



World as the Community in Extension Community Development

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Why Internationalize Extension?

- Extension must look beyond its borders to find solutions to community problems.
- CD practitioners need to learn to leverage global linkages to build strong local economies.
- Extension has to develop cross-cultural competency in an increasingly diverse society.

Issues that transcend borders

- Global Economy
- Food Security
- Climate Change
- Energy
- Health
- Immigration
- Water
- Invasive Species
- Homeland Security



National initiative to internationalize Extension

A 3-year project in collaboration with Michigan State University and land-grant partners aimed at:

Helping communities understand local implications of globalization

Building cross-cultural competency

Demonstrating benefits to local clientele

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Initiative's Activities to Date:

- National Conferences in 2003 and 2005
- Survey of State Extension Directors
- Web site and distribution lists developed
- Sharing successful approaches among states
- Building national network & organizational capacity
- Mini-grants to foster partnerships and innovation

Ways of Internationalizing Extension

- Foreign Exchanges
- Community Capacity Building and Training
- Trade Partnership

Internationalizing Extension Examples

- Training of CD, AG and NR extension staff in Panama
- Conservation partnership with Costa Rica
- New trade linkages with Belize



University of Illinois Extension Visits Panama

The power of working together as a community





**Conservation Exchange &
Training Partnership Between
UNH Coop Extension and
Costa Rican National Parks**





'Tico Conservationists visit NH



Working with Belizean Farmers and Sustainable Harvest International to Grow Cacao for Taza, a US-based chocolatier

The value of global engagement

- Understanding of how extensionists in other countries address issues similar to those faced in our own communities
- Hands-on training in community development
- Opportunity to learn another language
- Experience building cross-cultural relations
- Opportunity to collaborate on complex global problems
- Opportunity to learn about ourselves in a global context



Communicating with people from another culture

Challenges

- Convincing Administration the value of global relations
- Cultivating the international connection
- Encouraging Extension staff and international partners to take a risk
- Incorporating a multicultural competency component

“If we are to maintain our place at the forefront of the world’s institutions of learning, we must truly be universities and colleges of the world. We must internationalize our mission – our learning, discovery and engagement. Internationalization is not the latest academic fad...it is the single most important leadership challenge of the new century.”

- NASULGC Task Force