applications.
- Provide science-based information to guide public understanding of alternative energy sources.
- Collaborate with state and federal agencies on assessing alternative energy options and measuring impacts.
- Conduct research on the impact of energy-based resource extraction on natural ecosystems and communities.

Natural Resource Sustainability

Balancing socioeconomic development with environmental protection is complex. Opportunities exist to address forest and land management, regulatory policies, knowledge about renewable and reusable resources, nuisance and invasive species issues, and conflicts at the rural/urban interface.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Determine the effects of urbanization and changing rural ownership patterns on natural resources.
- Develop natural resource management strategies, balancing socioeconomic development and environmental protection.
- Provide science-based information to reduce negative impacts of invasive species.
- Provide consumers information to make educated decisions regarding “green” choices.

Climate Variations and Policy

Extreme climatic events prompt us to better understand the science behind them. Better knowledge should enable citizens and decision makers to respond to such events and to influence the development of local, state and national policies. The development of crops and cropping systems adapted to environmental extremes, tools for communities to lessen the effect of climatic events (floods, droughts, tornadoes, etc.) and the development of contingency plans for climate variations are essential. Agricultural and forestry production practices will be evaluated for their potential to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and sequester carbon in soils and vegetation.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Help Arkansas's communities and agricultural sector adapt to climate variations and extreme weather or climate-related events.
- Analyze and explain local impact of national and international climate policies.
- Provide unbiased information about the science behind the climate debate.
- Evaluate agricultural production practices to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and sequester carbon.

New Technology

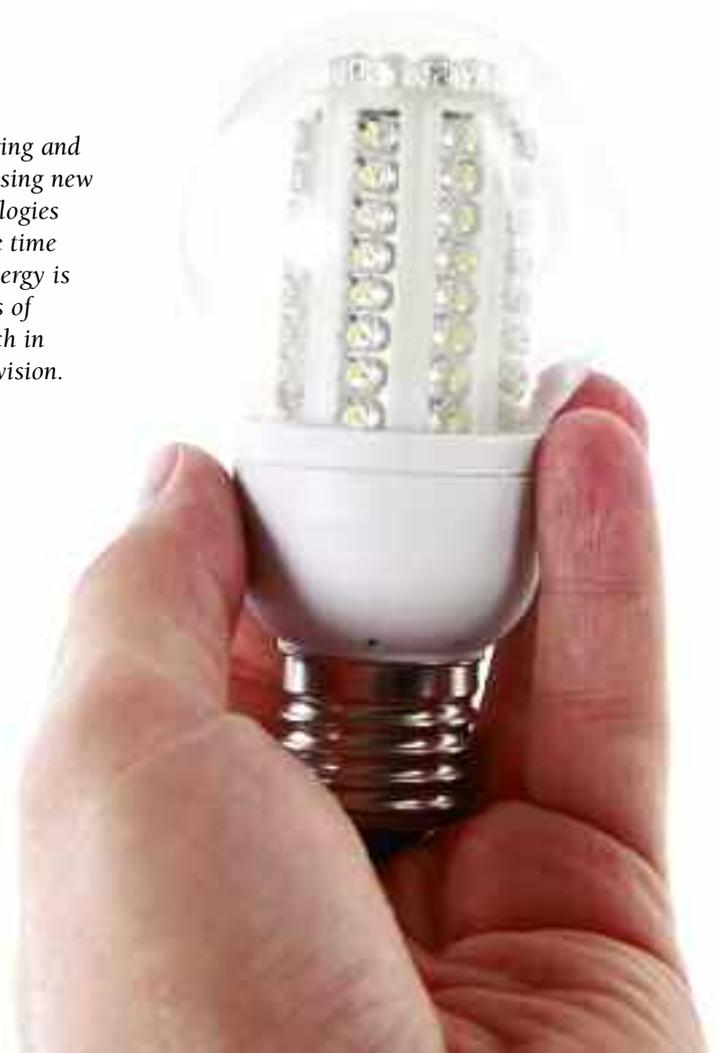
Technologies associated with energy, climate and natural resource use are in a constant state of change. Whether in the guise of renewable energy adaptations (bio-, solar and wind energy), in-field water and pest sensors or the newest application



Technologies associated with energy are undergoing change.

