



## P.C. Update

*A periodic electronic newsletter to members of the Applied Research and Extension Program Councils of Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE), the Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station in Ithaca (CUAES), and the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva (NYSAES)*

*This issue of P.C. Update covers the following topics of interest to Program Council members, including:*

- *an opportunity for the Program Council to influence future [program planning](#) and stakeholder engagement efforts*
- *an [update on preproposals](#) received from faculty for 2005-06 federal funding*
- *an update and “thank you” on [relevancy reviews](#)*
- *the availability of [2004 Program Work Team \(PWT\) annual reports](#)*
- *an update on [PWT requests for transitional support](#)*
- *news of a [leadership change in Geneva \(NYSAES\)](#)*
- *brief reports on the [recent efforts of some PWTs](#)*

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### **Council Member Input Invited on Program Planning and Stakeholder Engagement**

In the last issue of *P.C. Update*, we noted that, in 2005, “the councils will be engaged to provide input needed to shape and craft the federal work plan, including identification of statewide issue areas, needs and priorities, interpretation and distillation of the needs articulated by county extension associations, and suggestions on bettering the stakeholder engagement process.” As also mentioned in the October 20, 2004 letter from the CCE-CUAES-NYSAES directorate to all council members, our intent is to probe and “share ideas on how both the PCs (using input from conference evaluations and other feedback we will be soliciting) and we believe stakeholder interaction can be refined and enhanced.”

To that end, we welcome your feedback on a few questions related to how we might best engage the Program Councils in development of our 2007-11 federal plan of work. A survey website has been set up that suggests some possible interactive engagement approaches and receives your reactions to them. We invite and strongly encourage you to go to that website ([http://atcdb.cit.cornell.edu/survey//wsb.dll/mwd1/pc\\_input.htm](http://atcdb.cit.cornell.edu/survey//wsb.dll/mwd1/pc_input.htm)) and provide your input. It should only take a minute or two to respond, and your feedback will directly influence the councils' role and activities through 2005.

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## **Preproposals for Federal Research/Extension Funding Received; Competition for Support Will Be Intense**

The annual request-for-preproposals (RfP) for federal formula applied research and extension funding administered by CUAES, CCE and NYAES resulted in 113 preproposals from Cornell faculty principally residing within the colleges of Agriculture and Life Science, Human Ecology, and Veterinary Medicine. Of those preproposals, 74 were essentially research efforts, 15 were essentially extension efforts, and 24 were integrated (i.e., research *and* extension) projects. The deadline for preproposal submission was November 19, 2004.

The receipt of 24 integrated preproposals was the result of the RfP's strong solicitation of work that was truly integrated (having closely related applied research and extension functions) in nature, and the preproposal submission website's reformatting for the 2005-06 cycle. While annual RfPs of the past encouraged integrated projects, this cycle's call for preproposals gave much higher priority to functionally integrated work, and the web submission site included a gateway explicitly worded and formatted for submitting integrated preproposals.

The decision-making and review process used to allocate federal funds to the proposed projects will be very competitive. In sum, \$3.174 million in support was requested, included \$2.45 million in research dollar (from federal Hatch, Multistate, McIntire-Stennis, and Animal Health sources) requests and \$774,000 in extension dollar (federal Smith-Lever sources) requests. But less than \$1.2 million in federal research dollars and only \$350,000 in federal extension dollars are available for distribution.

Proposed projects that do well in review (including reviews by PC members and other off-campus stakeholders, Cornell academic department chairs, and the leadership of CUAES, CCE and NYSAES) and are approved for funding will begin on October 1, 2005, and will typically be funded annually for a duration of three years.

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## **Off-Campus Stakeholder Feedback Received on Preproposals**

Once again, off-campus stakeholder members of the Program Council are contributing reviews of federal research and extension preproposals for funding in 2005-06. These reviews are annually sought from CCE county extension association directors and from stakeholders external to the Cornell system in order to get their sense of the real-world relevancy of the research and extension projects that are preproposed by faculty. In previous funding cycles, this input has played a substantive role in identifying and narrowing down the number of preproposals to be further developed and proposed more fully.

As of February 21, well over 500 of these relevancy reviews had been received either in hard-copy form or via the new review submission website (the due-date was February 25). CCE, CUAES and NYSAES leaders wish to thank all of those who took the time to contribute their views and insights on preproposal relevancy.

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## **Program Work Team (PWT) Annual Reports Viewable Online**

Annual reports for 2004 from Program Work Teams (in Adobe/pdf format) are now available for viewing, downloading and printing. Go to <http://132.236.226.24/PWTPublic/public.htm> to select and view any of these annual reports, as

well as any PWT annual report submitted since 2001. (If for any reason this link does not work for you, just go to the Program Council/Program Work Team website (<http://www.cce.cornell.edu/admin/program/pwts>) and click on "PWT Annual Reports" in the left-hand sidebar).

