

Explaining the Role of the Program Area Committee: A Sample Letter Series for Agents

Objective: Productive Committee Members

A productive committee begins with individual members. Each member may have a different idea of the committee's role and responsibilities. This situation is typical since committees have both new and experienced members at any point in time. Thus, the task of building a productive committee involves a variety of approaches for training members.

After personal contact with the committee member, a follow-up letter is one way to help program/issue committee members within the County Extension Council understand what is expected of them. Four sample letters to program/issue area committee members are included in the letter series.

1. A new member letter – to be sent after a member has been appointed, within the first two weeks
2. A program/issues committee roles and responsibilities letter
3. A program/issues committee member duties letter

TIMELY

LOCAL

PERSONAL

4. A program/issue committee chair letter – to be sent after a new chair has been appointed to explain the roles and responsibilities of a committee chair.

The two letters to the program/issue committee member can be used early in a new year to acquaint newer members (and reacquaint experienced members) with the committee's role and duties of members. Allow two to four weeks between mail-outs of the two letters.

Each example letter in this series contains (blanks) for you to localize the information to your county. This should be done when the letters are prepared.

A **personal letter** always gets attention – members will relate it to their assignment on the committee. Most program/issue committees don't have a large membership, and it won't take much effort to put each person's name at the beginning.

Use the letter series as a part of your training effort – to help your program/issue committees get started on the right foot with a common understanding of the committee's function and how the committee can contribute to a successful Extension educational program. A series of fact sheets targeted to the program area or issue committee member and committee chair are also available for use along with the letters or in place of the letters.