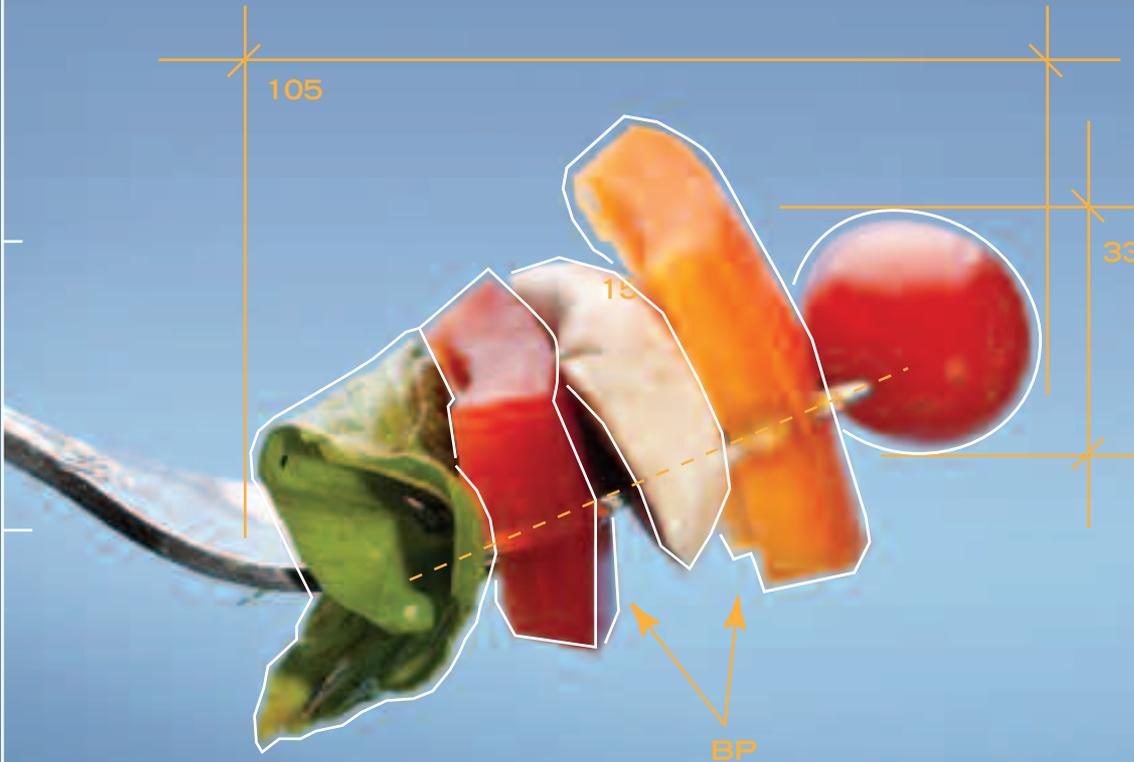
for cell phone-based control of your in-home amenities, Arkansas's citizens will be provided with a rapidly changing array of technological tools and choices. The Division of Agriculture provides a competent venue for studying available technologies and their potential as tools in the pursuit of a sustainable future.

Exploring and harnessing new technologies to save time and energy is a focus of research in the Division.



What should we eat?

Providing access to safe and nutritious food requires the nation and Arkansas to increase the availability of food choices which improve health and reduce obesity, particularly among children. It also requires safeguarding our food supply from pathogens and terroristic attacks.



EMPHASIS AREA

THREE

Access to Safe
& Nutritious Food



Recent studies have found more than 75 percent of American consumers want to know where and how their food is grown and processed. However, when making choices, most consumers consider taste and hunger satisfaction over questions about the health benefits of food consumed. Science-based information gained through research focused on food production, processing and consumption plays a vital role in the health of Arkansans.

Safe Food Supply

The Centers for Disease Control estimate that food-borne pathogens are responsible each year in the United States for millions of cases of illness. For example, incidents stemming from *Campylobacter*, *Salmonella*, *Listeria*, *E. coli O157:H7* and *Shigella* account for nearly 4 million cases annually. A viral food-borne



pathogen such as Norwalk-like virus is estimated to account for almost 10 million illnesses annually. The estimate of total costs of these cases of food-borne illness approaches \$50 billion.

Division programs educate food producers, retailers, processors and consumers about food safety.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Conduct research to control food-borne pathogens and toxins in the food supply.
- Educate Arkansans how to minimize risks of agro-terrorism.
- Develop innovative methods to detect, identify and control food-borne pathogens, toxins and contaminants in agricultural production and processing.
- Educate food producers, retailers, processors and consumers about food safety.
- Investigate economical, practical and naturally occurring antimicrobials and other compounds that target food pathogens.

