



New Millennium... New Directions

ASTRATEGIC PLAN

for the
University of Nebraska
Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources
2000-2008

University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Revised March 2000





IANR's Vision

IANR will be the premier provider of educational, research and outreach programs essential for shaping Nebraska's future as a leader in the 21st century in the areas of food, agricultural and agribusiness systems, natural resources and human resources. IANR is dedicated to providing the highest quality programs that are ecologically sound, economically viable, socially responsible and scientifically appropriate.



IANR's Silver Anniversary

The Nebraska Legislature passed LB 149 in 1973. This action established the University of Nebraska Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources effective April 1, 1974. In 1998-99 IANR celebrated 25 years of research, education and service contributions for Nebraska, the nation and the world.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2000-2008

Introduction

Since 1988, the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR) has followed a carefully developed Strategic Plan that has been revised regularly. The 2000-2008 plan reflects changes in Nebraska's agriculture, agribusiness, natural resources and human resources occurring at a pace that would have been considered unbelievable only a few years ago. Titling this brochure "New Millennium ... New Directions" seems very appropriate as we assess the IANR program priorities for the new millennium. Some of the emerging priorities will require change in program emphasis, operating structure or procedures required to address them. Other priorities can be met by ongoing quality core programs. The Strategic Plan outlines the primary direction for IANR action plans that focus on the priority needs of Nebraskans related to food, agriculture, natural resources, environment, agribusiness, human resources and communities. As needs change, the Strategic Plan's priorities will be reassessed and updated.

To determine IANR priority programs and operational needs, input was solicited at 25 listening sessions held at 19 sites across the state. More than 700 stakeholders, students, faculty and staff contributed their views. They provided vital input to the IANR Strategic Plan for 2000-2008.

The strategic planning process will be further complemented by IANR's participation in the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Food Systems Initiative, NN21, through March 2001. The initiative supports change within the University of Nebraska and stresses partnerships that enhance engagement opportunities to meet the needs of stakeholders and students.

The Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources is committed to three high-priority overarching objectives: Student Programs, Extended Education and Program Balance. The Strategic Plan's program themes are:

- Enhance economically viable and sustainable food and biomass systems;
- Improve natural resources management and promote environmental quality; and
- Strengthen the quality of life of individuals and families and contribute to community viability.

Operational priorities are suggested that lead to improving IANR's program effectiveness and efficiency. They include administrator, faculty and staff development; diversity and gender equity; communicating program impacts and agricultural and scientific literacy; program linkages; globalization of IANR programs; and organizational effectiveness and budget issues. A 1999 Communications and Market Analysis study's recommendations will be implemented to improve IANR's internal and external communications.

As the University of Nebraska and all Nebraskans embark on a new millennium, IANR is committed to team efforts and research, education and outreach programs leading to an enhanced quality of life in Nebraska, the nation and the world.



Irv Omtvedt
NU Vice President and IANR Vice Chancellor





Assumptions

- **Food and agriculture will continue to be an important contributor to Nebraska's economy.**
- **Natural resources and environmental concerns will increase.**
- **Nebraska's population will be more diverse and will continue to shift to trade and urban centers.**
- **IANR will provide proactive program leadership.**
- **Genetically-enhanced foods and medicines will increase. Acceptance will be challenged by some.**
- **Increased concentration of livestock enterprises will raise environmental concerns and increased attention to related public policy.**

IANR Overarching Objectives

The following overarching objectives are strategic to IANR's direction. IANR places high priority on providing quality undergraduate, graduate and informal education that is accessible to traditional and non-traditional students. Enhanced undergraduate and graduate programs, increased accessibility through extended education and providing a continual flow of research-based information are high priorities.

Student Programs: Recruitment/ Retention/Placement

- Empower faculty, staff, students, employers and alumni to recruit, retain and place students.
- Update curricula to include preparation for living and working in a rapidly changing society and being a member of the global community.
- Provide state-of-the-art course offerings that meet the needs of both traditional and non-traditional students on and off campus.

- Provide students with increased accessibility to needed student services.
- Collaborate in offering quality programs, including transfer programs from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, community colleges, state colleges and other institutions.

Extended Education

- Enhance learning opportunities through extended education in Nebraska.
- Use the IANR statewide network and lifelong learning centers to facilitate the delivery of University of Nebraska resources to meet clientele needs.
- Collaborate with other institutions to meet distance education needs as appropriate.
- Improve the use of telecommunications, information management and data transmission to meet the needs of society.

Program Balance

- Balance programs and their support in response to changing needs in food, agriculture, agribusiness, natural resources, environment, individuals, families and communities.
- Offer a balance of programs that meets stakeholder needs, as well as fundamental research programs that provide a knowledge base for the future.
- Respond in a timely manner and be accountable to stakeholder needs.
- Refocus some IANR programs to give increased impact to urban stakeholders.



- **The number of Nebraska farms is decreasing; the average size of farms is increasing.**
- **Further changes in Nebraska's food system structure are anticipated.**
- **Animal welfare/rights issues and environmental regulations impacting agriculture are expected to increase.**
- **New electronic communications technologies will be in more Nebraska communities and homes.**

Program Themes

IANR's program themes and long-term objectives include generating and disseminating knowledge and providing quality educational programs. These objectives dictate the focus and direction for IANR's programs. Essential, quality programs will continue in research, teaching and Cooperative Extension. Action plans will address the long-term program objectives and consider policy, environmental and societal impacts. Collaborative partnerships will be emphasized.

