



## Which Program Should I Evaluate?

### Which extension programs should I evaluate?

Choose the programs you wish to evaluate carefully. The following criteria will help you determine which programs deserve your time and resources.

#### Program Punch and Viability

Is there enough of a program to evaluate? Or is it merely an activity or two? A realistic comparison of program objectives and amount of time participants spend in the program may reveal a relatively weak program, not worthy of evaluation. Choose a substantial program for your evaluation effort.

#### Stakeholder Interest

Is the program of interest to key community leaders, potential funders, extension committee members, an administrator, or part of the state plan of work? If so, find out what the stakeholders want to know about your program and collect this information in the evaluation. It will make the evaluation more efficient for you.

#### Program Modification

Evaluating a program is a very rewarding experience if there is an opportunity to improve it as a result of your assessment. Remember that evaluation to modify a program is a *form of accountability*; stakeholders are more apt to make allowances for program deficiencies if you indicate how you are going to change the program as a result of the evaluation.

#### Marketing Potential

Once you have evaluation results, decide whether this program should be marketed using the results. Does the program have a diverse audience, for instance, or deal with critical policy issues in your county?

#### Program Objectives

Are the stated objectives or the indicators measurable? Were the program strategies chosen to carry out those objectives? If not, don't count on very good evaluation results from this program.

#### Organizational Interest

Do the volunteers in the program have a strong commitment to sustaining a program? Or, do they have too many other responsibilities to carry out? Volunteers in a program need the interest and the time to do justice to the evaluation.

#### Program Duration

Is the program going to be repeated? If not, it may not be worth evaluating.

#### Evaluation Materials

Have other agents or specialists developed evaluation strategies and tools for a program with similar objectives? If so, you may be able to modify them for your program.

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