Food Industry Innovation

The long-term growth of the food industry in Arkansas is dependent upon the industry's ability to innovate, to respond to consumers' taste and expectations, to employ a quality workforce and to minimize environmental impacts and the use of natural resources while maintaining economic viability.

New products that meet individual consumer's nutritional



The long-term growth of the food industry in Arkansas is dependent upon the industry's ability to innovate.

needs, deliver health benefits and satisfy the desire for natural ingredients will be in demand.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Educate consumers about the value of foods that promote optimal health, the safety of ingredients in food products and the impact of emerging food technologies.
- Train a qualified workforce for the food processing industry.
- Improve existing, and develop new, processing technologies to produce healthy, high-quality foods and reduce environmental impact.
- Continue partnerships with industry to facilitate technology development and implementation.
- Assist new food business entrepreneurs.
- Conduct research to enhance the nutritional value and consumer acceptance of foods, the efficiency of food processes and the use of food by-products.



Division programs help teach families with limited resources to select, prepare and preserve healthy foods.

Food Security

Arkansas has the third highest poverty rate in the nation, with one in four children living in poverty. Food security is defined as access at all times to enough nutritional foods for an active and healthy lifestyle. Arkansans in many areas of the state have limited access to nutritious and affordable food. The Division of Agriculture's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-Ed) and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) teach families with limited resources to select, prepare and preserve healthy foods. The Division of Agriculture's Cooperative Extension Service provides science-based information and educational programs to help families, communities and schools develop gardens and other resources to increase access to healthy food.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Increase food security in Arkansas by teaching consumers how to locate, select, prepare and preserve economical and nutritious foods.
- Increase awareness among low-income households of available nutrition assistance programs.
- Engage volunteers to help develop home, school and community gardens.
- Inform decision makers about best practices for increasing community food security.

Healthy Food Choices

Obesity is a significant and growing public health problem. Arkansas is disproportionately burdened with obesity, having the eighth highest obesity rate among adults at 30 percent, and seventh highest obesity rate among children at 20 percent. U.S. health



Division nutrition and educational programs target the reduction of childhood and adult obesity.

officials estimate obesity costs the health care system approximately \$147 billion annually — nearly 10 percent of all health care expenditures. Obesity-associated

complications such as diabetes, heart disease, asthma, sleep disorders and social and emotional problems are increasingly seen in adolescents. Early intervention to prevent obesity is crucial for the health of future generations.

While many factors contribute to obesity, achieving a balance between calories we consume and calories we burn is the overall key to healthy weight. Nutritious food is also essential for well-being. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains and certain vegetable oils contain bioactive substances that provide benefits beyond basic nutrition and should be part of a healthy diet.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Expand its nutrition education programs in all 75 counties targeting the reduction of childhood and adult obesity.
- Improve consumer nutrition literacy and cooking skills in preparing and consuming healthy foods.
- Promote farmers' markets and other venues for locally grown foods.
- Conduct research on obesity, energy balance, nutrient density, behavior modification and food choices.



Research may lead to foods providing enhanced nutritional benefits to consumers.

Can Arkansas afford not to strengthen its families and youth?

Arkansas has the second highest divorce rate in the nation, costing taxpayers more than \$500 million annually. The state ranks near the bottom at 47th nationally in a new state-by-state study on the well-being of America's children.



EMPHASIS AREA **FOUR**

Increasing Opportunities
For Families & Youth



These and many other issues, including an aging population, chronic disease and economic stress, pose challenges for the future of families and youth in Arkansas. The Division of Agriculture is in a unique position to address these challenges using science-based knowledge and our statewide network to strengthen Arkansas families and youth in communities across the state.

Living Healthy

Nationally, Arkansas ranks in the top 10 for both adult and childhood obesity rates. Obesity contributes to Type II diabetes, heart disease, lowered life expectancy, decreased quality of life and many chronic disorders. National health care costs attributed to obesity are approximately \$147 billion annually. The Division is conducting obesity research projects and offering educational programs such as *Walk Across Arkansas* and *Reshape Yourself*.

Arkansas ranks as one of the highest states in the nation for deaths from many chronic diseases. Heart disease and stroke are the leading causes of death for Arkansas adults.

The Division's efforts include ATV safety education to prevent life-threatening injuries among children and adults.