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### **Program Work Team Transitional Requests Approved and Funded**

As noted in the last issue of *P.C. Update* (October 2004), the continuing decline in federal Smith-Lever support provided to CCE for extension programs has forced the withdrawal of annual operational budget allocations to Program Work Teams (PWTs). In an effort to assist the teams in finishing up some key activities and/or to move smoothly off Smith-Lever funding, CCE offered eligible terming teams very small (less than \$1000) one-time allocations of "transitional dollars" for the 2004-05 fiscal year.

Twenty-nine (29) PWTs (that were working under original petitions that termed on September, 30, 2004) were eligible to receive this support. Nineteen (19) teams requested, and have been approved for, transitional support. Go to <http://www.cce.cornell.edu/admin/program/pwts/trans.htm> to view a listing of the teams receiving transitional support and a short description of their approved transitional projects (if for any reason this link does not work for you, just go to the Program Council/Program Work Team website (<http://www.cce.cornell.edu/admin/program/pwts>) and click on "2004-05 PWT Transitional Projects" in the left-hand sidebar).

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### **New Director at NYSAES-Geneva**

Signaling the start of a new era at the Geneva Experiment Station, Thomas J. Burr has been appointed associate dean of Cornell University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs) and director of the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station (NYSAES) in Geneva, NY, effective January 1, 2005.

Burr replaces Bob Seem, who has served as interim director of the Station since January 1, 2004, and Jim Hunter, who served as director from 1990-2003. In making the announcement, CALs Dean Susan Henry said, "We are very grateful to Jim Hunter and Bob Seem for their dedication, leadership and hard work in keeping the Station strong during difficult budgetary times."

A member of the Cornell faculty since 1977, Burr has served as chairman of the department of plant pathology at the NYSAES since 2001. His major research emphasis is the study and control of crown gall, a disease that infects grapevines especially after they have been injured by freezing temperatures. Researchers in his program examine traditional methods of control as well as biological control and genetic technologies that confer resistance to host plants.

The full official CALs news release regarding Burr's appointment can be found at: <http://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/pubs/press/2004/041203Burr.html>

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## PWT News Round-Up

The following are updates on the activities of several Program Work Teams:

**The Community Economic Renewal PWT** began with the objectives to “build capacity for community economic renewal and to offer successful tools and processes for community building.” “Main Street” revitalization has been one of the PWT’s primary activities and the team will continue to focus on sustainable development for downtown business districts. With the help of the PWT identifying communities in need, and with funding from the US Economic Development Administration, NYS Department of Economic Development, CUAES, and the CALS Office for Research, an active program is up and running, with complementary services provided by Cornell’s Community and Rural Development Institute (CaRDI) and CISER staff

Changes in the economy have left many of New York’s cities, towns, and villages in a state of decline, but those same communities can work toward being vital, engaging and attractive if community members are committed to building on their strengths and gaining skills to address their challenges. With the heightened interest in main street revitalization grant programs offered by the NYS Department of State, the Quality Communities Initiative, and the NYS Department of Housing and Community Renewal, communities have found they have a great need for programs such as the Main Street Institutes and other “tools.”

In 2005, the Program Work Team will interview community leaders in 3 downtown business districts that have excelled at “Main Street” revitalization. Communities will be selected on the basis of preliminary results from the currently active Research and Extension project, “Market Strategies for Main Street Revitalization.” While Main Street revitalization doesn’t happen overnight, communities can identify indicators to help chart progress toward the desired outcome of community economic renewal. These indicators (such as the current conditions of retail businesses and the demand for products and services; whether a community moves forward with a vision and/or strategic plan; and the level of citizen involvement and the willingness of leaders to accept input during a decision-making process) can paint a picture of the level of vitality and quality of life within a community. The materials gathered in the interviews will complement the statistical data produced from the closely related research and technical assistance projects. (PWT Co-Chairs are Warren Brown of the Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research {wab4@cornell.edu} and Andrew Fagan of CCE-Chemung County {agf1@cornell.edu})

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Between 2001 and 2004, the **Healthy Living and Learning Environments Program Work Team (PWT)**:

- developed, implemented, and evaluated a pilot program on indoor air quality education for limited resource households;
- produced an indoor air quality exhibit that won a national award;
- promoted awareness of breast cancer and environmental risks;
- expanded efforts to raise awareness of indoor environmental quality in childcare facilities;
- hosted a statewide conference on mold in homes;
- formed a partnership with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA); and
- examined issues related to civic participation in environmental policy.