Enhance Economically Viable and Sustainable Food and Biomass Systems

Increase Nebraska's agriculture and agribusiness competitiveness

- Develop new production and management technologies for Nebraska's farms, ranches and agribusinesses.
- Develop sustainable crop and livestock systems.
- Continue to develop functional genomics and plant and animal molecular biology programs.
- Enhance programs in the domestic and global marketing of agricultural commodities and processed products.
- Build research and educational precision agriculture programs.

Give value-added and entrepreneurship programs high priority

- Continue to develop new food and industrial products.

- Assist new and established food and industrial agribusiness firms with information and training.
- Add value to agriculture with development of genetically improved crops and livestock.

Improve Natural Resources Management and Enhance Environmental Quality

- Place high priority on water and mineral resource programs.
- Help improve livestock and solid waste management and provide information for policy decisions.
- Augment the management and stewardship of Nebraska's soil and rangeland resources.
- Provide programs that enhance rural and urban landscapes.
- Support global information systems (GIS) and the natural resources database activity.
- Support global climate and environmental change programs.
- Enhance Nebraska's woods, wildlife and fisheries and other aquatic resources with research, education and service programs.

Strengthen the Quality of Life of Individuals and Families and Contribute to Community Viability

- Further develop leadership programs for youth, agricultural, natural resources and community leaders.

- Continue to focus on youth and family development programs.
- Continue and enhance nutrition, health and safety programs.
- Give research and education programs on *E. coli* and other food-borne pathogens high priority.
- Focus on community nutrition and education programs.
- Provide quality preventative health and wellness programs.
- IANR will take a proactive role in research, teaching and extension programs directed at a changing rural Nebraska and agriculture as well as community viability.
- Provide community development information focusing on the needs of small communities.
- Be active in economic development, both statewide and in individual communities.
- Provide information pertaining to rural/urban/acreage interface issues.
- In addition to continuing programs with established farmers and ranchers, give assistance related to the unique needs of new farmers and ranchers and their families.



Assumptions

- **Nebraska must compete in the global economy. Value-added exports will increase.**
- **Appropriated funds will be limited.**
- **IANR must set priorities and focus its programs.**
- **Extended education's role will be increasingly important.**

IANR's Operational Priorities

Assessing the effectiveness of current IANR efforts and identifying ways to improve operational priorities is a continuous process. IANR's Strategic Plan discussions with stakeholders, faculty, staff and students suggest that actions for improving IANR's program effectiveness and efficiency should give priority to:

Administrative, Faculty and Staff Development

- Improve career, personal and professional development opportunities for administrators, faculty and staff. Retraining for newly created IANR positions also should be offered.
- Provide training on new methods for program delivery, including extended education.
- Ensure that personnel evaluation processes, rewards and recognition are consistent with IANR priorities.
- Involve office/service and managerial/professional staff more effectively in program planning and implementation.

- Facilitate and reward teamwork, including interdisciplinary team problem-solving approaches.
- Reduce faculty tasks that do not contribute to program outcomes.

Diversity and Gender Equity

- Implement initiatives to increase participation of under-represented groups by recruiting and retaining students, administrators, faculty and staff in these areas.
- Develop culturally diverse and gender-sensitive support systems for students, administrators, faculty and staff.
- Provide program content that meets the needs of diverse stakeholders and youth and recognizes evolving gender roles and contributions.

Communications, Communicating Program Impacts and Agricultural and Scientific Literacy

- Give high priority to improving internal and extension communications as suggested in the Swanson Russell Associates communications and marketing study.
- Emphasize program impacts and output as related to program inputs.
- Increase agricultural and scientific literacy by enhancing public understanding of IANR programs and the roles of agriculture, agribusiness, natural resources and human resources in society and the world.
- Emphasize elementary and secondary enrichment programs that present information on food, agriculture, agribusiness, natural resources and the environment, and human resources.
- Be responsive and effective in providing essential clientele-oriented services.



- **The out-migration of Nebraska's trained and educated citizens is a critical issue.**
- **Global concerns such as increased world population, the depletion of fossil fuels such as oil, environmental degradation, the loss of farmland and security issues will impact Nebraska.**
- **Nebraska's rural population is aging and declining in number.**

Program Linkages

- Give high priority to strengthened collaborative program linkages with other components of the University of Nebraska, as well as other universities, colleges, community colleges; international, federal, state and local government agencies; community organizations and private businesses.
- Increase efforts to develop collaborative programs within the region with emphasis on contiguous states.

Globalization of IANR Programs

- Build a strong global presence and understanding of undergraduate and graduate programs and courses.
- Meet the global information needs of Nebraskans with research and extension programs that have global dimensions.
- Contribute to the global marketing of Nebraska's agricultural production and processing.
- Enhance the global aspects of youth programs.

Organizational Effectiveness and Budget Issues

- Seek both internal and external input, assess organizational program efficiencies and implement appropriate structural changes.
- Reduce the cost of administration.
- Explore alternatives and make changes in procedures, policies and operations to strengthen effectiveness and increase efficiency.
- Increase and support faculty and staff team efforts, especially multidisciplinary teams.
- Give high priority to improving staff salary and benefits.
- Continue to be aggressive in increasing external funding with grants and contracts.
- Clarify IANR's statewide responsibility in the University of Nebraska per the provisions of LB 149.



Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources Statewide Network



