



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Extension
Service

Plans and Procedures for Program Participation Data and Information Collection in the Cooperative Extension Service

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SECTION A - INTRODUCTION

I. Responsibility

The Extension Service, administering benefit programs that are subject to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) nondiscrimination policy in 7 CFR 15, is responsible for providing for the collection of program participation data and information from State Cooperative Extension Services. The data and information should be of a level of sufficiency in order to comply with the Department's civil rights rules and regulations, and to permit effective enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as well as other nondiscrimination statutes.

II. Policy And Objectives

The purpose and objective for collection of program participation data is defined broadly in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Administrative Regulations, Title 9, Equal Opportunity, Chapter 2, Section 1, paragraph 21.A, as follows:

"Each agency that administers programs subject to 7 CFR 15, Subpart A or B, will develop a system for establishing base data that identifies eligible populations and measures delivery of program benefits in order that the quantity and quality of benefits and services delivered to minority individuals can be documented and compared to benefits delivered to nonminority individuals..."

Collection of program participation data and information is a strong ally and useful tool for program building. The data may serve as an important index for Extension workers to evaluate participation by various clientele groups in Extension educational programs and activities as well as an evaluation of the extent of conformance to equal opportunity objectives. The data and information can be of significant value to Extension in spotting and correcting program and administrative weaknesses.

The purpose of these procedures is to prescribe optional administrative instructions for States in collection and reporting of program participation data. The intent of the options is to provide for collection of data that can be used in planning Extension programs.

- F. Where designation of persons by race, color, or national origin is identified, the following designations shall be used. They conform with Office of Management and Budget Ad Hoc Committee on Race/Ethnic Categories and Recommendations.
- (1) "Black, not of Hispanic Origin." A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
 - (2) "Hispanic." A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
 - (3) "Asian or Pacific Islander." A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands. This area includes, for example, China, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, and Samoa.
 - (4) "American Indian or Alaskan Native." A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.
 - (5) "White, not of Hispanic Origin." A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East. Additional subcategories based on national origin or primary language spoken may be used, where appropriate, on either a national or a regional basis.
- G. "Potential recipient(s)." A person or group of persons who need the educational effort and meet qualifications of the provisions under which funds are appropriated and/or made available in support of the effort. 1/
- H. "Beneficiary." An individual whose educational interests and needs are served by or through direct participation in educational activities or events conducted by State Cooperative Extension Services.

1/ A State may include other criteria in the identification of potential recipients that are consistent with its program priority and/or mission. The decision to include other qualifying categories and criteria must be made consistent with legislative requirements and USDA policies, guidelines, and requirements for the use of appropriate funds, and the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

- K. "Membership data," for reports to ES-USDA, refer to and consist of information on persons who belong to, or have membership in, a structured club, unit, committee, or council of the State Cooperative Extension Service. 4/
- L. "Parity of Participation" refers to a condition in which the percent distribution of program participants (beneficiaries) is proportionate to, or within reasonable limits of (± 2.0 percentage points), their respective percent distribution in the potential recipient audience/population. 5/

IV. Major Compliance Requirements

The Department's regulations identify requirements of data and information which must be met and implemented by State Cooperative Extension Services to assess compliance with the intent of nondiscrimination statutes. These major requirements are set out as follows:

- A. Identify Extension clientele in the population eligible to participate in Extension programs and activities, using the best available data.
- B. Establish program participation targets in Extension annual Plans of Work.
- C. Incorporate specific program targets for the delivery of Extension educational benefits and service areas of underrepresentation in clientele groups.
- D. Promote parity of participation in Extension programs by underrepresented racial group members.
- E. Provide approved eligible targets against which Extension performance can be measured.
- F. Collect data for all counties in which the State Cooperative Extension Service program operates.

4/ The unit of members is considered to have officers and regular/periodic meetings, generally at some permanent or fixed location. There is permanency to the business agenda, objectives, and goals of the structured unit. Examples include 4-H Youth organized clubs, Extension Homemakers Clubs, planning and advisory committees, and review and expansion committees.

5/ The intent is to identify and assess proportionate representation, using the potential (eligible) recipients as a base. A treatment of the data involves a simple comparison of actual or projected contact participation to potential.

- B. The number and percent of persons participating and thereby receiving the benefits and services from Extension programs and related activities (Beneficiaries/Clientele).

The States are encouraged to consider and include pertinent qualitative aspects of program benefits and services to minorities in their State impact studies.

VI. Collection of Additional "Other" Data and Information

With the increasing attention being given to the rights of the handicapped, elderly individuals, and other minority groups, Extension must be able to cite the extent to which these groups are receiving the benefits of Extension programs and services. State Cooperative Extension Services are not required, however, to collect and report participation data on handicapped and "senior citizens" benefiting from Extension programs and services.

In response to the mandates of external regulatory agencies, Extension could need to meet additional civil rights data collection and reporting requirements. Requirements of this kind, however, are usually met on a one-time basis, as requested.

VII. Collection of Program Participation Data by Sex

Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments is the first comprehensive Federal law to prohibit sex discrimination in the participation and treatment of beneficiaries of educational programs and activities receiving or benefiting from Federal funds. The intent of the law is to eliminate sex discrimination in the programs, policies, and administration of educational institutions. It reads:

"No person in the United States, shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

In consideration of the requirements to assure nondiscrimination with the above provisions, State Cooperative Extension Services will provide for the assessment of compliance in policies, program participation, and the delivery of program benefits. Hence, the procedural instructions under Section B will be applicable in the collection and reporting of program participation data by sex.

It is necessary that State Cooperative Extension Services be able to cite the extent to which men and women are receiving the benefits of Extension educational programs. The provisions under Section B provide for the information necessary for evaluative interpretation of compliance. The sex data obtained on all significant aspects of Extension programs should record the total number of participants by major program area.