Equally alarming is the number of deaths in Arkansas because of risky behaviors among teens. The Division's ATV Safety course addresses the increasing rate of death and disability from ATV accidents, for adults as well as youth. Research on substance abuse and Extension programs like *Be MedWise Arkansas* address the alarming rise in prescription drug abuse by children as young as 12.

Most people spend more than 90 percent of their time indoors. Air inside a home can often pose greater health risks than outdoor air because of hazards like mold, carbon monoxide and household toxins. *Healthy Homes, Healthy People* is an example of an extension program that helps Arkansans deal with indoor air quality and home safety.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Address the obesity epidemic through research and education.
- Conduct research about healthy life choices and deliver programs promoting safe and healthy families.
- Provide families with science-based information on the safe use and disposal of medicines and supplements.
- Deliver science-based information to help people maintain healthy indoor environments.

Aging Well

Arkansas's senior adult population is growing faster than the overall population. This is projected to continue as Baby Boomers age. The aging process results in higher rates of disabilities and diseases and increases strains on families and communities in dealing with these issues. The Division conducts

research on how aging, caregiving, and use of health care services affect individuals and families. Division programs like *Aging in Place* and the *Arkansas AgrAbility* project help older Arkansans extend productivity and independence into later life, which saves the state millions of dollars each year.



Division programs help older Arkansans extend independence into later life.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Conduct research about how age-related diseases and disabilities impact families and teach prevention and coping skills.
- Provide educational resources that enable older persons to live long, healthy and independent lives.
- Conduct research and provide education about the impacts of caregiving on families.

Strengthening Families

Environmental and economic problems, interpersonal violence, substance abuse and military deployments contribute to depression and stress-related illnesses. Division research is addressing topics such as violence, substance abuse and depression. Extension programs like *Managing Stress* and *Operation Military Kids* help Arkansans manage their challenges and live better lives.

Arkansas's approximately 17,000 divorces every year cost taxpayers an estimated \$30,000 each or \$500 million annually. The Division's educational marriage programs and research help Arkansas families face the challenges of economic stress and couple relationships.

Parenthood in an increasingly complex society now

Helping families cope with economic, societal and technological changes is part of the work done by the Division.



includes single parenting, step-parenting and grandparents raising grandchildren. The Division's research and extension programs such as *The Parenting Journey* and *Adventures in Grandparenting* prepare adults for this vital and challenging role.

The limited availability of quality early childhood education programs is exacerbated by poor preparation and high turnover rates among early childhood professionals. The Division is actively involved with preparing high-quality early childhood education professionals.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Provide practical science-based knowledge to help people form and sustain healthy relationships, manage stress, and increase their well-being.
- Equip adults with practical science-based practices to raise resilient and caring children.
- Teach early childhood professionals practical science-based knowledge to help them provide care and education for children.

Empowering Youth

Arkansas youth face a growing list of challenges. As one of the largest and oldest youth-serving organizations in Arkansas, 4-H has a significant statewide impact through hands-on educational programs. This experiential method increases learning, retention and application. The teaching of life skills, like effective communication, leadership training and decision making, helps youth become responsible adults.

The need for science, technology, engineering and math education is at an all-time high. The Division is uniquely positioned to



4-H works to prepare youth to grow into engaged citizens who excel as leaders and have a strong set of skills for their lives ahead.

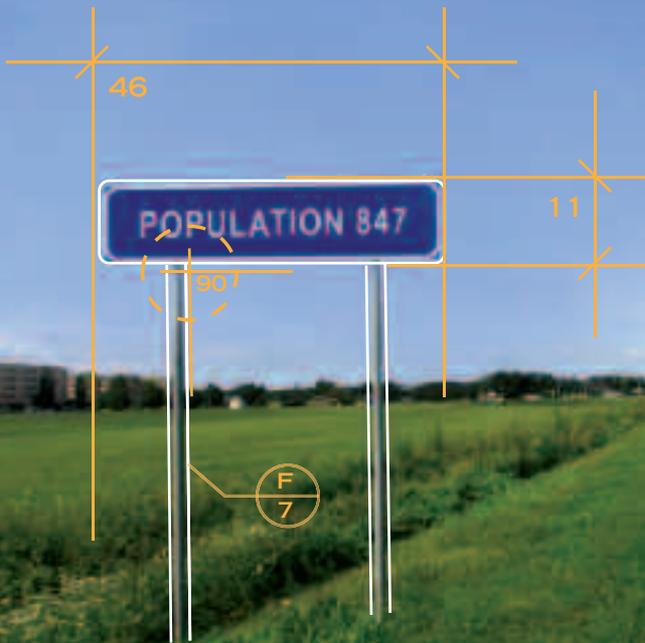
teach and demonstrate scientific exploration and application to Arkansas youth. The Division's programming helps young people explore career choices through diverse education, extension and science-based programming.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Expand access to quality 4-H programming in Arkansas.
- Teach life skills to prepare youth for adulthood.
- Help youth explore career and entrepreneurship possibilities.
- Provide programs that involve youth in science, technology, engineering and math.
- Raise awareness of the connections between food, agriculture and the natural world.