Resources have been developed that are being distributed on a national scale. The Healthy Homes exhibit and handouts were showcased at the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences conference in Nashville, and resulted in 123 Extension Home Economists requesting free PDF files of the exhibit and handouts. Updated Healthy Home exhibit panels were also made available to counties in New York State with funding from the Program Work Team. Funded research and Extension projects have led to broad networks with state and national agencies. PWT members will continue their program collaborations in 2005. (PWT Co-Chairs are Joe Laquatra of the Cornell Department of Design and Environmental Analysis {jl27@cornell.edu} and Jeanne Darling of CCE-Delaware {jmd30@cornell.edu})

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**The 4-H Science and Technology PWT** remains very active. The team met twice during the fall, once at the national 4-H educators' conference, and once on campus. The PWT remains committed to the goals of:

- Developing the 4-H curriculum Resource Directory, including guidance on the development of the web based directory tool and review of curricula and support materials to include on the directory. An MOU has been signed with the Department of Education to develop the Resource Directory. The directory will be unveiled at a workshop at the ACCEE Conference this Spring. The 4-H Sci & Tech PWT will also have a poster session about the Resource Directory.
- Supporting professional development efforts. The network of educators and campus staff on the PWT continue to help in the recruitment of workshops for professional development efforts and for workshops for youth, such as the Career Explorations Conference.
- Supporting county use of Cornell resources. The PWT continues to recruit department support in the form of mini-grants to counties for Science and Technology outreach at the NYS Fair. This has proven an extremely effective way to encourage counties to provide hands on, youth-run science activities at the Fair and back home.

- Supporting a campus/county network of professionals with an interest in promoting science and technology. Projects, grants, activities, collaboration and friendships have grown out of this PWT, by the simple act of bringing together a group of people with similar interests. The importance of this piece cannot be underestimated.

A February meeting is being planned. The 4-H Sci & Tech PWT has applied for Smith-Lever funding for the Resource Directory project and has also applied for transitional support for terming PWTs. (PWT Co-Chairs are Dana Palmer of the Cornell Department of Animal Science {dlp10@cornell.edu} and Kelly Radzik of CCE-Columbia {kar25@cornell.edu})

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**The Managing Wastes PWT** continues to make substantial progress on numerous PWT goals including:

- promoting appropriate policies for organic residuals management
- composting of mortalities and butcher residuals
- increasing the diversion of organic wastes from homes through small scale composting
- development of guidelines to assist turf and landscape managers in using compost
- helping farmers produce better composts
- land application of sewage sludges.

Management of livestock manure continues to be a focus. The PWT is successfully working with NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets to address regulatory issues and therefore permit compost producers to appropriately market their products. This is important to the more than 50 NYS livestock farmers who want to sell compost, and it promises to be a model for the nation.

Currently DEC is considering modifications to the solid waste rules and the PWT is a venue for discussion involving DEC and the compost community. Inconsistencies between the solid waste composting rules and the concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO) rules are being addressed. Enhancing markets for compost is a frequent topic of discussion, and use in horticulture and in erosion control are important potential markets. As a result of PWT input, compost blankets for use in erosion control are now a practice accepted and specified by DEC, and NYS DOT is working towards increased use of compost.

Research and outreach concerning the use of compost in turf maintenance and in landscape construction is reaching hundreds of people responsible for these activities.

Home composting has the potential to divert about 20% of the waste stream from landfills and incinerators. Following PWT discussions, a team including the Cornell Waste Management Institute, DEC, Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) educators, and the NYS Association for Reduction, Reuse and Recycling has encouraged small-scale composting in NYS through the development and posting on the WWW of new materials as well as workshops. Many CCE Associations are increasing their emphasis on this

practice. (PWT Co-Chairs are Ellen Harrison of the Cornell Waste Management Institute {ezh1@cornell.edu} and Keith Severson of CCE-Chenango {kvs5@cornell.edu})

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In 2004, the public trees in East Syracuse, Williamsville, Allegany, Seneca Falls and Cobleskill were inventoried by SWAT teams (Student Weekend Arborist Teams, a **Community Forestry PWT** program introducing undergraduate college students to urban forestry and related technology). In addition, a neighborhood in Brooklyn also began to use the Community Forestry inventory method with volunteers to assess and document the street trees in their vicinity. The Village of Fayetteville also began a street tree inventory using volunteers.

In August and September, 8 students from SUNY/Cobleskill trained along side 16 Cornell students and jointly worked to inventory the Village of Cobleskill's street and park trees. Professor Chris Cash was the liaison at SUNY/Cobleskill and the leader of the SUNY/Cobleskill SWAT. We had been successful in getting a \$10,000 grant from the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation to equip the SUNY/Cobleskill SWAT group with PDAs (personal digital assistants), a laptop, and GPS (global positioning systems) units. The addition of GPS capability improved the ability to take inventory data on park and open-space public trees. It also simplified the locational "fixing" of trees where no street address was apparent.

A Community Forestry PWT web site is up and running at <http://www.hort.cornell.edu/commfor>. It enables communities to learn about the program and apply directly for participation. Previous communities in which the team has worked have made excellent use of their inventories and the management workshops that were provided. A shining example is the Village of Red Hook, where the local tree commission developed a tree management plan for the community based on the inventory approach and data collected. (PWT Co-Chairs are Nina Bassuk of the Cornell Department of Horticulture and Paul O'Connor of CCE-Onondaga).

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