

## Commission Urges Extension To Reach Urban Communities

ALBANY, N.Y. — The county agent system founded three-quarters of a century ago to improve the lot of farm families should devote its attention in the 21st century to water pollution, urban youth, housing and public health issues, including AIDS, a new report says.

The need to reach an increasingly urbanized population is a key finding of the Commission on the Future of Cornell Cooperative Extension, which recently made public its report following a nine-month study.

The 15-member commission was headed by Robben W. Fleming, president emeritus of the University of Michigan, and included representatives of industry, agriculture, education, and state and local governments. It was appointed by President Frank H.T. Rhodes of Cornell University, New York's land grant university which is responsible for the state's cooperative extension system.

With agriculture still the state's largest industry, and with a strong commitment to Cornell Cooperative Extension among farm families, the report suggests the need to help make farms more profitable through better management, but also to find part-time work and even alternative means of livelihood for the 7,200 New York State farmers who are likely to go out of business by 1990.

The report asks Cornell and the county Cooperative Extension associations to apply research-based knowledge to contribute to economic development in both urban and rural areas. "Working relationships can be established and expanded between business firms and college researchers which will increase business investment and private-sector jobs," it says.

Toward the goal of enhancing the environment, the commission says that "additional programs are needed to deal with water quality and all the pollutants by which it is degraded," as well as with solid waste. It also calls for "better management of natural resources," including forests and fisheries.

Looking at demographic trends, the report calls for extension

programs targeted at the ever-growing elderly population and at the rapidly increasing number of minorities. "Cornell research and extension programs have an opportunity to assist youth in the metropolitan centers to develop a productive future for themselves ... with appropriate educational opportunities," the commission writes.

"Nutrition and health cry out for educational intervention," the report says, urging research and education on problems of premature birth and high infant mortality, as well as "the staggering AIDS problem."

Because many of the problems to be targeted are urban and because 40 percent of the state's population lives in the five boroughs of its biggest city, the commission asserts that "it is important that New York City and state funding expand the current Cooperative Extension presence in New York City to the levels of commitment and program found upstate."

In order to involve more academic disciplines in the university's diverse outreach commitment, the report suggests that Cornell's provost, who is the chief academic officer, bring all campus outreach programs within his area of responsibility.

The series of recommendations "will allow Cooperative Extension to be far more flexible, and to design its programs county by county to meet local needs," said Edwin L. Crawford, executive director of the New York State Association of Counties and a member of the commission.

"Local administrators will be given great flexibility in adapting programs suitable to their needs, with appropriate support from the university, whether it's a basically rural county, of which we still have many in New York, or Westchester County, which has a very active program," Crawford said.

The report refers to "the remarkable success of the Cooperative Extension System in New York State" and lauds Cornell's long-standing commitment to it.

In a message to New Yorkers involved in Cooperative Extension programs, Cornell President

Frank H.T. Rhodes spoke of his desire to "strengthen a program that's already strong."

"Cooperative Extension has touched the lives of many people in the state over its 75 years of existence," he said. "Our hope is, that in the years ahead, it can touch an even larger segment of the total population — enhancing human potential, increasing effectiveness in agriculture and economic development, stabilizing and strengthening family and community structure."

"I was very pleased with the

thoughtful report. It gives us a blueprint we can develop for the future," said Lucinda A. Noble, director of Cornell Cooperative Extension.

"The commission has challenged us to take a serious look at program priorities, staffing and funding," she noted. "Doing that successfully will really make a difference if we are to reorient ourselves as a modern land grant university, providing the fruits of our research to the citizens of New York and the nation."

Noble said she was heartened

that the report acknowledged Cornell's commitment to the land grant principle "because New York State has a real partnership with its people through cooperative extension."

The report's recommendations parallel those of a committee that studied the nationwide cooperative extension system three years ago and said "it must be prepared to modify its organization, its focus and its use of resources" to reflect new technologies and changing demographics. Noble was a member of that committee.

## Farm Museum Offers Egg Scratching Workshop

LANCASTER — Egg scratching, an exquisite art authentic to the Pennsylvania Germans, and the traditional technique of wax resist egg decoration will be demonstrated at the Pennsylvania Farm Museum of Landis Valley from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. May 23 and from noon to 5 p.m. May 24.

Another feature of the weekend will be the slide show "The Roots of Pennsylvania Germans in Palatinate Germany." Shown at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday, and at 3 p.m. Sunday, the show will be presented by a native German expert on traditional Palatinate culture. Twenty-two museum buildings will be open, some with guides or demonstrating craftsmen. Visitor services include a gift and book shop as well as eating facilities.

Evelyn Althouse, a native of Lancaster County, will demonstrate egg scratching. Mrs. Althouse says an egg with symbols of life scratched on it was found in

a 1,300-year-old grave of a woman in Eastern Europe. In America, she noted, Pennsylvania Germans practiced both the wax resist and scratching methods to decorate eggs at Easter. Scratched eggs were usually presentation pieces and were sometimes dated.


Two good friends of Mrs. Althouse from Germany will join her to create this special weekend. The expert in the wax reserve (batik) method is Brigitte Raab, who owns one of Germany's largest collections of decorated eggs. She noted that only a few areas of Germany still practice this early technique of decorating eggs.

Elke Schwang will produce and

present the slide show. She researches both her native Palatinate culture and its strong ties with that of the Pennsylvania Germans. She works at a Palatinate history and folk culture museum in Germany creating exhibits and organizing events.

The Pennsylvania Farm Museum of Landis Valley is located 4 miles north of Lancaster on Route 272 (Oregon Pike), a marked exit off Route 30. It is operated by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission with support from the volunteer group, the Landis Valley Associations.

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