Can our communities survive and thrive in this economic environment?

Changes in the economy, technology and population are transforming the ways Arkansans live and work. Between 2001 and 2008, the state lost nearly 44,000 manufacturing jobs, with 65 of the 75 Arkansas counties having a net loss during this period.



EMPHASIS AREA

FIVE

**Economic & Community
Development**



Rural areas were hit hard, losing 20 percent of their manufacturing jobs.

With broad programs and a presence in all 75 counties, the Division is uniquely positioned to support economic and community development. Efforts are focused in five areas: economic viability and sustainability; rural infrastructure; leadership development and community involvement; quality of life; and population composition and change.

Economic Viability and Sustainability

Many Arkansas communities and regions are facing severe economic conditions. Jobs are limited in many communities. People are migrating to urban areas, reducing revenue needed



As the economy changes, the Division provides needed specialized skills and insights to sustain communities, find new opportunities and remain fiscally grounded.

to maintain basic rural services. Small business owners and entrepreneurs are critical for the viability of Arkansas communities and regions.

At a household level, earnings per job recently increased in most Arkansas counties, median household incomes have declined and today's consumer averages 13 credit obligations on record at a credit bureau. Research shows financial literacy is low.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Identify trends affecting Arkansas communities and regions.
- Help Arkansas communities and regions identify and implement innovative economic development strategies.
- Provide education and technical assistance to Arkansas businesses and entrepreneurs.
- Provide personal financial management education for youth and adults.
- Help local governments explore innovative solutions and optimize resources.

Rural Infrastructure

Due to limited resources in many communities, it is increasingly difficult to maintain or expand infrastructure capacity. Roads, public utilities and other facilities are needed to maintain community viability and long-term quality of life.

An area of particular concern is access to advanced telecommunications. Communities, schools and businesses without access to high-speed Internet are at a distinct disadvantage.



The Division helps communities assess their infrastructure needs.

Broadband connectivity is critical to Arkansas's efforts to create and attract knowledge-based industries. The Division is poised to provide tools to help communities and regions assess and address their infrastructure needs.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Provide tools for communities to assess infrastructure needs.
- Assist in identifying local, state and federal resources to address infrastructure challenges.
- Support communities' efforts to obtain and use information technologies, including broadband connectivity.

Leadership and Community Involvement

Effective and inclusive leaders are vital to sustainable and economically viable communities. Community planning is often based on the decisions of a select few. Some residents and youth may be excluded from local decision making and strategic planning processes, even when these decisions affect them.

Diversity of populations and ideas is increasingly important to community planning, public support and effective implementation of plans. Engaging the public, expanding the local knowledge base on public issues, and creating a local environment that encourages collaboration and innovation are critical for community leaders to be successful in today's economy and in maintaining a high quality of life.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Provide leadership education for youth and adults.
- Assist local coalitions to develop and implement strategic plans.
- Work with communities and leaders to create environments that encourage innovation.
- Teach citizen involvement to enhance the vitality of Arkansas communities and regions.
- Engage diverse and under-served populations in civic involvement.
- Provide science-based information and education about public issues.

Quality of Life

In an era of increasing mobility, quality of life is a key factor in attracting and retaining families, retirees, workers and businesses. Arkansas has an abundance

The Division is helping communities examine their assets and needs to create quality of life.



of attractive natural resources and amenities. Communities often fail to take advantage of these assets.

Arkansas communities and regions can take a proactive approach to create a high quality of place and life. Quality of life includes basic services, education, health care, recreational opportunities, and financial and retail services. Successful communities build a sense of identity and leverage their unique assets, such as historical, cultural, natural or other features.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Provide tools to help communities evaluate and enhance their quality-of-life assets and opportunities.
- Assist communities in quality-of-life marketing to targeted audiences.

