

# Example 4:

## Letter to Program Area or Issue Committee Chair

TO: (Type in name of chair)

Congratulations on being selected committee chair! You hold a vital position of leadership on the committee. That means you take the lead in seeing that your committee effectively carries out its assignment. You will have an opportunity to work very closely with county Extension agents in preparing for and conducting committee meetings. They will look to you for leadership when your committee needs to take action. Together you will plan how the committee will carry out its assignment.

Your committee is part of the County Extension Council. The overall Council establishes program area committees and issue committees to develop educational programs. Most of these committees have responsibilities for addressing one or more of the critical issues in the county plan of work. Some committees are responsible for other special area of concerns to citizens. So, your committee is one of several committees that provide leadership for educational programs through the County Extension Council.

This letter will help you understand what the committee's job is about, your responsibilities as committee chair and how to have productive meetings. As advisors to your committee, (county name) Extension agents can help you. Keep in touch with us on a regular basis. We will work with you in preparing for and conducting meetings.

### **Committee Chair's Responsibilities**

Your overall responsibility is to be in charge of the committee's work. That doesn't mean that you do everything yourself – it means that you organize the committee's work so that all members have opportunity to be involved. You will want each member to take an active role in committee meetings. Also, they should help do tasks necessary for conducting educational activities the committee plans for various groups of people.

### **Understanding the Committee's Role**

The program or issue committee's role includes the following functions:

- Planning the educational program
- Helping implement or carry out the program
- Evaluating program results
- Reporting and marketing the committee's accomplishments to others

A detailed description of this role is contained in another publication entitled *Program Area or Issue Committees* available from your Extension agents. Several meetings may be required during the year to carry out these committee functions.

Make sure that you understand the committee's assignment. Are you expected to address one or more issues in the county plan of work? Or is your group responsible for another special area of concern? The overall council and your county Extension agents can clarify the assignment.

If your committee is in charge of addressing one or more of the issues, they will be described in the county plan of work and/or the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Strategic Plan. These documents can help your committee work more effectively. Ask your Extension agent for copies.

Extension specialists and other local and area resource people who have knowledge about your committee's area of responsibility should be identified and asked to help when you need them. We can arrange for specialists to meet with you or the whole committee. Resource people can help you understand issues, situations, concerns, and alternatives for addressing problems and concerns.

The Extension office has a variety of resource publications and guides – that will be helpful to you. Some of these are websites, slide-tape sets, program guides on critical issues, and slide presentations on the committee's role and worksheets to use when carrying out the various functions of the committee. Use these resources to help plan and conduct your committee work. The attached pages describe your responsibilities as committee chair. As you gain experience, you will become even more confident in carrying out your role as committee chair.

Sincerely,

County Extension Agent