Population Composition and Change

The social and cultural landscape of Arkansas is being reshaped by an aging population, ethnic diversification and shifts at the rural/urban interface. Arkansas is experiencing the social and economic impact of retirement-age Baby Boomers. The rapid migration of ethnic minorities into rural areas highlights important cultural differences and needs. Challenges exist where urban and rural meet.

Changes within the agricultural community are driven by an aging farm population and a lack of farmers to succeed them, as well as an increase in women- and minority-owned farms. The Division of Agriculture is assisting individuals and

communities in addressing challenges and maximizing opportunities created as populations change.

THE U OF A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE WILL:

- Inform policymakers and community leaders of pertinent population trends.
- Deliver programs that help leaders anticipate impacts of population changes.
- Develop and deliver programs for specific population groups based on demographic changes.
- Help Arkansans understand and address opportunities and challenges of the rural/urban interface.

The rapid migration of new ethnicities into rural areas is just one of the ways the social and cultural landscape of Arkansas is being reshaped.

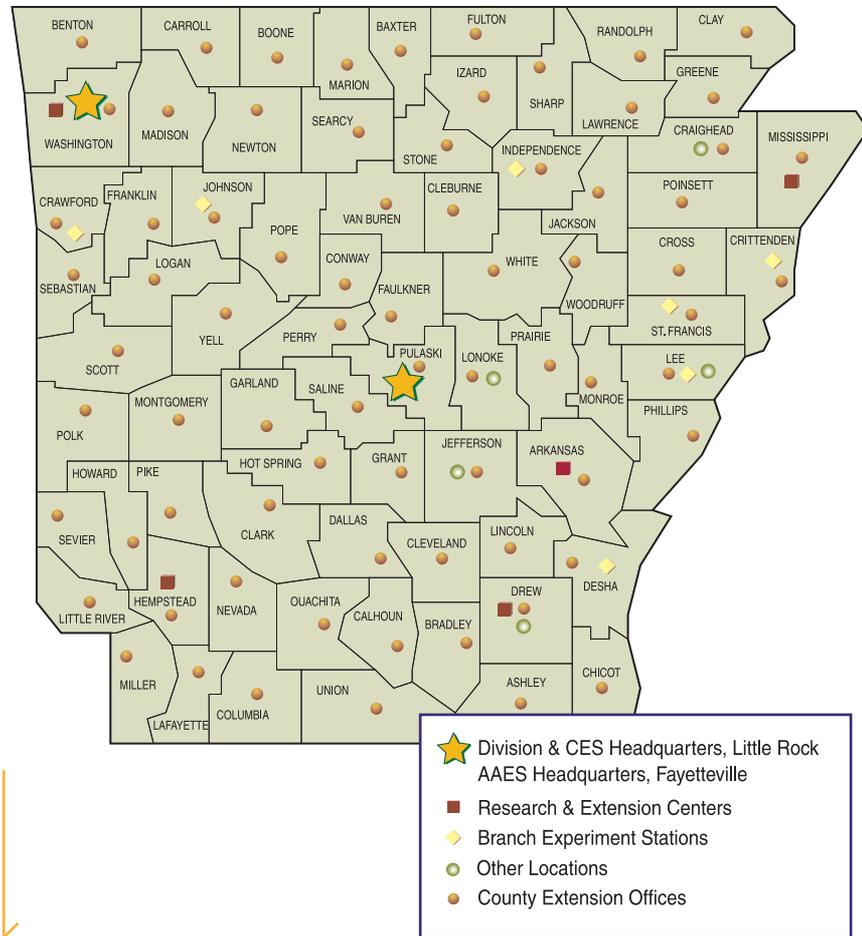


Blueprint \ blōō' – print \ n: a carefully designed plan.

From great plans come great results. The preceding pages encompass the cumulative vision of our stakeholders, faculty and all whose lives we are fortunate to touch. The people of the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture have set our hand to the job of planning and building for the most critical issues affecting the quality of those lives.

The University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture is uniquely positioned by its mission, its resources and its access to the national land grant university system to provide families, communities and agricultural producers and processors with sound, science-based information that will enable them to better meet emerging issues and challenges.

While no one can predict all the challenges that will emerge before us, we believe that this strategic framework — our *Blueprint for Excellence* — will enable the U of A Division of Agriculture to rise to the challenge. As we look forward to the next five years, we will continue our research, exploration, education and extension efforts that assist Arkansans in building their futures.



The University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.



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